

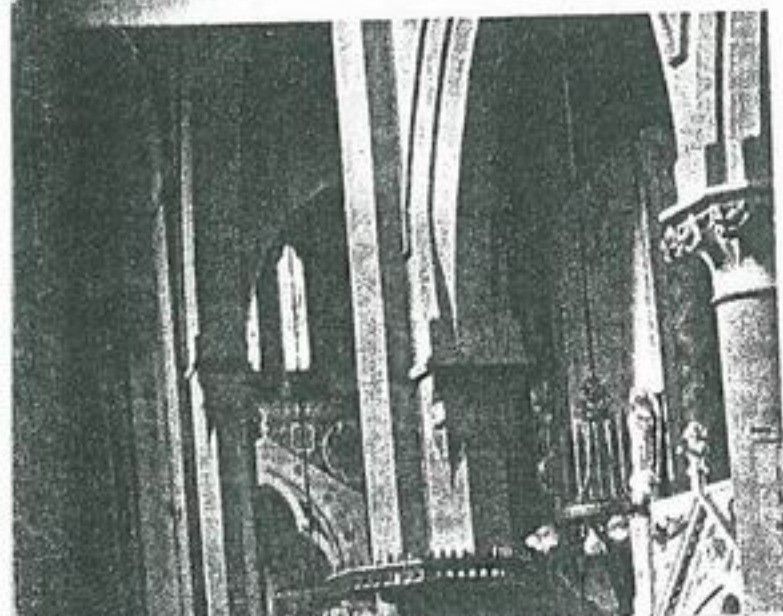
more ornate in design than the main building, yet its integration in the general plan is happily achieved.

The Cathedral, which was first opened for public worship in July, 1861, was consecrated in June, 1894. The old Church of St. John was built in 1753. Its site was between the present Cathedral and the adjoining presbytery.

The Cathedral houses two of Ireland's most remarkable ecclesiastical possessions, the Mitre and Crozier of Bishop Conor O'Dea, made in 1418, the only Medieval art treasures remaining in their ancient custody in Ireland. They are magnificently ornamented with cast figures, enamel and jewels and the Mitre is signed with the name of the craftsman who made them, Thomas O'Carryd.

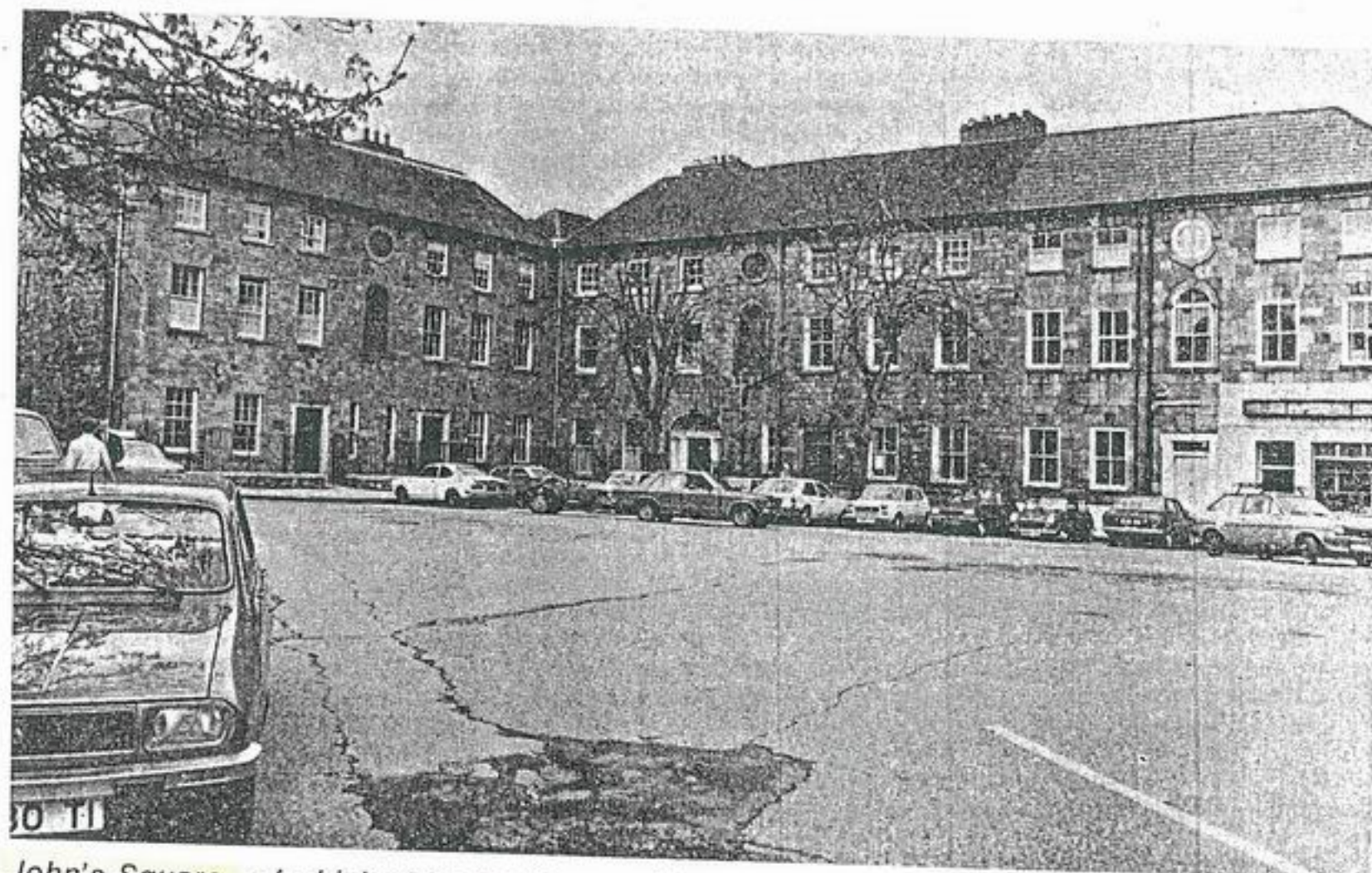
THE SARSFIELD MEMORIAL

In the grounds of St. John's Cathedral Presbytery is the statue of Patrick Sarsfield, defender of Limerick in the sieges of 1690 and 1691. Though the project to erect the statue began in 1845, it was not until 1891 that the statue was fully executed by John Lawlor of Dublin, who was also responsible for the "Engineering" shop on the Albert Memorial in London.



It'd be hard to explain if one was not that most people will endure to satisfy an vanity. To own a town house was those days, and such a circumstance

2. JOHNS SQUARE.



John's Square, refurbished by the Corporation, the building in the left foreground houses the Municipal Museum.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

St. John's Church, occupying the site which forms the east side of St. John's Square, was completed in 1852, and replaces a 15th century church on the same site.

It would appear from records that "St. John's Church below the City of Limerick" was in existence when Donatus O'Brien established the Canons of St. Mary's Cathedral about the year 1194. The church was named in later historical documents and referred to as "St. John's of the Holy Cross in the liberties of the City of Limerick".

The rebuilding of St. John's Church in the middle of the 15th century is noted in Ferrar's. — were additions made, perhaps, by the Church. The original doors of these houses were drab and plain, without any form of ornamentation. More than one observer suggested that they were more like back doors than front doors.

unused and stands enclosed by presumably the same limestone and brick wall as constructed in 1693. The entrance to the churchyard is now from John's Square.

The church has been donated to Limerick Corporation to be used for cultural purposes.

JOHN'S SQUARE

This square, noted on a map dated 1786 as "New Square", was constructed after 1751, and contains houses on three sides with St. John's Church and churchyard forming the fourth and east side. Access is central on the west side from Gerald Griffin Street, and from the north and south around St. John's Churchyard.

John's Square was not long before it was the place where John's Temperance Society mounted guard outside the Rectory, and also patrolled the grounds of the churchyard, to insure the

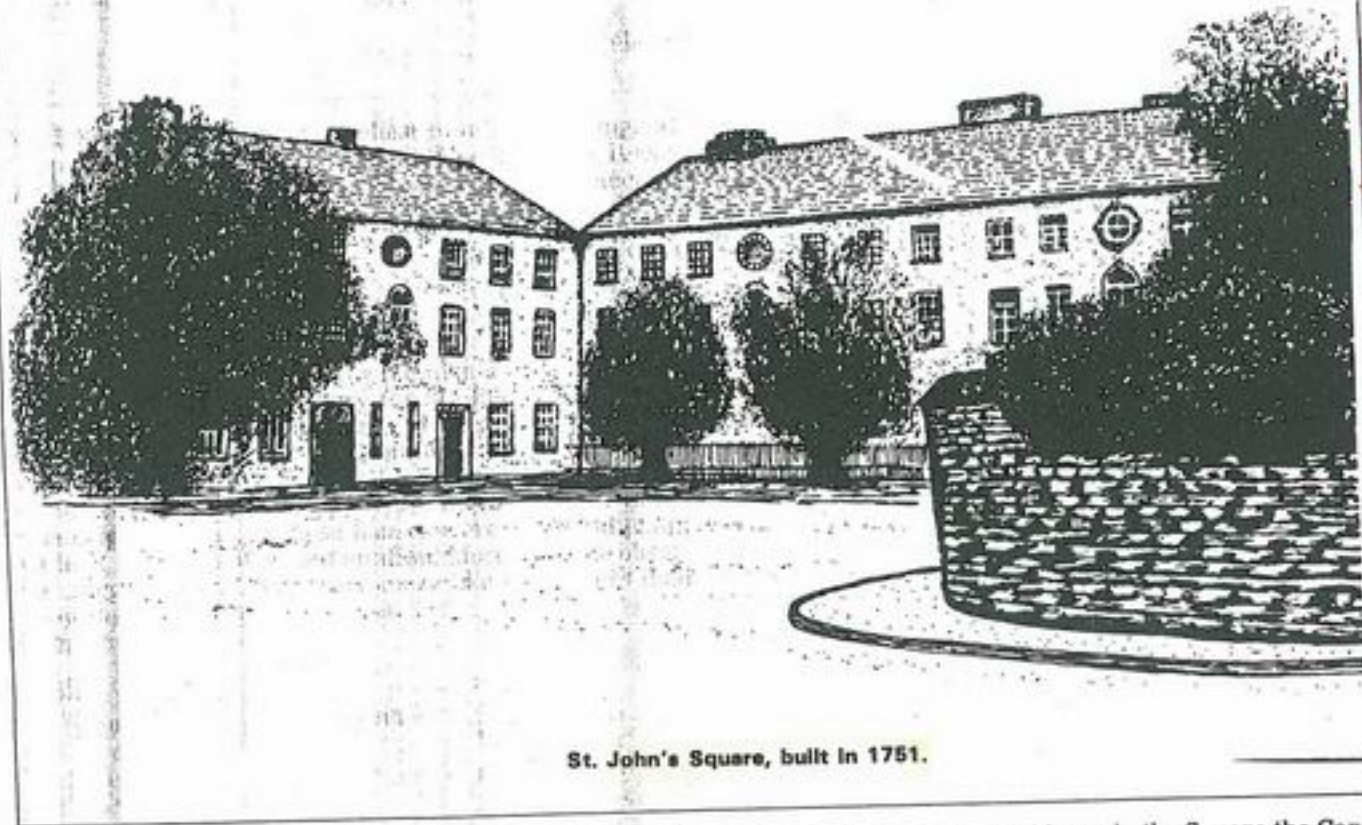
SQUARE

in Hannan



Portrait of Edmond Sexton Pery, by Hugh

Mallow Street, and Cecil Street — any town or city in Ireland. If beautiful country mansions could be hard to explain if one was not at most people will endure to satisfy an vanity. To own a town house was a great thing, and such a circumstance



St. John's Square, built in 1751.

No. 5 South, which was also close to other dwellings at Chapel Lane (now Canter's Range). Furthermore, it was unlikely that a dye works and a brewery could be accommodated in the same backyard.

A detachment of the garrison took over No. 2 on the south side and built a new wing at the rear and a fine cut stone entrance at Barrack Lane. The military moved out when the new barracks were completed in 1798 (now the Sarsfield Barracks).

No. 3 on the north side (now the men's hostel) became the Church of Ireland rectory for St. John's parish. The magnificent Georgian doorway of this house, together with the lamp standard — a reminder of the days when wealthy householders provided their own street lighting — were additions made, perhaps, by the Church Body. The original doors of these houses were drab and plain, without any form of ornamentation. More than one observer suggested that they were more like back doors than

When he first took up residence in the Square the Canon was advised by an old clergyman to take precautions against attack by the savage and superstitious natives. Indeed, his adviser, who apparently had no time for the common people of the parish, suggested the fitting of iron grills on the windows of the rectory.

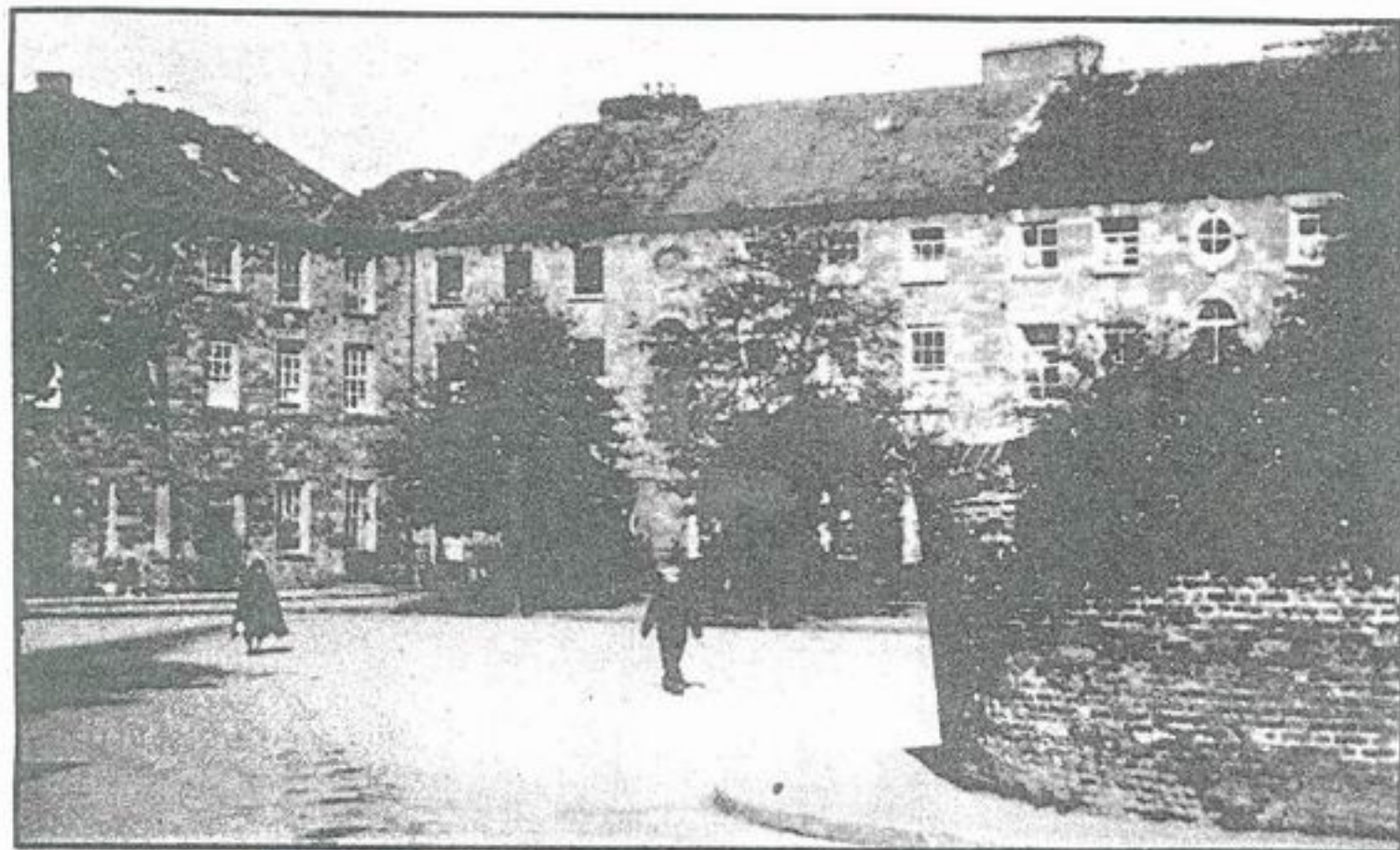
The Canon, disregarding these overtures, mixed freely with the local people, with whom he became a great favourite. That he was held in the highest regard by all classes was proved during the riots which followed an anti-Home Rule meeting held in the Theatre Royal in October 1912. On that infamous occasion the homes and business premises of many Protestants had their windows and doors smashed. Even the Protestant churches did not escape the fury of the mob. But the Canon in St. John's Square was not forgotten by the people amongst whom he lived. The members of St. John's Temperance Society mounted guard outside the Rectory, and also patrolled the grounds of the churchyard, to insure the

ST. JOHN'S SQUARE

John's Square

a walled garden and they started building of St. John's was just after the Treaty, people still recollectors of the wealthy lived in from the much of plunder of during the the Treaty

ns tell us set out in west of St. This was at an open re at the here was build the around it. is no open town, or, part of the families ous and uses made was no is certain old dwell- shed be- ns of the laid out.



A rare picture of John Square before the Civic Trust took over. The building on the extreme left now houses the city museum.

Street and Cecil Street.

That the owners of beautiful country mansions could leave their exotic gardens and parklands to dwell in the fetid and fever laden atmosphere of the eighteen century town would be

were completed in 1798 (now the Sarsfield Barracks).

No. 3 on the north side (now the Saint Vincent de Paul hostel) became the Church of Ireland rectory for St. John's parish. The mag-

house on the south side, No. 2, was owned by John Cross, whose brother, Joe, carried on a funeral undertaking business at Barrack Lane, using the old military livery yard to stable the horses and

By the early seventies the old square was all but dead. There was still some life on the north side, but for the passer-by it was a lonesome place, full of ghosts and sadness, for what evokes our saddest thoughts more than the abandoned habitation of a man?

In 1962 Pluinthead O Ceallaigh, the then City Architect, made the following recommendations: (1) In view of the uniqueness and of the intrinsic architectural qualities of St. John's Square, it is considered well worthy of preservation, both in the interest of Limerick and in the national interest (2) St. John's Square is sufficiently small to be capable of preservation without exorbitant expenditure. (3) recommend that every effort be made to preserve St. John's Square, and that favourable consideration could be given to the reconstruction of six houses in the square to provide residential accommodation.

These recommendations were not acted upon for more than a decade, and in

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