

# County Limerick

## A Brief History

Much of this county was part of the old Gaelic Kingdom of Thomond, while parts of the west of the county were in the Kingdom of Desmond. The major families in the county were the O'Briens, O' Ryans, O'Donovans, and O'Sheehans. Other families in the area included O'Hurley, MacSheehy, O'Gorman, O'Scanlan, and O'Hallinan.

In the mid-ninth century, the Vikings took control of Limerick City and retained it until the eleventh century, when they were defeated by the O'Brien chieftain, Brian Boru. From that time it became the seat of the O'Briens, rulers of Thomond. Because the Norse people did not use surnames, there is little evidence of the Viking heritage among the family names in the area. However, one of the few Norse names found in Ireland, Harold, is found in Limerick.

Following the Norman invasion, the county was granted to the De Burgos, ancestors of the Burkes, and to Fitzwalters and Fitzgeralds. The Norman influence is still evident in the names which are now common in Limerick, including Fitzgerald, Fitzgibbon, de Lacy, Woulfe, and Wall.

At the end of the sixteenth century, a rebellion by Fitzgerald, the Earl of Desmond (see Co. Kerry) led to a very bloody war, which devastated much of this area of Munster. Following the defeat of Desmond, his estates, some of which were in western Limerick, were granted to various adventurers and were planted with English settlers. The Plantation of Munster in 1598, which also included parts of Limerick, was largely a failure. Many of the settlers left during the O'Neill march through Munster in 1601, and others simply adopted Irish customs and assimilated into the native population. Further confiscations, which followed the 1641 and 1688

wars, increased the numbers of English landowners, but did not greatly increase the numbers of English settlers.

In 1709, families of German settlers from the Rhine Palatinate were brought to Limerick and settled around Rathkeale. These people were of the Moravian faith and came to be known as Palatines. Of the original eight hundred families who were brought to the county, only two hundred (approximately 1,200 people) remained in Ireland. Later in the century, groups of the remaining Palatine families moved to other colonies in Adare and in Castleisland in County Kerry. The commoner names among these people included Shouldice, Switzer, and Cole (see Miscellaneous Sources section for further references).

The county was badly affected by a local famine in 1820, caused by an outbreak of potato blight, and by the Great Famine of 1845-47. Almost seventeen percent of the county's population emigrated between 1851 and 1855, and almost 30,000 died between 1847 and 1850. The population was 330,000 in 1841, and by 1851 had fallen by twenty-one percent. By 1891 it had fallen to about 160,000, and is currently approximately 122,000.

Limerick is now an important industrial city and port. The other major towns in the county include Kilmallock, Newcastle West, Rathkeale, Abbeyfeale, and Adare.

## Census and Census Substitutes

### 1570

List of the Freeholders and Gentlemen in Co. Limerick. NLI P1700; *N. Munster Arch. and Hist. Soc. J.* 9 (3) (1964): 108-12.

**1586**

Survey of Leaseholders on the Desmond Estates. NAI M 5037.

**1654-56**

Civil Survey. Vol. 4. Simington, R.C. Co. Limerick, with a section of Clanmaurice Baroney, Co. Kerry. Dublin: Stationery Office, 1938; SLC film 973122.

**1659**

"Census" of Ireland. Edited by S. Pender. Dublin: Stationery Office, 1939. NLI I6551. SLC film 924648.

**1664**

Hearth Money Roll for Askeaton. *N. Munster Antiq. J.* 1965.

**1715-94**

Freemen of the City of Limerick. PRO—London; SLC film 477000.

**1746-1836**

"Index of Freemen of Limerick." *N. Munster Antiq. J.* 4 (3) (1945): 103-30 (gives name, address, occupation in some cases, and date freedom attained).

**1761**

Militia List. Counties Limerick . . . etc. GO Ms. 680. Names and Addresses of Freeholders Voting in a Parliamentary Election. NLI ms. 16093.

**1766**

Householders of Parishes of Abington, Ardcanny, Cahircomey, Cahirelly, Carrigparson, Clonkeen, Kilkellane and Tuogh. NAI Parliamentary Papers 681/684. (Ardcanny also in NAI M 147.)

Protestant householders of Parishes of Clonagh, Croagh, Dondaniel, Kilscannel, Nantinan and Rathkeale. GO 537; RCB Ms. 37; SLC film 258517; also in *Ir. Anc.* 9 (2) (1977): 77-78.

List of Protestants and Papists in Limerick Diocese. GO 540; SLC film 100212.

**1776**

Names of the Owners of Freeholds Entitled to Vote. NAI Mf. 1321-22.

**1793**

"Two Lists of Persons Resident in the Vicinity of Newcastle in 1793 and 1821." *Ir. Anc.* 16 (1) (1984): 40-44.

**1798**

"List of Rebel Prisoners in Limerick Gaol." *N. Munster*

*Antiq. J.* 10 (1) (1966): 79-82.

**1799**

"Gentlemen of the Counties Clare and Limerick Who Were in Favour of the Union in 1799." *Ir. Anc.* 14 (1) (1982): 30-35.

**1813**

"The Chief Inhabitants of the Parishes of St. Mary's and St. John's Limerick in 1813." *Ir. Anc.* 17 (2) (1985): 75-76.

**1816-28**

"List of Freeholders for the County of Limerick." SLC film 100224; GO M623.

**1817**

"Voters in the Limerick City Election of 1817." NLI IR324L1; *Ir. Anc.* 17 (1) (1985): 49-57.

**1821**

Newcastle—see 1793.

"Fragments of Census Returns for Kilfinane District." *N. Munster Antiq. J.* 17 (1975): 83-90.

**1823-38**

*Tithe Applotment Survey* (see introduction).

**1829**

Limerick's Freeholders with Addresses and Occupations. GO M623.

**1834**

"Heads of Households in the Parish of Templebredon and Numbers in Each." *N. Munster Arch. and Hist. Soc. J.* 17 (1975): 91-101.

**1835-39**

Lists of residents of Limerick in Waterworks accounts. NLI P. 3451.

**1836**

Freemen—see 1746.

**1840**

List of Freeholders in the Barony of Coshlea. NLI ms. 9452.

**1841**

"Emigration to North America from Limerick Port, 1841." *N. Munster Antiq. J.* 23 (1981): 67-76 (includes the passenger list for the *Shelmalere*, 26 May 1841 to New York).

Delivery he is Intitled to 13s. 4d. fees on each Man for such Crimes. The following is a list disposed of as underneath mentioned—

<i>Death, Executed</i>		
No. 1	Mathew Kennedy	35 James Mahon
2	John Moore	36 Thomas Lawler
3	Stephen Dundon	37 Michael Timmen
4	Thomas Mullanny	38 Michael Daley
5	John Hayes	39 Michael Mulconry
6	Thomas McInerney	40 Richd. Robinson Enlist- ed in the 54th Regt. Foot
7	Thomas Kennedy	
8	William Ryan Stephens	
9	Patrick O Neill	
10	Patrick Wallace	
<i>Persons discharged on Bail</i>		
No. 1	Joseph O Loughlin	40 Wm. Healy
2	John FitzGerald	41 Thomas Dunn
3	Daniel Bohan	42 John Murphy
4	James Hillard	43 Wm. Gorman
5	Patrick Carroll	44 James Grant
6	Michael Callaghan	45 David Callon
7	Thomas Butler	46 Richd. McElligott
8	Denis Halloran	47 Wm. Hannabury
9	Patrick Halloran	48 John Sullivan
10	John Ryan	49 Edward Riely
11	Darby Ward	50 Edmond Sheehan
12	Mathew Hayes	51 James Hackett
13	David Twohy	52 Daniel O Brien
14	Michael Callaghan	53 Denis McNamara
15	Thomas Ryan	54 John Meade
16	Michael Donegan	55 James Hayes
17	James Dundon	
18	Martin Kelly	
19	George Murphy	
20	Wm. Gleeson	
21	John Flinn	
22	Hugh Dwyer	
23	James Crough	
24	George Hardgrove	
25	Robert Cross	
26	Martin Howard	
27	Thomas Collopy	
28	Wm. Tubbs	
29	Richard Welsh	
30	John Murphy	
31	John O Hogan	
32	Wm. Crowe	
33	Edmond Dunn	
34	Andrew Kennedy	
35	Michael Considine	
36	Mathew Dea	
37	John Twohy	
38	Thomas McKnight	
39	Theobald Barry	
<i>Transported</i>		
No. 1	Owen Ryan	
2	Thomas Gorman	
3	James Ryan	
4	Edmond Ryan	
5	James Keagh	
6	John Dwyer	
7	Thomas Dwyer	
8	Charles Nolan	
9	David Leahy	
10	James Kennedy	
11	John Moroney	
12	Richard Kelly	
13	Michael McInerney	
14	Owen Ryan	
15	James Brohane	
16	John Cunningham	
17	Wm. Higgins Enlisted in 54th Regt.	
18	Andrew Ryan	
19	Philip Hogan	
20	John Cowney	
21	Daniel Carroll	
22	James Ryan Stephens	
23	Daniel Hayes	
24	James Kelly	
25	Thomas Frost	
26	John Connor	
27	John Mawn	
28	James Casey	
29	Maurice Shea	
30	Francis Arthur	
31	John Kerin	
32	Michael Conry	
33	Ells. Allum	
34	John Abraham	
<i>Prisoners discharged by the Court Martial</i>		
No. 1	Peter O Keffe	
2	Denis Ryan	
3	John Clume	
4	Edmond Ryan	
5	Patrick Ryan	
6	James Cowney	
7	Thomas Lane	
8	Charles Small	
9	Michael McCormack	
10	John Coraghan	
11	John Ryan	
12	Frans. McNamara	
13	Martin Kelly	
14	Patrick Connor	
15	Barthw. Clanchy	
16	Lieut. Harrass	
17	Lieut. Rice	
18	John Sullivan	
19	Quarter Master Holmes	
20	Thomas Doe	
21	John Burke	
22	Lieut. O Dwyer	
23	Thomas Madagan	
24	Chas. Strudgeon	
25	Timothy Tierney	
26	John Cloghessy	
27	Danl. Shaughnessy	
28	John McInerney	
29	Edward Hastings	
30	Michael Hastings	
31	John Garvey	

#### The Petition

To his Excellency Lord Marquis of Cornwallis,  
Lieutenant General and General Governor & Commander in Chief of the Kingdom of Ireland—

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A list of rebel prisoners held in Limerick Jail following the Rebellion of 1798, with their sentences. From *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* 10 (1) (1966).

**1843**

Voters List. NAI 1843/66.

**1846**

Survey of Households in Connection with Famine Relief. NLI ms. 582 (Loughill, Foynes, and Shanagolden area).

**1848**

Petitioners for William Smith O'Brien. Names of male petitioners in Abbeyfeale and Limerick City. NAI 1848/180.

**1851**

Kilfinane—see 1821 re: census fragments.

**1851-52**

Griffith's Valuation (see introduction).

**1867**

"List of Active Fenians in Co. Limerick." *N. Munster Antiq. J.* 10 (2) (1967): 169-72.

Marchers in memory of Allen, Larkin, O'Brien. *Old Limerick J.* 22 (1987). City of Limerick—Name, Occupation, Address of 437 marchers.

"Persons Attending Fenian Memorial Procession" (437 people named, with occupation and residence). *N. Munster Antiq. J.* 10 (2) (1967): 173-205.

**1901**

Census. NAI (see introduction).

**1911**

Census. NAI.

## Church Records

**Church of Ireland**

See the introduction for a description of Church of Ireland records and their major repositories. Many C of I records were lost in the PRO fire of 1922. These are indicated as "Lost." However, as Church of Ireland records were effectively state records, the records of marriage (from 1845) are also in the General Registrar's Office. Many are still in local custody (LC), while others are in one of a variety of other archives (e.g., RCBL or NAI). Many of the parish registers of this county have been indexed by Limerick Archives (see Research Services at the end of the chapter). A search of the index will be conducted by the center for a fee. Those indexed are noted as "Indexed by LA." An index to the marriages in Co. Limerick before 1845 is available on SLC film 874438.

**Abington**

Earliest Records: b. 1811-; m. 1813-; d. 1810-  
Status: LC; NAI MFCI 2, M5222 (b. 1811-98; m. 1813-45; d. 1810-92)

**Adare**

Earliest Records: b. 1826-; m. 1826-; d. 1826-  
Status: LC; NLI P1994 (b. 1845-89); Indexed by LA (to 1980); SLC film 874437 (b. 1826-66; m. 1826-45; d. 1826-78)

**Aney**

Earliest Records: b. 1760-; m. 1761-; d. 1759-  
Status: *J. Ir. Mem. Assoc.* 12 (b/m/d. to 1802 with index to deaths)

**Ardcanny and Chapelrussell**

Earliest Records: b. 1802-; m. 1802-; d. 1805-  
Status: LC; NLI P 2761 (b. 1802-48; m. 1802-44; d. 1805-44); NAI M5072 5 (b/m. 1802-1920+; d. 1805-1940); Indexed by LA (to 1980); SLC film 928607 (b. 1802-1927; m. 1802-44; d. 1805-94)

**Askeaton**

Earliest Records: b. 1877-; m. 1845-; d. 1877-  
Status: LC; Indexed by LA (to 1980)

**Athlacca and Dromin**

Status: Lost

**Ballingarry**

Earliest Records: b. 1785-; m. 1785-; d. 1785-  
Status: LC; NAI MFCI 16 (b. 1785-1872; m. 1809-46; d. 1809-75); GO 701 (extracts); SLC film 257807 (extracts b/m/d. 1698-1736); SLC film 101780 (1785-1843); Indexed by LA (to 1980)

**Ballinlanders**

Earliest Records: m. 1852-77  
Status: RCBL

**Ballybrood**

Status: Lost

**Ballycahane**

Status: Lost

**Bruff**

Earliest Records: b. 1859-; m. 1845-; d. 1859-  
Status: LC; NAI M5975/6 (b. 1859-71; d. 1859-71); Indexed by LA (to 1980)

**Caherconlish**

Earliest Records: b. 1888-; m. 1845-; d. 1890-  
Status: LC; Indexed by LA (to 1980)

**Cahercorney**

Status: Lost

**Cahernarry (also see St. Mary)**

Earliest Records: b. 1855-; m. 1847-; d. 1877-  
Status: LC; NAI M5112 (b. 1855-77); Indexed by LA (to 1980)

**Cappamore and Tuogh (see also Abington)**

Earliest Records: b. 1859-; m. 1845-; d. 1859-