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Limerick City
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Arch. Gwd 724R
(local)

The Nineteenth Century

Town Hall

Much of the building in Newtown Pery was carried out by the rich merchants of the area, such as the Roches and the Arthurs. In the eighteenth century the jurisdiction of the Corporation was limited to the part of the city which has been surrounded by the medieval walls. The merchants were determined that this corrupt body would never get its hands on the new part of the town.

In 1805 these city merchants built what was then called the Commercial Buildings in Rutland Street. It served as a meeting place for them and contained 'one of the most spacious coffee rooms in the land'⁽⁸⁾. In 1815 these merchants were incorporated by Royal Charter into the Chamber of Commerce of Limerick and in 1833 they moved their headquarters up to what was then George Street.

The Commercial Buildings became the Town Hall in 1846. It is a seven bay three storey building. In the rusticated ground floor there are six tall round-headed windows; the other floors are of red brick. The fanlight has beautiful delicate decoration but the doorway gives a somewhat 'squashed' impression as it has no sidelights.

The name of the architect is unknown but I would think he was also the designer of a row of houses in Hartstonge Street. Again there is a rusticated ground floor in which there are long round-headed windows; the three upper storeys are of red brick. The doors have fanlights but no sidelights and the fanlight is supported on console brackets and not on an entablature and two slim Doric columns, as they are in the Town Hall.

Old County Courthouse

On 1st September, 1807, the foundation stone of a new County Courthouse was laid and this was the beginning of the building which is now used for the sittings of the District, Circuit and High Court on Circuit, in the city. The architects, Messrs. Nicholas and William Hannon, were natives of County Limerick. The building opened at the summer assizes