

## ARLEVILLE RT: DANCE LICENCES

granting renewals of hall licences in the area of licensing sitting of the District Court on Tuesday. C. S. Kenny stated that a number of people allowed into the maximum fixed by the County Council engineer, he went down the hall and licence, as he would not be crowding. The County Council went into this matter and licensees must be limited. The court were applicable of four halls, viz.: Ball, Chapel Street, Charles Pavilion Ballroom, the Ballyhea Dance Hall, the Dromina Dance Hall. Binchy, solr., appeared for the licensees con-

**NEW EXITS.** The very first recorded grant of the fisheries, that of King John to William de Braose, was also the cause of the first law suit. Edmund, the Bishop of Limerick, claimed that they were his and were not Crown property; and to compensate him for his loss, King John instructed his marshal, Geoffrey, to grant the Bishop ten pounds of silver for ever, every year. Let not the reader think that ten pounds of silver, in 1215, is still ten pounds. Ten thousand pounds would be much nearer the mark.

in granting the requirements of the County Council, being carried out at the maximum number permitted would be of all the licences. The Ballyhea Hall, a licence was being Patrick McCann, ing said he had asked ventilators be provided erected 8 feet over the requirements had been The maximum number e hall was 200 people. cation was granted. se of the Dromina Hall, e licensee was Patrick

ing said there was no on, which was all that The other require- complied with. The umber of people was hall. stated that there was apply in the village at

cation was granted. ce for the Pavilion as granted as the pre- approved of by the d requirements carried ximum number in this ed at 850.

## LIMERICK COMMITTEE AGRICULTURE. DEVELOPMENT SCHEME, 1953/54.

above-named Scheme r for Agriculture, is further sum to the or the purpose of pro- to poultry keepers in the present financial ds the cost of new poultry accommodation ent.

will not be awarded

# OUT OF THE PAST

By ROBERT HERBERT

## THE LIMERICK FISHERMEN.

I DON'T think we shall be accused of contempt of court—or of interfering in any way with a matter which may or may not be sub judice—if we give a few notes from the history of our great Limerick fisheries, even if we begin them by stating that that history, stretched over eight hundred years, is the story of one law case after another. The last great law case extended from 1859 to 1862, and ended up in the House of Lords; so perhaps our City Manager is right in disclaiming responsibility, on behalf of the citizens, for the costs of a possible future inquiry.

## THE FIRST GRANT.

The very first recorded grant of the fisheries, that of King John to William de Braose, was also the cause of the first law suit. Edmund, the Bishop of Limerick, claimed that they were his and were not Crown property; and to compensate him for his loss, King John instructed his marshal, Geoffrey, to grant the Bishop ten pounds of silver for ever, every year. Let not the reader think that ten pounds of silver, in 1215, is still ten pounds. Ten thousand pounds would be much nearer the mark.

## THE STONE AGE.

Our archaeologists claim that the first invaders to Ireland settled at the first fordable points on the rivers; and the evidence so far produced substantiates that claim; and the site of the old Lax Weir conforms in every respect to the site where the first settlement would have been on the Shannon. Besides, hundreds of their stone-axes, probably used to fell the young trees of which they built their weirs, have been found in the area. The very word, Lax, derives from the Danish, for salmon, and there can be no possible doubt at all that these notorious fishermen exploited the river to its fullest extent when they ruled the City of Limerick, which, incidentally, they did long after they had been conquered by King Brian Boru. Perhaps it was they who built the first stone-weir, which exists, more or less in outline, to the present day. History does not record whether they supplemented the weir's catch by fly-fishing, worm-fishing, thread-lining, or stroke-hauling. My own contention would be that they stood knee-deep in water and clubbed their fish. Can an expert tell me if this somewhat hardy method of fishing is illegal?

## THE DOMINICAN FRIARS.

A tradition, held by the late Abbey fishermen with such conviction that it was stoutly maintained by them in the law courts, was that it was built in the eleventh century by the Dominican Friars, to whom, incidentally, is attributed the digging of the Abbey River.

What giants they must have been in those distant days! Be that as it may, the report of the trial, in which they fought for their ancient rights against Poole Gabbett in 1840, states that the Friary on the King's Island proving too small, they built an additional one on St. Thomas's Island, and that "the students of St. Thomas's Island (which island then abounded with plenty of wood) betook themselves to the erection of the weir, and succeeded in forming a sort of basket or crib, by means of which they were able to take such quantities of salmon as enabled them not only to supply their own tables, but the tables of every religious community in Limerick."

## THE OLD LAX WEIR.

The old Limerick Lax-weir was the largest stone-weir in the country. It stretched from the Old Mill at Corbally to the Church of Parteen, and was about 1,500 feet in length. It consisted of a number of stone piers, about thirty feet long, and divided by spaces varying from fifteen to forty feet. Twelve of these piers, on the north shore, were re-built in cut stone, by Messrs. MacAdam and Little, who had a lease of the fisheries from 1818 to 1834. The rest consisted merely of loose stones encased in wood. In fact, in about 1870 the old night-watchman of the weir said that he remembered when the piers "instead of being encased in wood, consisted of rough basket-work filled in with stones."

## THE KING'S GAP.

In the centre of the weir was a gap of fifty feet for the escape of salmon to the upper reaches for propagation purposes. This was known as the King's Gap of Monaree and seems to have existed from time immemorial. In the middle of the 18th century, the weir owners throughout the country began to close these gaps; and a law was framed, in the time of George the Third, directing that every weir should have a twenty-one foot gap. This was ignored, as was a similar act of Queen Victoria until 1863. After that date it was rigidly enforced until the abandonment of the old weir, in recent years.

## AN EVASION.

An interesting, if somewhat tricky, method of evading the law is related in the Abbey fishermen's trial of 1840. At the trial they swore how the owner, "Mr. Doras, following MacAdam, placed a dog representing an otter in the centre gap of the weir, to prevent the fish from going up the Shannon. This dog was covered in an otter's skin, with copper ears and glass eyes, which so frightened the fish that they retreated and forced their way into baskets or cribs, sooner than face so dangerous an opponent as an otter."

(To be continued).

## THE LICENSEE WAS CANDID: SHE SAID "GUILTY"

A VERY candid licensee appeared in Kilfinane Court before Justice H. L. Conner. Anne Hyland, Galbally, was summoned for a breach of the licensing laws at 10.10 p.m. on Sunday, the 30th August, and 8 men were summoned for being on the premises.

Inspector Pender prosecuted and Mr. W. A. Lee, solr., defended.

Sergt. P. Coyle, Galbally, gave evidence of visiting the premises at 10.10 p.m., on Sunday, the 30th August. He went to a side door and after half a minute or so he observed a couple of lads coming out. He questioned them and brought them back into the licensed premises. There were a number of men sitting about the kitchen, eight of whom were non-bona-fide travellers. When he questioned the licensee all she said was "guilty." Most of the men had glasses in their hands containing intoxicating liquor. The licensee admitted the offence.

Mr. Lee said the facts were admitted. The men were sitting peacefully around the fireside at the time and there could be nothing grander. Mrs. Hyland's premises were very well conducted. The Justice imposed a fine of 20/- on the publican and the men on the premises were fined 2/- each.

## SIMILAR OFFENCE.

Summoned for a similar offence at 10.30 p.m. on Sunday, the 23rd August, was Humphrey Dennehy, Galbally, and 24 men were summoned for being on the premises. Mr. W. A. Lee, solr., appeared for the licensee.

Sergt. Coyle said that accompanied by Garda Grady he inspected the licensed premises of the defendant, and just as they were approaching a number of men came out the back. Witness approached them and Garda Grady entered the premises, in which were a number of other men.

Mr. Lee said the facts were admitted. Some of the defendants came in to leave their clothes there as they were going to a dance and it was admitted on behalf of the publican that he served some share of drink.

As there was a previous conviction the Justice imposed a fine of 40/- and 2/- each on the men found on the premises.

Margaret McDermott, Ballynaders, was summoned for a like offence at 12.30 a.m. on Thursday, the 30th July, and 4 men were summoned for being on the premises. Mr. Lee, solr., defended.

## HEARD VOICES AND SAW LIGHT.

A Garda witness gave evidence that he heard voices inside as he approached the premises and saw light in the bar. He knocked and was admitted by the licensee's cousin, Sean O'Donnell. He heard footsteps leaving and going in the direction of the back yard. There was nobody in the bar when he entered but on going to the rear