

# Justice for Magdalenes

## Articles Concerning Lace making



Compiled by Claire McGettrick, Justice for Magdalenes

## CONVENT GIRLS SEWED FOR CORONATION PARTY

*Times Pictorial* (1941-1955); Jun 6, 1953;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times (1859-2011) and The Weekly Irish Times (1876-1958)

pg. 2

# CONVENT GIRLS SEWED FOR CORONATION PARTY

**O**NLY two Irish girls in the Convent of the Good Shepherd in Waterford were able to embroider the gossamer fine lawn for a coronation table-cloth used in Dublin this week at a cocktail party. And they were able to complete the three-yard long and 80 inch wide cloth, covered with unicorns, lions and griffins, in just over three weeks.

Mrs. Madelaine Chadwick, the wife of Mr. John Chadwick, Chancellor of the British Embassy in Dublin, for whom the cloth was embroidered, worked out the unusual design herself.

At the party, 80 guests drank champagne out of crystal glasses specially designed and made in France by Paul Daum. They were fluted in shape with a crystal crown at the base. The chief surprise for Mrs. Chadwick's lady guests, however, was her thoughtful gifts, a hand-embroidered lawn handkerchief and a red or white rose.

Parisian-born Mrs. Chadwick loves hand-embroidered linen and antique glass-ware. She often works out unusual designs for her cloths. One is a special Tóstal cloth with roses and harps, which the people in the Gaeltacht are embroidering.

## Article 50 -- No Title

The Irish Times (1921-Current File); Aug 21, 1935;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times (1859-2011) and The Weekly Irish Times (1876-1958)

pg. 3

# FAMOUS IN ARMS, CULTURE AND COMMERCE

**V**IKINGS' camp, historic capital of Thomond, thrice beleaguered garrison city, Limerick has a stirring past; and seeing her broad, busy streets her visitors to-day will observe that she stirs in the present, too, more actively than ever her citizens' warrior ancestors could have dreamed.

Limerick began as "a place of the steeds," for that is what her name, a corrupted form of "Luimneach," signifies, and Limerick horses are still famous. To-day she is an important port and industrial centre, with a population of 40,000. A notable feature of her more recent history, too, is her outstanding social progress. A fine city of broad streets that meet at right-angles and are designed on a regular plan, she is one of the earliest instances of good town-planning in the eighteenth century.

Ever since the time of the Corn Laws, Limerick has been a centre of the important grain trade. Her flour-mills supply the greater part of the South-West and the North-West of Ireland. There are also four bacon-curing establishments, in which over 10,000 pigs are slaughtered weekly; a clothing factory, tanneries, foundries, saw-mills, cream and condensed milk factory, and margarine factory. To these Limerick has lately added a new factory for shoes, and another for bolts, etc. Of her lesser industries, the making of Limerick lace is probably the most famous. This delicate and ancient industry is fostered in the local convent of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

As part of her equipment-improving policy, the city has lately acquired a fine new dock, too; and, apart from floating docks, graving dock, etc., has quays almost a mile long on both sides of the river, where vessels drawing 19 feet can come alongside.

In May last the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, Mr. Sean T. O'Kelly, in one day opened the £15,000 new Tuberculosis Hospital on the outskirts of the town, housing 64 patients; opened the new Ophthalmic Hospital, another extension of an existing institution to meet modern demands and conditions; opened the Island

Field scheme of 300 houses, and visited the new dock. Two miles of concrete roads and four miles of tar macadam paths had to be provided for the housing scheme, which indicates its useful extent.

## DOWN THE YEARS

In the late tenth century, the Vikings, sailing fifty miles from the Atlantic up the Shannon's tideway, encamped upon the island (later called King's Island) that splits the river by the rapids of Currageower. For a generation they were the plunderers of all the rich plains south and east. They brought their loot to safety on the hump-backed island around and upon which the Limerick of to-day is built.

Brian, later to be the victor of Clontarf, won an early triumph when he rallied the neighbouring Irish clansmen and sacked the island stronghold. His descendant, Muirccartac, made the island his capital town. He, with Bishop Gilbert, was probably a founder of the Limerick Cathedral of St. Mary's.

Another of Brian's distinguished descendants, Donal Mor, by victories over the native chieftains, made himself King of Thomond, and held his capital, Limerick, until his death. His successors, however, came to terms with the Anglo-Normans, who in 1195 appointed Limerick's first Provost.

King John, in the early years of the twelfth century, visited the Borough of Limerick and gave its first extant charter, started a mint there, and built Thomond Bridge and a castle in the town.

Edward Bruce in 1316 made the town a rallying-place for his allies in Ireland. From time to time the town's fortifications were improved, a town hall was built, and in 1500 a pier was constructed. When the country was rent with the wars of the Earls of Desmond and Reformation troubles Limerick was protected by "King John's Castle, by twenty-four towers upon the walls of the English part of the town, by towers at the several gates of the Irish part, and by the lofty twelve-towered Dromcore Castle,

around which the Irish town centred."

In the sixteenth century it was reported that most of the Limerick houses were of hewn black marble, "built like castles"; that the town walls were of marble, and that the walls of "the Irish town" were ten feet thick. It was well that Limerick was so fortified, however, for her defences had to resist three sieges.

First was the siege of Cromwellian times, when Gaelic chief and Norman noble, who had planned to hold Limerick for the national confederacy, resisted the Protector's lieutenant, Ireton, until defeated by intrigue. Most famous, however, was the unsuccessful assault by King William's troops of twenty thousand men, fresh from the victory of the Boyne. The Duke of Berwick and General Sarsfield, supported by the pick of the Irish army, held it against them, thanks chiefly to Sarsfield's magnificent exploit at Ballyneety, where he blew up the siege train train to the cry of "Sarsfield is the word and Sarsfield is the man."

In 1691 the siege was renewed, and, from the tumult Limerick eventually emerged, to be known as "the city of the violated Treaty," historic fight-point of the "wild geese."

The fighting days of Limerick were for the moment over and she progressed further in the arts of peace. She never lacked great citizens and wise administrators, and a hundred years made a revolutionary change. In 1696 her Mayor lighted the public streets with lamps at his own expense, and in 1717 quays were constructed. In 1760 trade in the area was given a great impetus by the commencement of Shannon navigation and by the making of new roads. The same year saw the end of Limerick's career as a walled garrison town, and to-day few traces remain of the fortifications, except near St. John's Hospital, where are the walls that were breached unsuccessfully by William's soldiers.

In 1766 additional quays were erected on the Abbey River (the narrow arm of the Shannon at this point), and in 1796 what was called "the new town of Limerick" was begun. This constitutes the central part of the Limerick City of to-day.

# U.S. Naval Secretary At Shannon Airport

Because Mr. James V. Forrestal, United States Secretary of the Navy, wished to make a motor tour of part of Ireland, his party, which included Admiral Thomas B. Inglis, of the Navy Department, had to stop at Shannon Airport for four hours last night.

Mr. Forrestal and some of his party went by car on a tour to Clare, Limerick and part of Tipperary. The other members of the party, including Admiral Inglis, Captain John A. Kennedy, U.S. Navy, and Captain Frank Nash, Secretary's Assistants, went to Limerick, where they purchased some Limerick lace at the Good Shepherd Convent. "It is the finest in the world," said Captain Kennedy.

Mr. Forrestal and his party are on the last stage of their round-the-world flight.

## GOODS OF USE AND GOODS OF BEAUTY: CLORTHING

The Irish Times (1921-Current File); Nov 25, 1952;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times (1859-2011) and The Weekly Irish Times (1876-1958)

pg. VI

# GOODS OF USE AND GOODS OF BEAUTY

*Limerick  
Industries*

## CLOTHING

**LIMERICK** has the distinction of having the first ready-made clothing factory in the world.

It was in 1850 that Peter Tait, a Scot, he had come to Limerick in his youth, as a counter hand in Cannock's drapery warehouse (which still flourishes in O'Connell street), got the idea that led to the founding of the industry. At that time Army uniforms were made by hand, by tailors in the town where a regiment happened to be stationed. Tait saw the possibilities of using the recently invented sewing-machines to make army clothing in standard sizes, on a contract basis.

He was the first to introduce the system of sub-division of labour, by training unskilled workers to do one or two simple operations, instead of spending years learning every operation in the making of a suit.

His first factory was in a side street, off William street, where he began to put his ideas into operation in a small way. Later he secured a contract for the supply of uniforms for the British army. The original premises being too small for the job, he took over a disused military barracks at Lord Edward street, and began the erection of additional buildings, which are still in use.

The main workroom, 330 feet long by 100 feet wide, was built on the old barracks square, and at the time of its erection was said to be the largest single roof span in the British Islands. He installed the first power-driven sewing machines in Europe, and within a few years was employing 1,000 workers. John Barran, the founder of the ready-made clothing industry in England, came to Limerick to see the machines working, and to study the methods employed in Tait's factory.

During the American Civil War, Tait became a blockade-runner with three ships which carried Limerick-made uniforms and supplies to the Southern forces, and returned with cargoes of cotton for the making of more uniforms.

On Tait's retirement the business of the factory declined, but it was re-organised in 1890 under the name of the **Limerick Clothing Co. Ltd.**, and quickly came back to vigorous life, and exported army uniforms to all parts of the world.

When the Irish Free State came into being, the factory began to look to this country for its principal market. It produced uniforms for the Army and the Civic Guards, and still continues to do so, as well as for Post Office and railway workers and for Aer Lingus. In the changed circumstances the factory then turned to production for the civilian trade. In 1934 Mr. C. A. Crabtree was appointed managing director, and he em-



Always a centre of food production, Limerick now sends its produce all over Ireland and ..abroad, in tins. The girls in the picture are packing canned peas.

barked on a programme of modernisation, in line with the latest developments in the retail clothing industry.

The factory now employs over 400 workers, the majority of whom are women and girls. In some cases three or four generations of the same family have worked there. There are 230 sewing machines, and 80 or 90 special machines, all electrically driven. The civilian trade has expanded rapidly in the last twenty years, and the factory's products go all over the Republic. All the cloth is of Irish manufacture. To-day the firm is again considering the development of an export trade.

## METAL GOODS

**LIMERICK** has no considerable tradition of metal manufactures. There are, however, two factories, making chiefly nails, which are both of fairly recent origin.

**Irish Wire Products Ltd.**, situated in the Dock road, began operations early in 1937. Before the opening, the machine operators were given a special training in the local Technical School. The works foreman and Mr. John Whelan, of the Technical School engineering section, helped in training the men. A total of about £400,000 has been spent on the plant and factory.

The wire-rod, which is used in the manufacture of nails, staples, screws, etc., is imported mainly

from Britain, Belgium, Germany, and the U.S.A. The firm is not working at full capacity at present, but there are about 84 employees on the pay-roll.

**Shannon Products Ltd.** own a smaller nail factory established in recent years.

## SHOES

**LIMERICK SHOES, LIMITED**, originally **Limerick Shoe & Slipper Works**, situated in Mulgrave street, was registered in 1932, with Irish directors, including the late Mr. Daniel O'Callaghan, as Managing Director.

In the early days, component parts of boots and shoes were brought from England, and the employees were trained to make them up. Since 1934 the whole job has been done in the factory. The uppers are cut from skins of leather mainly produced in Irish factories, and the bottoms procured from leather also tanned in home tanneries. Production is principally ladies' and children's medium quality footwear.

Extensions have been made to the original factory, and recently new offices and a sample room were added, and, from the manager's office, almost the whole factory can be surveyed.

The most modern machinery is used, and additions are made whenever necessary and when improved machines are available.

Materials are also kept to a high standard, thus ensuring good quality footwear.

Normally nearly 300 workpeople are employed, and besides catering for the home trade, considerable quantities of shoes are exported to England, where the products are comparable in price and quality to their counterparts over there.

During the busy seasons, output is up to 7,000 pairs per week.

The present directors are: John Crowe, Mairead Ni Dalaig, Liam O'Ceallacain and Alfred Walker.

## LACE

**THE** world-famous **Limerick lace** has carried the name of the city with it wherever it has gone.

Its production is a highly-skilled craft, which has been carried on by generations of out-workers in their own homes, who are employed by some of the larger drapery firms, such as **William Todd & Co., Ltd.**, and **Cannock & Co., Ltd.** A considerable quantity of lace is also made in the **Good Shepherd Convent**.

One of the difficulties about the trade, which has an export value in the dollar market, is the scarcity of skilled workers, and at the moment an effort is being made to train more workers at a special class in the Technical School. If this is successful, it may well lead to a revival of this old craft of lace-making.

# Best stand at Limerick exhibition

THE £30 AWARD for the best stand at the "Limerick Can Make It" exhibition, at the National Development Association's Centre, 3 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, was presented last night to Captain Gerard O'Gorman Quin, chairman of the winning firm, John Quin and Co. Ltd., wholesale tea, wine and spirit merchants, of Ellen street, Limerick.

The presentation was made by Mr. Denis J. Bernon, general manager of United Dominions Trust (Ireland) Ltd., on behalf of his company. It was vital for the Irish economy, he said, that industry in parts of the country outside Dublin should be encouraged. They must all be kept aware of industrial development in all parts of the country, and such an exhibition as this was one of the best ways this could be done.

Mr. Liam V. Nolan, chairman of the National Development Association, thanked United Dominions Trust (Ireland) Ltd., for their support in the exhibition.

The exhibition is the second in a series on the theme "Progress in the West," and has attracted an average of 500 visitors each day since it opened on May 15th. Firms taking part include manufacturers of food products, furniture, cement, knitwear, chinaware, wrought iron, fashion goods and also Limerick Lace from the Good Shepherd Convent.

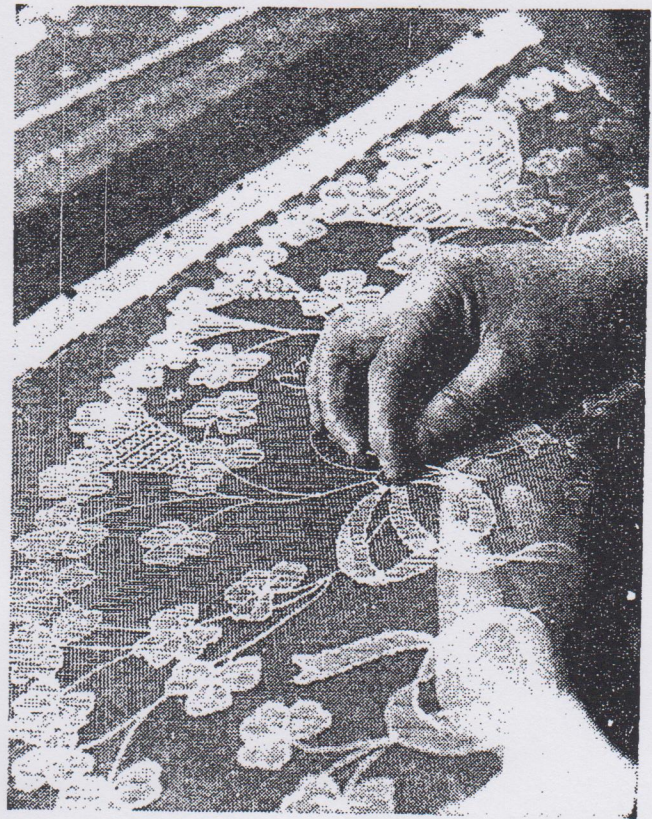
Judges at the exhibition were Mr. Denis Bernon and Mr. Aidan Prior, of Prior Interiors.

# BAD FISHING WEATHER

The Irish Times (1921-Current File); Jul 18, 1970;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times (1859-2011) and The Weekly Irish Times (1876-1958)

pg. 12



Lace making in the Convent of the Good Shepherd,

Limerick. Pictures by Jack McManus.

# BAD FISHING WEATHER

THE WEATHER is playing Old Harry with the fishing. What with drought (these showers mean nothing to the rivers) and the high winds there are many anglers who are browned off, except those cute blokes who go out after dusk to the quiet places and catch the big ones.

The Killala sea angling festival, run in conjunction with the Bailina junket, was blown out, although I did not get news in any detail of what happened. I had nothing whatever from Killybegs and so must assume that the winds around Killala last weekend did not drop before they came to Donegal. If Killybegs was hit, then it was a pity, for the date was changed from August to July to enable competitors to have a go at the top.

Down south, Courtmacsherry had a fine weekend, when three new angling boats were put to the test in a strong south-west wind. Mrs. Chrissy Ryan and her husband, Bill, did well on the Sunday, winning first and second for the heaviest catch — Mrs. Ryan also caught the heaviest single fish, a skate of 137½ lb. Since she could take only one prize, first and second for the heaviest single fish went to Niall O'Sullivan, a local man, and Derek Stukens, of Warrenpoint, Co. Down, who had the heaviest fish on Saturday. And on the Saturday John O'Sullivan, another local man, got the heaviest catch, with Mrs. Ryan second.

There seems a lot of Ryan here, but, for the record, Mrs. Ryan

won the Ryan cup for the best aggregate over two days, with 249½ points; her husband was second with 118 points; John O'Sullivan 3rd, with 104 points, and Derek Stukens 4th, with 93½ points.

The Courtmacsherry club is starting to build a store-shelter, to make the place look a bit shipshape, and is asking approval from the county council to have a general clean up of the pier area. A grand thought in Conservation Year, indeed.

\* \* \*

Lots of us fish for mackerel and fail to find a big one. Not so Jack Horsfield, of Sandycove, Co. Dublin, who caught one of 2 lb. 12½ oz. near the East Pier at Dun Laoghaire this week. It was 20 inches long and 10 inches girth. The record of 3 lb. 6 oz. was set up last year by J. O'Connell at Valentia. Horsfield's fish tops the specimen size by 4½ oz. so he too will be decorated by the specimen fish committee, which always wants to lay hands on the big one that did not get away.

\* \* \*

The men of Inland Fisheries Trust are catching big ones and actually letting them go again. They are tagging fish to see how they will grow and where they may be caught. The species include bass, grey mullet, monkfish, tope, common skate, white skate, undulate ray and painted or small-eyed ray, also sharks.

Three types of tags are being used, not of course on every fish, but anglers should keep an eye out for them — and more than one may be found on a fish.

\* \* \*

One hopes that the good angling reports from Lough Mask — even in the sunshine — keep on being good for the August holiday weekend contest. Mr. John Leonard from Dublin last week had almost 40 trout in the week — biggest 7 lb. He got them dapping the natural grasshopper, always an attractive lure on Mask. I find the wet artificial green grasshopper a useful fly — and it helped an angler named Maharg (reverse for Graham!) to win £100 there.

I hear that anglers from the North are not so numerous around the West this season, so perhaps it behoves us to weigh in with entries to Tony Mulloy, of Ballinrobe, before July 25th. The competition is good value for £5-10s, for boatman, meals and chance of top prize £150.

\* \* \*

This weekend the Irish Shark Club goes into the water off Kinsale for the Irish Shell trophy and other prizes. I hope that more mackerel are around for using as bait than at a recent outing at Kinsale; probably the rising sea temperature will bring them in. Blue sharks are mostly caught in the south, with the porbeagles

OFF

THE

REEF

By George

Burrows



heading up the west coast to around Achill. One of the finest sea sights I ever saw was off Black Rock, Mayo, last autumn, where about a dozen porbeagles were lazing around on top of the water, maybe having a committee meeting. The pity was that night was not far away and the shore at Bullsmouth was still two hours off, so no baited hooks went out to those idlers.

\* \* \*

The dry weather is killing trout in shallow streams and in deeper one too — the Dodder here in Dublin has got another knock around Orwell bridge, and the River Martin, near Blarney, in Cork, has lost most of its trout. Of course, pollution is suspected, not just disease.

An angler back from the West tells me that for a week or so in June it was feared that lots of young trout, making their way to the bigger lakes, were caught in drying-up rivulets and would have been in real danger but that the sky opened and swept everything, even dead wood, into the lakes.

3104

## Blood donors still needed

*The Irish Times* (1921-Current File); Sep 1, 1979;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times (1859-2011) and The Weekly Irish Times (1876-1958)  
pg. 9

# Blood donors still needed

BLOOD donors have been responding to an urgent appeal by the Blood Transfusion Board to come and give blood in the days before the Papal visit. The limitation of movement and other considerations make it necessary for hospitals in city and country to have adequate blood supplies in advance of the coming weekend, according to a board spokesman.

The board had earlier hoped to build up a reserve supply of blood over the past two weeks, but this had not materialised because of a fall-off in attendances at its clinic.

# Corporal for Mass given

A LIMERICK lace corporal, which will be used by the Pope to cover the chalice during the Pontifical High Mass, was presented to the Bishop of Limerick, Dr Jeremiah Newman, yesterday. The lace corporal, which embodies the coat of arms and Papal letter M in Celtic ornamentation, was specially made by Sister Agnes at the Good Shepherd Convent, Limerick. The presentation was made on behalf of Limerick Chamber of Commerce.

5018



## Breathing new life into Limerick lace

Nolan, Anna

*The Irish Times* (1921-Current File); Sep 17, 1987;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times (1859-2011) and The Weekly Irish Times (1876-1958)  
pg. 13

# Breathing new Life into Limerick lace

THE delicate art of making Limerick lace is receiving a revival at the hands of 12 young people from Southill in Limerick. Based in the Tait Business Centre in Limerick — where you are welcome to call and buy, they tell us — they are producing a wide range of handsome items, all of them potential heirlooms.

The range includes a bride's handkerchief for £30, a christening souvenir for £35, centre-pieces from £20, or designs such as Celtic crosses at £45 and sham-rocks at £15. All of the pieces can be mounted and framed for an additional £5.

The group, called the **Southill Connection**, will also make special items on request, from a suitable picture or drawing.

Limerick lace first came to Limerick in 1829, but the making of it declined during the Famine and the industrial revolution. It was revived in the 1880s by Mrs Vere O'Brien, who incorporated flowers into the design, and her

products are said to have been well received at the court of Queen Victoria. But lace went into a decline with the death of Prince Albert and the long mourning period that followed.

The art has been kept alive at the Convent of the Good Shepherd in Limerick. Last year, the members of Southill Connection, under the guidance of the Rev Joe Young, decided to revive some old designs and add the Celtic design. They are helped in this venture by Mrs Dorothy Stewart, a great-granddaughter of Mrs Mills, and lacemaker Ms Rita Costello.

The members of the co-op, all aged between 16 and 24, got a great boost when they won the Craig Gardner Accountancy Advice Award in the Livewire Business Awards Scheme recently.

Anna Nolan

● Lace traces — lacemakers at work in the Tait Business Centre, Limerick.



roduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

3106