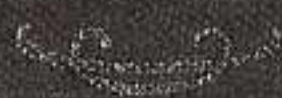


James and George Pain —
Gothic Architects



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Introduction

In Britain and Ireland during the nineteenth century many architects, estate owners and institutions (both secular and ecclesiastical) seeking to communicate a sense of landed power and social status, historical continuity and ancestral right to ownership of land, spiritual worth and nobility of purpose, or simply expressing a reaction against industrialisation and the break-up of traditional landed class structures, erected buildings in a style known as 'Gothic' - this being a revival of a style of architecture characteristic of the High Middle Ages of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries.

The two leading exponents of this Gothic style in Munster in the early nineteenth century were Limerick and Cork based architects James and George Richard Pain. Born in England, the two brothers were articled to leading Regency architect John Nash and first came to Ireland during the second decade of the century, James about 1811 to supervise the building of Lough Cutra Castle near Gort in Co. Galway, a castellated house designed by Nash for Colonel Charles Vereker, Member of Parliament for Limerick City. Following completion of his work for Vereker, James, along with his brother George Richard who arrived in Ireland c1816, went on to establish an extensive fashionable architectural practice of their own in Limerick and Cork - one of their particular specialities being Gothic castellated country houses.

As former pupils of the eminent Nash their acceptance by fashionable landed Society in the Munster was assured. They assiduously cultivated and enjoyed the patronage of the aristocracy and among their major commissions can be counted Dromoland Castle in Co. Clare for Sir Edward O'Brien MP; Mitchelstown Castle, Co. Cork for George King, 3rd Earl of Kingston, and Adare Manor, Co. Limerick for William Henry, 2nd Earl of Dunraven. Their period of prominence was the 1820s and '30s and they were equally capable of carrying out commissions in Greek Revival and Tudor-Gothic as well as the more romantic Picturesque Gothic with which they are historically associated.

Besides being involved in country house architecture, the Pains also designed churches, prisons and courthouses throughout the province and were involved in a number of important civil engineering projects in Limerick including the design of Thomond and Athlunkard Bridges over the river Shannon and Baals Bridge over the Abbey River. A tally of their buildings in the city includes St. Michael's Church in Pery Square; Villiers' Alms Houses on King's Island and Limerick Prison on Mulgrave Street. The brothers also made a significant contribution to the

built heritage of Cork City. A further point of interest is that James Pain was one of the original shareholders in the Pery Square Tontine Company and may have been the principal architect of this Greek Revival style terrace of six houses in Limerick's Pery Square, unquestionably the finest terrace to be erected in the Georgian quarter of the city.

Both brothers continued to live in Ireland for the remainder of their lives, George dying in Cork in 1838 at the early age of 45, while his elder brother died in Limerick in 1877, aged 97, and was laid to rest in the Vereker family vault in St. Mary's Cathedral.¹

It would be impossible within the limits of this thesis to discuss in full the complete body of work undertaken by the Pain brothers. Rather, the intention is to outline their professional careers in the context of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Gothic Revival and the 'Battle of the Styles' that raged between Gothic and Classical during the late Georgian/early Victorian era. For, in order to understand their contribution to Irish architecture we do need to place James and George Pain in their historical architectural context. It is only by examining the origins and political symbolisms of the Georgian Gothic Revival, and explaining why leading members of the British and Anglo-Irish elite developed such a profound emotional attachment to Gothic, that we can fully understand why this Romantic style became such a pronounced feature of the Pain brothers *oeuvre*.

This thesis is the product of the writer's participation as a student in an MA 'Local Studies and Historical Research' course at the University of Limerick. Since James Pain spent over sixty years of his life in Limerick, whereas George Richard lived mostly in Cork, the emphasis will be on the elder brother. Particular attention will be paid to James' early years in Limerick and the social milieu in which he circulated so as to understand the source of the patronage he received.

¹ *Civil Death Record and Church Burial Record of James Pain*, Limerick Archives and Ancestry Office, The Granary, Limerick.

CHAPTER ONE

The Politics of Georgian Gothic

The proliferation of Gothic revivalist architecture in the early nineteenth century, a style with which the Pain brothers were associated, had its roots in a change of cultural taste that began in English landscape design during the previous century when Gothic style came to be considered appropriate for the creation of particular forms of garden buildings to adorn the parklands of country estates.

With the emergence, from the 1730s onwards, of the new 'naturalistic' treatment of the English country park and garden, in which the undulating line expressed the ideal of natural beauty, estate holders sought to create picturesque buildings of modest size that would add to the pleasing vistas of rolling hills, serpentine waters and clumps of carefully planted trees. A style of landscape design that sought, in the words of garden historian James Howley:

'not only to let nature take her true course but also to adorn her with buildings to embellish and thus underline her beauty. The belief was that a natural landscape, no matter how beautiful, could be further enhanced by the addition of a building or structure judiciously placed to represent the presence of civilisation in a balanced and unimposing way. The building could either evoke association through memory or allegory, or simply demonstrate man in harmony with nature.'²

To achieve this effect the fashionable Georgian landowner could choose from a variety of styles to create focal points and inject a sense of discernment and aesthetic taste into the landscape. In the early decades of the eighteenth century small Classical temples were very popular, an example can be seen in the grounds of Dromoland Castle, Co. Clare (Fig. 1); but as the century progressed other features such as mock-medieval ruins, Gothick temples and summer houses came into vogue, as well as a taste for Chinoiserie.

The symbolism associated with these temples, follies and picturesque 'ruins', as with the architecture of the period in general, was not haphazard. Buildings constructed in the Classical style during the first half of the century reflected the then prevailing view that architecture, especially the severely symmetrical Palladian style, represented the triumphs of the Renaissance over medieval

² J. Howley *The Follies and Garden Buildings of Ireland* Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1993. p. 4.

ignorance and expressed the civilising virtues of scientific inquiry, balance and reason – in a word Rationality (Fig. 2). Rationality in thought. Rationality in architecture. In Britain cultural bias against medieval Gothic was so pronounced during the ‘Augustan Age’³ that many intellectuals tended to look back with disapproval on all pre-Reformation English history as savage and uncouth and their greatest insult was to say that someone or something was ‘positively Gothic’. For Augustans, Classical architecture should reign triumphant over the ruins of Gothic medieval barbarism with its associated aspects of irrationality, cruelty and superstition.

Of course, society is always full of complexities and subject to cultural and religious variations and constant political change, and not all those in early eighteenth century intellectual and political circles viewed the medieval period as lacking all virtue and positive symbolism. Foremost among these were a number of Whig oligarchs who saw the English barons of the Middle Ages as the champions of British liberties and founders of Parliamentary rights, for had not the feudal barons not stood up to King John and extracted, at the point of a sword, Magna Carta from a reluctant and tyrannical king. Up until the second half of the eighteenth century the Whigs were an influential and powerful grouping of country aristocrats and mercantile interests who supported the supremacy of Parliament, the Protestant Succession and the constitutional monarchy of the House of Hanover. Beneficiaries of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the expansion overseas of British mercantile trade and influence they were opposed to Absolutist Monarchy and a Jacobite restoration, for they wished to dispose of their fortunes as best they saw fit free of the meddlings of a centralised ‘Sun King’ state.

Prominent among these Whigs was Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham, who, at his landscaped garden park at Stowe, Buckinghamshire created a series of architectural set-pieces in which the use of Classical and Gothick garden buildings expressed, to the initiated, his anti-absolutist policies and defence of Parliamentary rights. Of particular interest is the Gothic Temple (1741) designed by James Gibbs⁴ (Fig. 3).

Originally named the ‘Temple of Liberty’, and built as an intact structure (not as a ruin), it was dedicated to the ‘Liberty of our Ancestors’. In Whig historical mythology the term ‘Gothic Liberty’ referred both to the political institutions of Anglo-Saxon England prior to the Norman invasion, in particular the royal council known as the Witenagemot (meaning ‘a meeting of the wise men’, that advised the Anglo-Saxon kings on policy and was composed of nobles and churchmen) and the Germanic spirit of resistance to tyranny. A spirit and political practice which,

³ Augustan - a period in British cultural history of the late seventeenth/early eighteenth centuries associated with Classically inspired writers and poets who were imitators of Latin poets such as Ovid and Virgil who lived during the reign of Augustus Caesar (27BC-14AD).

⁴ C. Brooks *The Gothic Revival* Phaidon London, 1999. pp. 54-5.

though oppressed by Norman centralisation, was not crushed and came to manifest itself in Magna Carta (1215) and the establishment of an English Parliament during the thirteenth century to restrain the powers of monarchy and maintain the rights of subjects, particularly subjects who happened to be rich and powerful. Royalist power, however, was not to be finally curbed until the parliamentary and military struggles waged against the Crown in the seventeenth century finally bore fruit in the overthrow of James II in 1688 and the establishment of the Hanoverian Succession in 1714. Even then, the defenders of this new political dispensation had to be on guard against French supported Jacobite threats of rebellion and invasion, fears that were not finally laid to rest until the defeat of the '45 Rebellion at Culloden.

The term 'Gothic' is interesting in that it is derived from the fact that Roman, and later historians labelled all the Germanic tribes on the northern borders of the Roman Empire as 'Goths'; Gothic being a synonym for 'barbaric'. However, English Parliamentarians seeking historical precedents in their struggles against the Crown, argued that the Saxons, as Germanic settlers in England, had inherited the love of liberty and freedom believed to have been an ingrained virtue of the tribal life of the Goths, especially as expressed in their resistance to the Roman Empire. The most spectacular example of Gothic resistance took place in 9 A.D. when Arminius, a German chieftain, united various Germanic tribes in opposition to Roman expansionism east of the Rhine, utterly annihilating three Roman legions at the Battle of Teutoburger Wald and preventing Germany from being absorbed into the Empire. Arminius, as a supposed blood ancestor of the Saxons, came to be regarded as virtually an English hero. Interestingly, the Gothic Temple at Stowe bore the inscription 'I Thank God That I Am Not A Roman' to underline Richard Temple's view of himself as a freedom-loving Goth in opposition to Roman Catholicism and Absolutism.⁵

The Gothic Temple at Stowe, however, is not to be counted as the first structure in Britain to be built in the Gothic mode during the Georgian period for the purpose of making a political point. That distinction goes to the Gothic Temple (1716-17) at Shotover Park in Oxfordshire built by James Tyrell to celebrate the establishment of the House of Hanover on the throne of England in 1714 along with the defeat of the Jacobites and the confounding of all their devilish plots and knavish tricks.⁶ Other Gothic structures were built in the course of the eighteenth century, but nevertheless the Gothic Temple at Stowe is the one that particularly stands out in the history of English architecture, for it formed part, an integral part, of a political manifesto argued out in architectural form.

⁵ *ibid.* p. 55.

⁶ *ibid.* pp. 51-2.

Gothic Romance – Gothic Horror

The next logical step for the advance of Gothic architecture was to move from the parklands of noble estates to the mansion house itself. During the mid and latter half of the eighteenth century there arose in England the beginnings of a romantic Gothic movement in which gentleman antiquaries at both local and national level established societies to study ancient monuments, preserve authentic ruins and rebuild houses and churches in a pastiche of medieval Gothic with little attention to architectural accuracy. To cater for this new taste, craftsmen and designers such as Batty Langley and Charles Over published pattern books with titles such as *Ancient Architecture, Restored and Improved* (1742) and *Ornamental Architecture in the Gothic, Chinese and Modern Tastes* (1758) illustrated with Gothic and other detailing for builders to reproduce. Hence, we find features such as battlements, Gothic pointed arches, medieval-style tracery windows, drip mouldings, fan-vaulted ceilings, canopied Gothic niches etc. appearing in the dwellings of the rich and fashionable. Much of this Gothicising work was initially carried out on previously built country houses that were being remodelled and adorned, some quite extensively, with fashionable Gothic.

The first country house to be built virtually from the ground up in this romantic medieval manner was Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill, a small villa at Twickenham near London that Walpole, a Whig MP (from 1741 to 1767), extended over a period from 1753 to 1776 into a crenellated mansion with features such as pointed arch windows, battlemented tower and fan-vaulted ceilings (Fig. 4). Walpole did not design the interiors and exteriors solely on his own for he was fortunate to have the assistance of a group of friends who comprised a 'Committee of Taste'. Built in the middle of a century when first Palladianism and then neo-Classicism were all the rage, Strawberry Hill was to prove a prescient forerunner of country house Gothicism that was to become so very popular in Britain and Ireland throughout much of the following century. Inspired by the ongoing Strawberry Hill experiment a fashion for building Gothic garden fancies spread among Walpole's friends and where once small Grecian temples and neoclassical statues had been the preferred element in a picturesque landscape, fashionable people now built small Gothic summer houses with small leaded panes, or built Gothic ruins.⁷

In Ireland, a number of estate holders also participated in this exciting experimentation and one of the first stirrings of romantic Gothic in this country appeared at Castle Ward in Co. Down. Built c1762, it is a two-faced mansion in which the front façade is in Classical mode with engaged columns, central pediment and all the other typical trappings of a grand eighteenth century country house, while in complete contrast the rear, garden-facing façade is decorated with Gothic detailing such as battlemented parapet, crocketed pinnacles and pointed

⁷ *ibid.* pp. 85-93.

tracery windows. However, Castle Ward, retaining the structural form of a Georgian country mansion, cannot be described as a castellated house⁸ (Fig. 5a & b)).

Gothic garden buildings and eye-catchers were also being built in Ireland on estates and parklands mainly as ruins, one such example being the screen wall (1770s) at Heywood, Co Laois which is punctuated with authentic medieval windows taken from a nearby derelict abbey. (Fig. 6). Nearer home at Castle Oliver in Co. Limerick we have the example of a sham castle ruin consisting of two ruinous looking towers linked by a curtain wall⁹

Whereas the intact Gothic Temple at Stowe expressed a positive political symbolism, the role of a sham medieval ruin set in a picturesque landscape could play a far more melancholy function, enabling those of a philosophical frame of mind to contemplate the various themes of: Beauty threatened by Decay; Strength overwhelmed by Nature; the Fall of Civilisations and the Mortality of all Man's Endeavours. More significantly, the sham Gothic ruin also served the function of associating the estate holder with the hereditary right to own land.

This taste for Gothic decoration and fascination with ruins also coincided with a literary taste for the sensational, the supernatural and the ghoulishly graveyardly; a taste that became labelled 'Gothic'. As well as building Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole is doubly celebrated as the author of *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) which initiated a fashion for the 'Gothic novel', a genre popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and characterised by an atmosphere of mystery and horror located invariably in a pseudo-medieval setting over which reigns a cruel and lascivious tyrant. Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* is full of supernatural and overly melodramatic happenings interspersed with some quite tedious conversations, but the novel is sufficiently short and light enough to provide the modern reader with an easy introduction to the genre. A short description of the novel is not inapposite to this thesis, as the George Richard Pain of this thesis was to later paint in 1831 a striking watercolour of the novel's denouement, such was the enduring impact of Walpole's creation on the romantic imagination. *The Castle of Otranto* features a capricious Sicilian nobleman, Manfred, Prince of Otranto, given to fits of violent passion who is only brought to his senses after inadvertently stabbing to death his own daughter, Matilda, in a case of mistaken identity, for, in a fit of jealous rage he really intended to kill a highly desirable, sexy young lady, Isabella, whom he lusted after, but who fled in terror from his rapacious clutches, and who was to have been his daughter-in-law, that is until his only son and heir, Conrad, had been horribly

⁸ J. O'Brien & D. Guinness *Great Irish Houses and Castles* Wiedenfeld & Nicolson Ltd., London, 1993. pp. 142-7.

⁹ Howley *op. cit.* p 112-3; 109-10.

mangled and crushed to death by a tremendously massive iron helmet that mysteriously fell from the sky and was deliberately dropped onto the poor unsuspecting victim by a revengeful and gigantic ghost called Alfonso who had been foully murdered by the grandfather of the villainous prince . . . the climax of the story comes when the ghost of Alfonso rises high above the castle of Otranto and the walls of the tyrant's fortress come crashing down.¹⁰

The English Gothic novel was further developed by writers such as Ann Radcliffe who wrote *A Sicilian Romance* (1790), *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) whose plots typically featured a virginal heroine who, in the course of her adventures, is trapped at midnight in a bewildering labyrinth of dark castle passages, spiral staircases and dungeons while discovering dark secrets during her nocturnal explorations. Gothic novel settings include castles, monasteries and convents situated in a medieval style social order in which feudal aristos freely indulge in their favourite pastimes of murdering family members and committing incestuous rape. These dark deeds taking place in a foreign lands such as Italy or Sicily where unbridled Latin passions reign and Protestant virtues are absent.

The popularity of the Gothic novel, especially among middle-class females, came at a time of rising prosperity in Britain and a wider appreciation of the civilising effects of culture, taste and polite manners on society. However, as Elizabeth Jenkins remarked in her 1938 biography of Jane Austen:

‘With the impulse natural to the human mind, the period that marked the highest reach of rational elegance in society saw at the same time the reaction towards the fascination with the mysterious past; and people who liked to live in white-panelled rooms lighted with crystal lustres, who admired china in the delicious apple green and rose colour of Sèvres, who had their carriages painted primrose colour or vermilion, and their waistcoats sprigged with rosebuds, derived an agreeable titillation from reading about ruins infested with bats and screech owls, the nodding horror of forest boughs at nightfall, and the discomforts and perils of life in a haunted Gothic fortress.’¹¹

A fascination caricatured in Jane Austen's first mature novel *Northanger Abbey*, written 1798-9, in which the young Catherine Morland, her imagination inspired by her reading of Anne Radcliffe's novels, becomes terribly excited when she is

¹⁰ Horace Walpole *The Castle of Otranto* Penguin, 1968.

¹¹ E. Jenkins *Jane Austen* Sphere Books, 1973. p. 70. Originally published by Victor Gollancz Ltd., in 1938.

invited to stay as a guest of the Tilneys at their country home, Northanger Abbey: 'Her passion for ancient edifices was next in degree to her passion for Henry Tilney . . . Northanger . . . It's long, damp passages, its narrow cells and ruined chapel, were to be within her daily reach, and she could not entirely subdue the hope of some traditional legends, some awful memorials of an injured and ill-fated nun.'¹² The lure of horror, for Miss Morland, being placed on the same exquisite level as sexual lure.

English Gothic - A Patriotic Style

By the 1790s, therefore, a considerable amount of interest in the romance of the Gothic past had been generated through literature, antiquarian studies and architectural experimentation as to lay the basis for the next phase in the Gothic Revival. Towards the turn of the century Gothic became increasingly acceptable in Britain and Ireland as an architectural style among wealthy estate holders, not only for whimsical buildings of small scale and dilettantish make-overs, but also for new country houses of a substantial size incorporating the characteristics of a medieval castle. For, at the time of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, a new accretion of meaning became attached to the Gothic Revivalist style. It came to represent the stability of a monarchical and aristocratic social order standing firm against the threat of social revolution and violent disinheritance posed by the Jacobin mob and French expansionism.

Essentially, two different stylistic approaches to the building of castellated houses had emerged by this stage, the Picturesque and the Sublime. Those built in the Picturesque manner, the majority, were asymmetrical in design, the exterior massing being irregular with battlemented and machicolated towers of diverse heights, sizes and shapes (round, square, octagonal) linked by battlemented ranges of various lengths; the ranges being one, two or three stories high. Slender little turrets rose over the entire composition making the exterior massing ever more irregular and asymmetrical, and as one walked around the building the pictorial composition was ever changing, no two perspectives being identical. The eye of the beholder was foremost in the mind's eye of the designer as on his drawing board he assembled, rearranged, resized and shuffled around the various architectural elements until he achieved the aesthetic, picturesque effect he desired. Key to the success of the overall design was the landscape in which the building was to be set, the more picture painterly the surrounding countryside the better – Nature and Artifice working together in harmony to create a pleasing effect. Sublime Gothic, on the other hand, took a far less subtle approach with its emphasis on massive size, towering height, stern appearance and regularity of design to achieve its primary effect of projecting a sense of social power and authority onto the outside

¹² Jane Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chap. 17, Penguin Classics edition, 1995. pp. 124-5.

world. Both stylistic approaches taking inspiration from the many authentic medieval castles to be found throughout Britain, one of the most romantic being the fourteenth century Bodiam Castle in Sussex. Set within a large, pretty moat, its elegance of design casts a spell over the imagination (Fig. 7).

The identification of Gothic style with a sense of being patriotically English, or British, had, of course, been well established by this time due to the strong historical associations between the medieval past and the foundations of English political liberties. Gothic architecture had come to be regarded as a distinctive British style and, in truth, it was only in Britain and neighbouring Ireland that the Gothic Revivalist style took firm root and seriously challenged the supremacy of Classicism that was all so dominant in western Europe, especially in France. During Britain's long conflict with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France from 1793 to 1815, to build in Gothic was to express one's nationality and patriotism. In 1796, for example, work commenced on the fantastical Fonthill Abbey in Wiltshire (Fig. 8); a Gothic palace built under the instructions of William Beckford who had inherited a huge fortune largely based on slave sugar plantations in the West Indies, sugar islands over which the British and French fought in the 1790s and where thousands of soldiers died, mainly of disease. Like Walpole, Beckford was a Gothic novelist, publishing *Vathek* in 1786. The central tower at Fonthill was massively and stupendously Gothic, but the architect and masons lacked the skill of their medieval forefathers and the overweening tower collapsed into ruins in 1825.¹³

There were, of course, many reasons why people were drawn to Gothic, not all of them overtly or consciously political. For there were those who felt that the rigidities of Classicism, with its overly defined rules and 'orders', imposed too much discipline on artistic style - in the process stifling imagination, individuality and self-expression. The Palladian mansion and the urban Georgian terrace may represent social order, civilisation, regularity and proportion for the prospering bourgeoisie, but there is only so much that can be built in that manner before the eye gets weary and the soul revolts and yearns for something more adventurous. That was one of the reasons why Horace Walpole and others turned to Gothic, it was an escape from the humdrum, the conventional and the ordinary and gave flight to imagination and eccentricity. The artistic soul must soar above the Aonian Mount or else fall crashing to the ground and in Gothic adventurous architects and their wealthy patrons found the extraordinary. English Gothic became part of a broader European artistic and intellectual movement that developed from the 1790s onwards that became known as Romanticism; a movement in revolt against Classicism. A movement concerned with feelings and emotions, individualism, the picturesque, the asymmetrical, the awe and grandeur of Nature as a healthy emotive response to the rigidities of Greco-Roman symmetrical form with its emphasis on what constitutes 'correct' aesthetic proportion.

¹³ Brooks *op. cit.* pp. 155-7.

From 1800 the neo-Gothic style also began to be popular with Irish estate owners who, in search of the romantic and a sense of identity, added turrets and battlements onto existing houses to create the illusion of a castle, or else engaged the services of a fashionable architect to build a castellated mansion from the ground up. The first major country house in Ireland to be built completely in the new style was Charleville Castle in Co. Offaly (Fig. 9). Designed in 1801 by architect Francis Johnson for Viscount Charleville, it proved highly influential in popularising Gothic among the Anglo-Irish. Begun just three years after the 1798 Rebellion, Charleville Castle, built as a high, square, crenellated block, is heavy in construction and defensive in appearance. With its stepped battlements, narrow entrance gate overhung by a massive corbelled arch and its heavily machicolated octagonal tower, narrow lights and smallish stone mullioned windows, Charleville has the appearance of a Sublime fortress and, although usually described as a 'toy fort', the masonry gives Charleville a cold, suspicious air. A high, slender tower stands 125 feet above ground level surmounting a round corner turret, and one can well imagine a trusty man-at-arms peering over the battlements of the watchtower keeping a wary eye on the restless natives.¹⁴

¹⁴ D. Scott Richardson *Gothic Revival Architecture in Ireland* Vol. I, Garland Publishing Inc., New York and London, 1983. pp. 119-23.

CHAPTER TWO

ESTABLISHING AN ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE 1811-19

One of the leading architects of the Regency period was John Nash (1752-1835), best remembered for his great architectural achievements such as Brighton Pavilion, the transformation of Buckingham House into Buckingham Palace and his town planning designs for London involving the lay-out of the capital city's West End, work that included the elegant white plastered terraces facing Regent's Park. Nash was also instrumental in the rise of Gothic taste among England's elite, building his own castellated mansion, East Cowes Castle (1798) on the Isle of Wight and carrying out Gothic commissions for patrons who wanted a touch of the romantic in their lives. Nor was he overlooked by the landed wealth of Ireland; in the early years of the nineteenth century the name of Nash is associated with the design of four Irish Gothic houses: Stanbally in Co. Tipperary; Kilwaughter, Co. Antrim; Killymoon, Co. Tyrone and Lough Cutra in Co. Galway¹⁵ - the latter designed for Colonel Charles Vereker, MP for Limerick City who became 2nd Lord Gort in 1817. Despite the amount of work that Nash carried out in Gothic, and the number of lucrative castellated commissions he earned, it seems that 'Feudal' may not have been his style of first choice, for he was reputed to have once said, 'I hate this Gothic style, one window costs more trouble to design than two houses'¹⁶ However, despite this alleged remark, Nash was the premier architect of Picturesque Gothic practicing in Britain at this time, for he had a remarkable eye for pictorial composition - his design for Luscombe Castle (1799) in Devon amply illustrating this quality (Fig.10).

But regardless of preferences, architects must learn to please their patrons and Nash was certainly flexible in serving both the dictates of fashion as well as catering for more traditional tastes. As proof, Nash's other Irish commissions included three, at least, Classical style houses (one being Rockingham House in Co. Roscommon)¹⁷, and his design work in this island may have also included the Swiss Cottage near Cahir in Co. Tipperary, a superb example of *cottage orné* designed for Richard and Emily Butler, Lord and Lady Cahir, and restored in the mid-1980s with the assistance of the Irish Georgian Society. But with the commencement of his work

¹⁵ T. Davis 'John Nash in Ireland' *Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society* Vol. VIII, No. 2, April-June 1965.

¹⁶ Quoted in K. Clark *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste* John Murray, London, 1962.

¹⁷ Davis *op. cit.*

in 1811 for the Prince Regent in laying out London's West End, it proved impossible for Nash to exercise any personal control over his Irish projects. He therefore recommended to Col. Vereker that James Pain, one of his assistants, oversee the building of Lough Cutra. A surviving architectural drawing by John Nash of the front elevation of Lough Cutra is signed and dated October 1811 and it is generally accepted that construction work began about that time¹⁸ (Fig 11). If so, very probably, James came to Ireland that year or very shortly after. We certainly know that he had become professionally established in Ireland by 1813 for he submitted drawings to Sir Edward O'Brien for the proposed rebuilding of Dromoland House, drawings that were signed and dated 'James Pain/ July 31 1813'.¹⁹

James Pain and his brother George Richard, who later joined James in Ireland to act as his assistant, were born into a family of builders and architects, James c.1780 at Isleworth in Middlesex and George c.1793 in London. It can be justly said that they were well and truly bred to the profession. Their grandfather, William Pain, who described himself as 'an architect and joiner' and 'architect and carpenter', was the author of at least twelve pattern books published during the second half of the eighteenth century with titles such as *The Practical House Carpenter* (1789) and *The Builder's Pocket Treasure; or Palladio Delineated and Explained* (1763).²⁰ In at least one of these publications he was assisted by his son James,²¹ a builder and surveyor by profession who, in turn, was father to at least six male children including the James and George of this thesis who both became pupils of John Nash. How effectively the two brothers assimilated Gothic while working with Nash, and at the same time gaining an easy familiarity with Classical, can be seen in their subsequent work in Ireland.

¹⁸ The drawing is reproduced in D. Guinness & W. Ryan *Irish Houses and Castles* Thames & Hudson Ltd., London, 1971. p. 176; M. Bence-Jones *A Guide to Irish Country Houses* Constable, London, 1982, 2nd Revised Edition, 1999. p. 192.

¹⁹ Dromoland Castle Album, see Richardson *op. cit.* p. 132.

²⁰ H. Colvin *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* Third Edition, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 1995.

²¹ This James Pain is not to be confused with the celebrated James Paine, spelt with an 'e' (1717-89), the well-known English architect involved in a large number of country house commissions, including Chatsworth, Kedleston and Alnwick Castle, as well as major projects such as Middlesex Bridge (1771-7) and Middlesex Hospital (1755-78). James Paine was commissioned in the 1750s by Tyneside coal baron John Burdon to layout a 40-acre landscape garden at Hardwick Park, Co. Durham featuring a 17-acre lake and an extraordinary collection of follies and garden buildings. These included grottoes, Classical temples and a *bono retiro*, a Gothic retreat for select visitors (*The Guardian* 5 May 2003).

Precisely when they came to this country we cannot quite be certain, but as regards James it cannot have been long after October 1811, the month Nash drew up elevational drawings of Lough Cutra for Vereker's approval. Prior to coming to Ireland it is possible that James was assisting Nash in his London office, drawing up plans for the development of the West End, plans that were submitted to the Prince Regent in 1811. As stated above, James was certainly in Ireland by 31 July 1813 when his signature appears on drawings he submitted to Sir Edward O'Brien, and one can only assume that James would have had to have been in Ireland for a year or so previously to enable him to 'press the flesh' and work the circuit of Vereker's wealthy and influential friends before being invited to submit a proposal to Sir Edward.

James' brother George Richard arrived in Ireland a little later than James, maybe even several years later, for he was only eighteen in 1811 and still serving his time with Nash. The date of George's arrival in Ireland is vague and it is difficult to know precisely what projects we can jointly attribute to both brothers in those early years, and which ones were the sole responsibility of the elder. It does seem, however, that George Richard was still in England in 1814, for he exhibited at the Royal Academy that year and gave a London address: 1 Diana Place, New Road, London. (In 1812 the Royal Society of Arts archives recorded his address as 'Dixon's Place, New Road, London'). He regularly exhibited architectural designs at the Academy between 1810 and 1814 and was awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Arts in 1812 for the 'an original design of a Gothick church' and the Silver Medal in 1813 for 'a design for a gothic palace'. He also painted topographical and subject paintings and his view of Henry VIII's Chapel at Westminster was shown at the Academy in 1813.²² It is probable that George Richard moved to Ireland sometime after 1814. He was certainly resident here by 1816, at the very latest, for reference is made to him in the Limerick Corporation minutes for 29 January 1817 on the occasion that he was conferred with the Freedom of the City.²³ George Richard's undoubted skill with architect's pen and artist's brush stood the brothers' architectural partnership in good stead over the following years, for according to an article in a 1911 edition of *The Builder*, it was tradition that 'James was the better at planning, and more the man of affairs, whereas George was the draughtsman and designed the elevations.'²⁴ George Richard's skill as a watercolourist is further indicated by two paintings he exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1832: his *Destruction of the Castle of Otranto*

²² For biographical notes on G. R. Pain see A. M. Rowan 'George Richard Pain' *Index of Irish Architects* Irish Architectural Archive, Merrion Square, Dublin.

²³ *Limerick Corporation Minute Book* 29 January 1817, Limerick Archive and Ancestry Office, The Granary, Limerick.

²⁴ *The Builder* 23 June 1911. p. 772.

depicts the collapse of Horace Walpole's massive Gothic fortress, while *Caius Marcius at the Ruins of Carthage* has a Classical architectural theme on an epic scale.²⁵

CORRUPT CORPORATION

James' first patron in Ireland was the very same dashing Col. Charles Vereker (Fig. 12) who had distinguished himself at the Battle of Collooney in Co. Sligo when he led the Limerick City Militia into battle against General Humbert's French expeditionary force on 5 September 1798. Vereker, as the sitting MP for Limerick City, was a powerful figure in Limerick politics in conjunction with his power-broking uncle, John Prendergast Smyth. Members of the Smyth/Vereker family exercised dominant control over the 'Corrupt Corporation', a conservative Ascendancy clique that controlled the city's parliamentary seat by rotten borough methods whereby many of the city's leading merchants, traders and artisans were excluded from exercising the franchise, while at the same time the electoral roll was stacked in favour of the 'Clique of Corruption'.

At that time in the city's history only males over the age of 21 and formally registered as Freeman of the City were permitted to vote and it had been customary since the mid-eighteenth century for the faction in control of the Corporation's Common Council to grant this privilege predominantly to politically reliable friends and acquaintances, many of them non-residents of the city. This ploy was used in order to keep those Limerick voters opposed to the political and financial misdeeds of the Corporation in a permanent electoral minority.

It is difficult today to imagine the extent of the power and patronage that John Prendergast Smyth, Col. Vereker and their close family relatives exercised in Limerick at that period, but a quick look at the levers of power held in the hands of both Vereker and his uncle will prove instructive.²⁶ For it gives some idea of the social milieu within which the Pain brothers, especially James, 'the man of affairs', had to circulate in order to establish a reputation and gain patronage, especially during his early years in Ireland.

The grip that the Smyth/Vereker clan had on the political life of Limerick extended back into the eighteenth century. Prior to the Act of Union of 1800 two representatives for Limerick City sat in the Dublin Parliament and one of these seats had been held continuously since 1731 by a member of the Smyth family.

²⁵ A. Crookshank & Knight of Glin *The Watercolours of Ireland* Barrie and Jenkins, London, 1994. p. 107.

²⁶ The following information on the Smyth-Vereker family is taken from M. Lenihan's *Limerick; Its History and Antiquities* 1866, Republished by Mercier Press, ed. Cian O'Carroll, Dublin and Cork, 1991.

Charles Smyth was MP for 45 years until 1776 when his son, Thomas Smyth, took over. When Thomas died in 1785 his brother, John Prendergast Smyth, inherited the position. In 1790 both J. P. Smyth and his nephew Charles Vereker were both returned as Members of Parliament for Limerick. Charles Vereker was the son of Thomas Vereker of Roxborough and Julia Smyth, a daughter of Charles Smyth and sister to J. P.

Following the Act of Union the city was allowed to return just one member to the Westminster Parliament and Charles Vereker held this position from 1802 to 1817, winning five elections in a row thanks to the assistance of the ever obliging non-resident voters. During this period J. P. Smyth was elevated to the titled ranks of Society as firstly Baron Kiltarton of Gort in 1810 (at which stage he gave his Lough Cutra property to Charles Vereker) and then 1st Viscount Gort in 1816. He died the following year and Vereker inherited the title from his uncle, as 2nd Viscount Gort. Elevated to the peerage, Vereker was obliged to surrender his seat in the House of Commons. Fortunately, his son, John Prendergast Vereker was on hand to fill the breach, winning the prize in the subsequent by-election held in July 1817. The seat remaining family property until the celebrated election of 1820 when it was lost to Thomas Spring Rice following a decision by the Westminster Parliament to disallow the votes of non-residents. On the first poll J. P. Vereker had won the election, but when the votes of the non-residents were taken out of the equation following an appeal to Parliament by Spring Rice the result was overturned. This signaled the beginning of the end for the Corrupt Corporation, but it was not until the municipal reform act of 1840 that the Corrupt Corporation was finally routed, the clique controlled by the 2nd Viscount Gort fighting a stubborn rearguard action all the way.

Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun and the Smyth-Verekers were certainly willing to exercise control over locally recruited militia units. In February 1776, with the onset of the American War of Independence and the withdrawal of regular army units from Ireland, Thomas Smyth MP formed the Limerick Union, a militia corps consisting of a troop of cavalry and a company of infantry recruited from the leading Protestant citizens of the city. Their function was to maintain law and order in the city and protect property rights. Two years later the Limerick Union amalgamated with another militia unit known as the Friendly Knot to form the Loyal Limerick Volunteers of which Thomas Smyth was Colonel. Another Volunteer unit in the city, the Limerick Independents, was founded by his brother, John Prendergast Smyth.

Once Britain found itself at war with Revolutionary France in 1793 a Militia Act was introduced in Ireland forming battalion-sized units in each separate county and major city in the country. J. P. Smyth MP was appointed as Colonel Commandant of the Limerick City Regiment of Militia by the Lord Lieutenant, while his nephew Charles Vereker MP was appointed Major. Shortly afterwards, Vereker was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel of the Regiment and in October 1793 a relative,

Major Charles Smyth, became Adjutant. The regimental rolls record that several other members of the Vereker family also served in the unit over the following years, including John Prendergast Vereker, Charles' son and political heir.

At a local political level the Smyths had exercised a powerful role in Limerick Corporation since the mid-eighteenth century, the role of 'city boss' being passed from relative to relative along with the inherited transfer of the parliamentary seat. The methods by which the Smyth-Verekers maintained their power and distributed patronage among their supporters earned the Council the well-deserved epithet 'Corrupt Corporation' among political opponents. The Corporation's decision-making body, the Common Council, was a self-perpetuating clique whose members, the burgesses, had absolutely no electoral mandate. New members were simply co-opted onto the Council for life by the sitting burgesses who gave the public no prior notice that a co-option was to take place. Decisions relating to the appointment of salaried office holders and the election of mayors were, almost without exception, taken unanimously by the Council.

This was the body that had the power to confer the Freedom of the City onto Borough citizens and non-residents alike. This privilege was granted wholesale to cronies and the politically reliable, especially when parliamentary elections were due, and on one occasion, 29 January 1817, a list of 146 new Freemen was passed. An analysis of the list reveals the umbilical link between patronage and duties owed, for of the 146 names, twenty-nine were non-commissioned officers in the Vereker controlled Limerick City Militia. Another twenty-five Freemen were living in Gort Co. Galway, many of them tradesmen - carpenters, shoemakers and cabinet-makers - as well as a number of shopkeepers, innkeepers and minor gentry. It is no co-incidence that Gort was the nearest town to Col. Charles Vereker's country seat at Lough Cutra. A further four names on the list were salaried Corporation appointees, either Serjeants at Mace or collectors of Port dues, and, in addition, some eleven Freemen were sons of burgesses, including three sons of the sitting Mayor, John Vereker, brother of Charles.²⁷

Nepotism was rampant, with plumb jobs going to members of the Smyth-Vereker family and others within the Golden Circle. For instance, the lucrative position of Weigh Master had been given to John Vereker, brother of Charles, on 5 April 1811 when his uncle, John Prendergast Smyth was Corporation boss with the title of Chamberlain.²⁸ (As the person who acted as the treasurer of the Common Council, the Chamberlain controlled the purse strings of the Corporation.) The duties of Weigh Master, a lifetime appointment, were to weigh the butter and corn presented for sale at the city markets and collect fees for so doing. The job was a sinecure, the actual work being carried out by paid deputies, with the Weigh Master keeping the profits of the office after deducting annual expenses amounting to about £250/300.

²⁷ *Minutes of Limerick Common Council* 29 January 1817.

²⁸ *ibid.* 5/4/1811.

According to the Report of a Parliamentary inquiry held in the city in 1833 to investigate the dubious workings of Limerick Corporation, the average yearly income John Vereker received during the period 1827-9 from, 'the fees of the butter crane was £1,470'.²⁹ Another example of low politics in provincial places also concerns John Vereker who was appointed Mayor of Limerick in June of 1815 with an annual salary of £365; an office he retained for three years until 29 June 1818 on which date the Common Council very kindly increased his salary to £500 a year, backdated to 1815.³⁰

At the time of the arrival of the Pain brothers in Ireland Col. Charles Vereker also held the post of Foreman of the City Grand Jury, a body predominantly composed of members and supporters of the Common Council and, with a few exceptions, confined to Protestants.³¹ The function of the Grand Jury was to levy a rate on local property owners living within the city boundaries and allocate funds for various public institutions and infrastructural projects. Its orbit included the building and maintenance of prisons, 'lunatic' asylums, roads, bridges etc., and the awarding of contracts. Vereker remained Foreman of the City Grand Jury until his elevation to the peerage in 1817 when his son took over the position, naturally.

James Pain had certainly landed on his feet when he came to be acquainted with Col. Charles Vereker, a man of influence with many valuable social and political connections who could open up doors for an ambitious architect who sought both public commissions and the private patronage of Society.

Lough Cutra Castle

Given his background, what better man than Col. Charles Vereker to own a Gothic Castle! Overlooking a lake in south Co. Galway, Nash's design was quite simple in plan and fairly modest in scale, consisting of just one round, one square and two octagonal towers linked by low battlemented ranges (Fig. 14). It was similar to Nash's own East Cowes Castle, since demolished, on the Isle of Wight, which Vereker had visited and admired. With its large, bright windows and neat proportions it is far more elegant in appearance than Francis Johnson's Charleville

²⁹ 'Report on the County of the City of Limerick: Sections 102-3' *Reports from Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in Ireland* British Parliamentary Papers, 1835.

³⁰ *Minutes of Limerick Common Council* 29/6/1818.

³¹ 'Report on the County of the city of Limerick: Section 119' *Reports from Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in Ireland* British Parliamentary Papers, 1825.

Castle, which seems rather crude by comparison. At the same time Lough Cutra also manages to exude robustness and military solidity so that all the elements of a well-designed early nineteenth century Gothic dwelling are represented in the overall composition: a sense of it being a superior, comfortable mansion for a gentleman of substance; a sense of power and strength; a sense of historical continuity; a sense of Gothic romance; a sense of the dramatic; a sense of the Picturesque. All expressed and combined in Nash's design.

The crenellated house relies for its Picturesque charm on its lakeside setting. Set on a rise overlooking the Lough, the mansion, which strands on a terrace to resolve the problem of a sloping site, has no need to rely on a mountain of masonry piled high stone upon stone to achieve elevation and express social status. Vereker had been born to command, a natural leader of men who, as a youth, had served as an adventurous midshipman on a Royal Navy fighting ship in time of war; a warrior who led the Limerick City Militia into battle against French invaders in 1798; a city political boss who disdained the clamorous whinging and whining of liberals seeking Catholic rights and reform in Limerick politics. Such a man had no need of vulgar, extravagant architectural displays to puff himself up, extravagant displays that ruined less sensible men. James Pain in his work on Lough Cutra Castle used the best of materials and the interior Gothic plaster work is finely done, avoiding the ponderous detailing that is associated with Gothic style; the finished structure fully justifying Nash's choice of James as supervisor of the project.³²

Shortly after arriving in Ireland James joined the Freemasons as an Entered Apprentice, being initiated into the Ancient Union Lodge No. 13 Limerick, on 3 August 1813.³³ From this, we can with safety state that James was resident in the city at that time. Established in November 1732, No 13 is one of the oldest Masonic Lodges in Ireland. It still functions, or 'works', to this day. James was to be in well-connected company, for some of the most prominent men in the city and county were, or were to become, Masons in the same Lodge, including Henry Watson, proprietor of *The Limerick Chronicle*; James Spaight, merchant; Michael Furnell, High Sheriff of County Limerick, as were various members of the influential Barrington, Maunsell and Vereker families, along with many other leading citizens. In 1824 he registered as a member of Lodge 95, Cork, and about 1864 he served as Provincial Grand Senior Deacon of the Province of Munster. When the aged architect died in 1877 *The Limerick Chronicle* described the

³² Richardson *op. cit.* pp.126-8; Guinness & Ryan *op. cit.* p. 176; M. Bence-Jones *op. cit.* p. 192.

³³ Scroll of Membership of Lodge 13 in possession of the Limerick Freemasons. The surname was spelt 'Paine'. However, according to the archives of the Grand Lodge of Freemasons in Ireland he was registered as a member of the Lodge on 21 March 1814.

deceased as, 'an old and much esteemed member of the Masonic body.'³⁴ At some stage during his progress through the various orders and degrees associated with the Masonic fraternity James Pain was conferred with the title 'Provincial Grand Architect'.

Whether or not his Masonic contacts proved beneficial to his professional career we know not, but in the pursuit of making friends and influencing people we can safely assume that membership of the Freemasons proved no disadvantage in the social milieu in which James circulated.

As well as being given responsibility by John Nash for overseeing the Lough Cutra project, it is highly likely that James was entrusted with other of Nash's Irish commissions. In an obituary of James Pain that appeared in *The Irish Builder* shortly after his death, and signed W. F. (probably William Fogerty, a Limerick architect who would have known James personally), it is stated that he was sent to Ireland by Nash, 'to superintend some important works.'³⁵ Some evidence for this is to be found amidst Maurice Lenihan's voluminous footnotes in his *Limerick; Its History and Antiquities* where he states that the plans for the new City Gaol, which the City Grand Jury had decided at the Spring Assizes of 1811 should be built at a cost of £6,123 .. 4s .. 6d, were 'perfected by Mr. Nash, Architect, and the place selected was the Dean's close, near the Cathedral of St. Mary's in Bow Lane.' Lenihan further notes that on 13 March 1814 an engine to supply water to the new Gaol was, 'put up . . . by Mr. Paine, architect, the builder of the city gaol'; the prison being completed in the latter part of November 1813.³⁶ The Deane's Close, also known as the Deanery Yard, was the old site of the Dean of St Mary's house and garden; this area being bounded on its four sides by Crosbie Row, Bow Lane, part of the old city town wall facing the Shannon, and Brewery Lane (a continuation of present-day Newgate Lane).³⁷ Presumably Nash drew up the plans for the prison when he was in the Limerick/Clare area working on the design of Lough Cutra for Col. Charles Vereker who was Foreman of the Limerick City Grand Jury. The site of Nash's prison is now occupied by Limerick Civic Offices and the buildings associated with the City Gaol have since been demolished. However, most of the facade of the original structure facing onto Crosbie Row, with its pedimented entrance, has been retained in the design of the Civic Offices (Fig. 15). So, the hand of genius of John Nash, the man who designed Brighton Pavilion, Regent's Street and Buckingham Palace, once touched Limerick.

³⁴ *Limerick Chronicle* 15 December 1877; Biographical notes on James Pain in Rowan *op. cit.*

³⁵ *The Irish Builder* 1 January 1878.

³⁶ Lenihan *op. cit.* pp. 428; 428 n2; 431 n.

³⁷ *A Ground Plan of the Deanery Yard and Adjacent Strand, 25 March 1788* Limerick Museum (LM 0000.1906); *A Map of the City of Limerick Based on the Civil Survey 1654* drawn by Claire Lane, 1989 Limerick Museum.

Besides working for Nash, James Pain was anxious to establish his own reputation as an architect and one of the first signs of him striking out for independence came in the summer of 1813 when he submitted drawings dated 'July 13 1813' to Sir Edward O'Brien M.P. whose seat was Dromoland House. Dromoland being an early eighteenth century mansion that stood near Newmarket-on-Fergus in Co. Clare. Sir Edward was actively considering the possibility of replacing this house with a more modern structure and Col. Vereker M.P. may very well have introduced his fellow M.P. to the eager-to-please architect, recommending the Englishman highly on the basis of his work at Lough Cutra. Pain's initial Dromoland proposal was not Gothic in design and involved retaining part of the old house. It was by no means the only architectural proposal received by Sir Edward during this period, for architect Thomas Hopper also submitted drawings, as did Richard and William N. Morrison³⁸ (Fig. 16). It was not until 1819 that Sir Edward finally made up his mind on the various proposals that had been submitted to him during the years 1812-19, including a second Pain submission.

In the meantime James, and later his brother, had to take whatever work was available until a prestigious project came their way. In 1814 James surveyed Limerick City's ancient Thomond Bridge, believed to have dated from the thirteenth century, and on 13 September drew up a plan and elevation of the old bridge and a sketch of its proposed replacement. In a discussion on Pain's proposal Judith Hill writes that he, 'discovered that he could design a new bridge using the foundations of the old; using contemporary stone-building technology he doubled the span of the original arches'³⁹ (Fig. 17). Over 20 years were to elapse before James would eventually be commissioned in 1837 to rebuild Thomond Bridge.

James is believed to have been associated with the Classical remodelling of Mount Shannon (near Castleconnell in Co. Limerick) for John Fitzgibbon, 2nd Earl of Clare. These alterations included the construction of an imposing Ionic portico that served as a porte-cochere for the mansion. Work commenced c1813 to the specifications of architect Lewis Wyatt and, according to Bence-Jones, James Pain worked at Mount Shannon, 'either supervising the remodelling according to Wyatt's design, or carrying out subsequent alterations.'⁴⁰ Now a highly photogenic ruin, Mount Shannon possesses all the romantic beauty one associates with a Picturesque ruin and if one should have the need or desire to muse on the ultimate futility of Humanity's endeavours, then Mount Shannon, set on a gentle rise, offers a splendid contemplative view (Fig. 18).

³⁸ For discussion on these various proposals see Richardson *op. cit.* pp. 128-39.

³⁹ For 1814 drawings see *Journal of the North Munster Archaeological Society* 1909-11; Judith Hill *The Building of Limerick* The Mercier Press, Cork, 1991. p. 147.

⁴⁰ Bence-Jones *op. cit.* p. 216.

During his early endeavours to establish a practice in Ireland James received work from Limerick Corporation, the Common Council's manuscript minutes for 21 April 1815 recording that the Committee of Accounts⁴¹ had authorised a payment to him of £423 .. 17 shillings.. and 5 pence for sundry repairs and alterations to the Exchange on Nicholas Street where the Corporation had its offices and meeting rooms.⁴² He was quite fortunate to receive such a commission, for scrutiny of the accounts for the period 1812-22 reveals that the Corporation very rarely spent money maintaining the buildings and infrastructure of those areas of the city for which it was responsible, viz. Englishtown and Irishtown, which were in sore need of repair and attention. Seven months later, in November 1815, James was in receipt of minor amounts of money from Limerick Corporation for work undertaken on the new Corn Market. The relevant passages stating that 'James Payne' [sic.] was to be paid £9..13s..0d for having, '... slated the new Corn market and weather slated the Parapet wall,' and an additional £8..0s...8d for 'pointing the Parapet inside and outside in July 1815 ...'. There is no mention of George Pain in these Corporation accounts.⁴³ Four years later, in June 1819, £182 ..1s and 2½ d was paid to 'Messrs. Pain' for further repairs on the Exchange.⁴⁴

Church Building

Evidence of James Pain's early involvement in ecclesiastical architecture is to be found in the vestry minutes of Kilnasoolagh Church of Ireland at Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare, which notes that he was appointed by the parish to rebuild the church.⁴⁵ This was the church at which the O'Briens of Dromoland worshipped; so, James's acquaintance with Sir Edward O'Brien was not without some initial gain. Another of James' early Church of Ireland commissions was in 1817 in Drumcliff parish, Co. Clare when the church was in need of renovation after being struck by lightning.⁴⁶

It is very likely that it was during this period that James also supervised the construction of St. Paul's Church of Ireland in Cahir, Co. Tipperary, a building that had been designed by John Nash, probably during his stay in Ireland in 1810. The earliest known documented report of Nash's work in Cahir dates from 1837 when

⁴¹ The Committee of Accounts was appointed by the Common Council, but it had no control over the Chamberlain's accounts which remained a closely guarded secret; the Committee being mainly responsible for tradesmen's bills etc.

⁴² *Minutes of Limerick Common Council* 21 April 1815.

⁴³ *ibid.* 21 November 1815.

⁴⁴ *ibid.* 28 June 1819.

⁴⁵ A. Hewson *Inspiring Stones* Diocesan Council of Limerick, Killaloe and Ardfert, Limerick, 1995. p. 102-3.

⁴⁶ National Library of Ireland *Ms 8821*; see also S. Lewis *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* Vol. 1 London, 1837. p. 601.

Samuel Lewis stated that St. Paul's was re-built, 'in 1817 . . . It is a spacious structure of stone, in the later English style, with an embattled tower surmounted by a finely proportioned spire, the whole after a design by John Nash of London.'⁴⁷ Given the date of construction, and the fact that James Pain had been sent to Ireland by Nash, 'to superintend some important works,'⁴⁸ we may draw the conclusion that James Pain devoted some of his time overseeing the St. Paul's project.

While St. Paul's has been described as Nash's 'best Gothic Revival church',⁴⁹ it is not to everybody's taste with its overly feudal militarist look and its squat, heavy appearance. Every available piece of skyline on the building is battlemented; bartizans 'decorate' the exterior corners of the transepts; the windows of the corner towers flanking the east doorway, although cross-shaped, recall the loopholes of fortifications; and the whole structure is over-endowed with a blistering array of sharp pointed spires and pinnacles. St. Paul's is the sole surviving church designed by Nash (Fig. 19).

It has been strongly argued that during his stay in Ireland that Nash, as well as attending to his designs for mansions such as castellated Lough Cutra Castle and the classical style Rockingham House in Co. Roscommon, also designed the Swiss Cottage near Cahir. Two reasons have been advanced for this opinion: (a) Swiss Cottage bears close similarity with the designs Nash sent to England from Ireland in 1810 for the ornamental cottages that were built at Blaise Hamlet at Henbury, Bristol the following year, and (b) while in Cahir working on the layout of St. Paul's it is difficult to imagine that England's premier Society architect and friend of the Prince Regent would not have made the acquaintance of Richard Butler, 12th Lord Caher and his wife Lady Emily whose seat was nearby Cahir Castle and who were hugely influential over the town of Cahir and district. Swiss Cottage was built for the private use of Lord and Lady Caher and, as a picturesque and romanticised vision of rural idyll, it was the perfect place to entertain guests (Fig. 20). While no definite date has been fixed for its year of construction, there is evidence of its existence by 1816. Set on that part of Lord Caher's estate in the district of Kilcommon where the annual local races were held, a report written in 1816 on that year's racing event recording the:

' . . . scenery over which the bounty of nature has spread her most attractive beauties and upon which the hand of taste has disposed its most bewitching embellishments – the grounds of Kilcommon and the tout ensemble of the Cottage affording a display of rural decoration not easy to be equaled in this country for chasteness of character and richness of fancy.'⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Lewis *op. cit.* p. 239; Richardson *op. cit.* pp. 200-2.

⁴⁸ *The Irish Builder* 1 January 1878.

⁴⁹ Richardson *op. cit.* p. 200.

⁵⁰ Quoted in S. O'Reilly *The Swiss Cottage* The Office of Public Works, Criterion Press, Dublin, 1993. p. 17.

Swiss Cottage is therefore contemporary with St. Paul's Church, Cahir, and suggests the tentative statement that James Pain may have supervised the building of this captivating *cottage orné*. Certainly, James' familiarity with Nash's work made him the ideal candidate to supervise the building of the Cottage, a smaller project than Lough Cutra certainly, but a highly prestigious commission none the less for a social climbing man of affairs.⁵¹

James' name is more definitely linked to the design of Limerick's St. Saviour's Dominican Church on Baker Place (then Upper Glentworth Street) - the first stone being blessed and laid by Bishop Tuohy on 27 March 1815. Fr. James Joseph Carberry, a local Limerick Dominican historian writing in 1866, informs us that a 'Mr. Wallace, builder', had been contracted to build the church while, 'the plans were furnished by Payne [*sic.*] Esquire, Architect.'⁵² Although St. Saviour's, consecrated on 6 July 1816, made use of Gothic trappings such as crocketed pinnacles, crenellation and pointed arch fenestration, it lacked the soaring upward thrust one normally associates with ecclesiastical Gothic (Fig. 21). This was because before 1829 Catholic churches in Ireland were not allowed to have a spire or tower and Catholic churches built before that date all have the appearance of chapels. Thus, the original St. Saviour's had a rather subdued, squat appearance on its front elevation.

The church was extensively remodelled in the 1860s under the Priorship of F. Carberry, for by then the church was directly facing another Pain design, St. Michael's Church of Ireland (1844) in Pery Square, St. Saviour's looking like a poor relation. The Dominican church was in dire need of an uplifting makeover and extensive renovation work was carried out by architect William Wallace who, with the addition of a clerestory, added an extra 20 feet to the height of the building. The insertion of a circular window in the western elevation of the clerestory and the replacement of Pain's simple Gothic tracery with a more elaborate and a more pleasing geometrical style, certainly enhanced the building⁵³ (Fig. 22).

⁵¹ For discussion of the origins of Swiss Cottage see: M. Girouard 'Swiss Cottage, Cahir' *Country Life* 22 September 1966; M. Girouard 'The Swiss Cottage, Cahir, Co. Tipperary' *Country Life* 26 October 1989; O'Reilly *op. cit.*)

⁵² Fr. J. J. Carberry O. P. *Chronological and Historical Account of Some of the Principal Events Connected with the Dominican Convent Limerick* (privately published 1866).

⁵³ For a description of William Wallace's redesign of St. Saviour's, both interior and exterior, see A. Buckley O.P. 'The Present Dominican Church' *Dominicans in Limerick 1227-1977* Limerick, 1977. pp. 30-1.

It is shortly after the consecration of St. Saviour's that we first begin to hear of George Richard Pain's presence in Ireland. Both brothers were elected Freemen of Limerick by the Common Council allowing them to vote in Parliamentary elections; the Council minutes revealing that 'James Pain, Esq. Architect, City of Limerick' was granted the franchise by grace on 1 July 1816 while his brother 'Geo. Richard Payne, Architect, City Limerick' received the privilege on 29 January 1817 along with 145 other gentlemen.⁵⁴ This suggests that George arrived in Limerick sometime between July 1816 and January 1817. During the local by-election held in Limerick in July 1817 following Col. Vereker's elevation to the peerage as 2nd Lord Gort, James cast his vote in open ballot on Tuesday 15 July for John Prendergast Vereker, the candidate of the Corrupt Corporation.⁵⁵ There is no record of George having voted. Does this suggest that James' younger brother, newly arrived from sophisticated Regency London, was overly unimpressed by the shenanigans of this provincial rotten borough?

Builder of Prisons

Besides supervising projects designed by John Nash, and getting work here and there, the Pain brothers were eager to establish their own independent fashionable practice in Ireland, for we must remember that by now James was 31 years old in 1817 and George twenty-four. They were to make a good team, James with his widening circle of influential friends and George with his artistic talent. Both had the social cachet of having been pupils of Nash, the Prince Regent's favoured architect. But they would have to wait another two years for their opportunity.

In the meantime, in 1816 James Pain won a public competition to design a new County Gaol on Limerick's Mulgrave Street (then known as the New Cork Road). The process leading to the awarding of the contract began in 1814 when the Gaol Committee undertook an investigation into the state and condition of the then existing County Gaol which was situated adjacent to the new City Gaol built on Dean's Close. Evidence was sought from various expert sources, including James Pain, 'whose architectural abilities have been displayed in the improvements of the City Gaol.'⁵⁶ In his 1814 report to the Committee, and in response to subsequent

⁵⁴ *Minutes of Limerick Common Council* 1/7/1816; 29/1/1817.

⁵⁵ *Limerick Chronicle* 16 July 1817; See also *A History of the Proceedings at the Particularly Interesting Elections for a Member to Represent The City of Limerick in Parliament; Containing . . . A List of the Electors, Their Places of Residence, and the Quality in Which They Voted* Printed by William Henry Tyrell, No. 17 College Green, Dublin, 1817. p. 84.

⁵⁶ Report of the Commissioners of the County Limerick Gaol' *Limerick Gazette* 9 February 1816.

queries put to him, Pain made the observations that the old County prison was insecure, there was no chapel for worship and there was only accommodation for 30 male felons, 10 female felons and 10 debtors. In response to the Committee's query whether the prison could be enlarged to accommodate a population of 100 criminals, with a separate cell for each prisoner, Pain replied, 'I think not . . . It would be an inconvenient, unwholesome, and confined prison and not so secure as a place of this description should be - the expense of this would be fully equal to building a new prison.'⁵⁷ Although the 'old' prison had only been built in the latter part of the eighteenth century, the Committee identified a number of problems associated with the gaol such as poor sanitation and hygiene and, according to Pain, the water obtained from a well in the prison's forecourt was not fit to drink. The only way to remedy this was to pump water from the river by an engine. Such a device, 'would prevent the intercourse that now exists between the public water-carriers and the prisoners.'⁵⁸ Little wonder then that the security system around the County Gaol was a little porous, as evidenced by the escape of eleven prisoners on one occasion in 1813. This example was followed by three other inmates the following year.⁵⁹

At the 1816 Spring Assizes the County Grand Jury allocated £23,000 for the purpose of building a new County Gaol and on 27 March the Gaol Commissioners accepted James Pain's architectural proposals costed at £21,500.⁶⁰ The project, completed in 1821, thoughtfully included the provision of a treadmill in the prison for the better exercise of the inmates. The institution was built on, for the period, the most up-to-date penitentiary pattern, with five cell-block wings radiating from a central, decagonal sided, administrative hub. As a place both of penitence and thoughtful reflection on a sinful life, it was built in line with current progressive thinking on penal reform. It was a matter for enlightened congratulation that each of the 103 convicts and criminals scheduled to be housed in the building would each have a separate cell. This was in contrast with the old County Gaol where, in cells measuring six feet by eight, 'three human beings are frequently confined; exhibiting instances of suffering unexampled except in the history of Africa slave ships.'⁶¹

Whereas the old prison was deemed unsatisfactory because there was no proper separation of the various categories of prisoner - young offenders being immediately placed in contact with hardened criminals and petty offenders having to associate with felons convicted of crimes of the most serious hue - Pain's model new prison on Mulgrave Street provided for the various different categories to be housed apart.

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Lenihan op. cit.* pp. 447-8.

⁶¹ 'Report of the Commissioners of the County Limerick Gaol' *op. cit.*

Accommodation was set aside for 22 debtors, separate apartments being provided for Master Debtors and Pauper Debtors; for even in cases of debt class distinctions had to be maintained. The design included five 'condemned' cells reserved for prisoners facing execution and for the punishment of refractory inmates.⁶² The 1840 Ordnance Survey of the prison illustrates the detailed categorisation of prisoners, with separate areas reserved to accommodate categories such as 'Revenue Cases', 'Misdemeanors for Trial' and those under 'Rule of Transportation'. Female prisoners were housed in a section of the institution completely separated from the males⁶³ (Fig. 23).

This project was not the only penal commission carried out by the Pain brothers, for in 1818 they designed the House of Correction for Cork County Goal on the city's Western Road. Built on 'improved principles', similar to those at Limerick, the facility featured six wings radiating east, north and west from a central polygonal hub. Writing in 1846, local Cork historian J. Windele thought it worthy of comment that the 'cells are fitted up with hammocks' similar to those used on naval ships. But what impressed Corkonians most was the fact that the front of the House of Correction was modelled on the Temple of Theseus at Athens, the entrance being composed of a Doric portico of four columns surmounted by a pediment⁶⁴ (Fig. 24).

It was while working in Cork that George presumably met Catherine Benn whom he married. Making their home at 5 St. Patrick's Hill, Cork,⁶⁵ the couple had a son, James Richard Pain, born c1823. George was made a Freeman of the City in 1827⁶⁶ and by 1831-2 the family had moved to Camden Place, Cork.⁶⁷ Although James had settled permanently in Limerick, the two brothers nevertheless worked in close partnership and together established a very successful practice in the south of Ireland until George died in 1838. James moved address at least once during the

⁶² Lenihan *op. cit.* p. 448 n.1.

⁶³ Ordnance Survey, City of Limerick, Sheet 19, 1840.

⁶⁴ J. Windele *Historical and Descriptive Notices of the City of Cork and its Vicinity* Cork 1846. p. 25. At the time of construction the Athenian temple on which the Cork House of Correction entrance was modelled was erroneously believed to have been dedicated to Bacchus.

⁶⁵ *Pigot's Directory* 1824.

⁶⁶ T. F. McNamara *Portrait of Cork*, Cork, 1981.p.155.

⁶⁷ Royal Hibernian Academy's Index of Exhibitors.

approximately 66 years he lived in Limerick. In 1824 his address is given as Upper George's Street⁶⁸; his 1863 Will notes his residence as 35 George Street⁶⁹ while at the time of his death in 1877 James was living at 17 Upper Glentworth Street⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ *Pigot's Directory* 1824.

⁶⁹ 'The Will of James Pain' *Transcriptions of Wills of Limerick* Limerick Archives and Ancestry Office, The Granary, Limerick.

⁷⁰ James Pain *Death Certificate* Limerick Ancestry and Archives Office.

CHAPTER THREE

The Pain Brothers' High Gothic Period 1819-35

Dromoland Castle

The big break for the Pain partnership in establishing themselves as fashionable architects came in 1819 when they were offered their first independent Gothic castle commission by Sir Edward O'Brien of Dromoland who had finally made up his mind about the design of his new home to replace his early eighteenth century mansion. The gestation period had been rather lengthy, about seven years in fact, involving a number of proposals from various architects before Sir Edward finally accepted a Gothic design jointly drawn up in early 1819 by James and George Richard Pain. James' earlier 1813 proposal was conservative and relatively dull in comparison, the difference illustrating an increase in confidence by James over the intervening six years and the benefits of being in association with his more artistic brother (Fig. 25 a & b).

Though 1826 has been advanced in several secondary sources as the year construction commenced on Dromoland Castle⁷¹, and Burke's *Visitation of Seats* published in 1855 says that it, 'was commenced in 1822', it seems fairly certain that building work began several years earlier in 1820. For, in the spring of that year Sir Edward, writing to Dromoland from London (where he sat as an M.P.), tells his wife, Lady Charlotte, to inform 'Mr. Pain', (presumably James Pain as he was the senior partner) that the new house is to be built in, 'the very best manner & of the very best materials.' Lady Charlotte was also instructed to tell the architect that, with the building about to start, he was not to cut down more oak trees on the estate than was necessary. Two years later, in the early summer of 1822, it is evident from Sir Edward's correspondence that building work had been proceeding for some time for, with distress in Clare being caused by a potato failure, Sir Edward wrote to his wife saying 'that since their income from rents had virtually ceased he might have to contemplate halting construction on their new house if finances did not improve. He also writes, 'The parts of the House that are finished look very well & executed in the very best manner.'⁷²

⁷¹ See, for example, Bence-Jones *op. cit.* who writes that the former eighteenth century mansion at Dromoland was 'demolished ca. 1826 . . . and a wide-spreading and dramatic castle . . . was built in its place.' p. 109.

⁷² Sir Edward O'Brien Correspondence with Lady Charlotte O'Brien, National Library 2972-4; 2976-7.

The extended period over which Dromoland was built, some fifteen years between 1820-35, makes it difficult to identify precisely the dates of the various construction phases, for Dromoland Castle was not built in one continuous flow of building activity. Up to the mid-1820s the family lived in the eighteenth century mansion alongside which the western section of the new Gothic house was being built. The old house was demolished in the mid-1820s and, after a delay of several years, work started on the eastern section of the castle, probably about 1832, ending about 1835⁷³ (Fig. 26).

Throughout, Sir Edward O'Brien insisted that not only was the workmanship and materials to be of the highest quality, but he was also determined to be economical in purchasing materials and house furnishings so as to keep the entire project within his financial limits. Cost conscious, he was constantly comparing the prices of furnishings between Limerick and Dublin, London and Manchester, and was quite delighted when he could obtain goods at discount. Sir Edward also took a keen and informed interest in the design of his new home and there was constant dialogue between architects and patron over architectural proposals and detailing. In 1820, for example, he wrote instructing the architects that they were to make the 'End window of the Gallery looking on to the yard have a Handsome Gothic Head & it gives an appearance to all the windows of it of Cloisters which I have seen in some Houses . . . so that it would have the appearance of a Chapel.'⁷⁴

Of additional interest in discussing the brothers' work for Sir Edward is the fact that they also designed furniture for the new house. Dromoland Castle was built with tender loving care, with great attention to detail being shown by both the patron and the architects alike, and it can be judged the most successful of the Pain brothers contribution to country house Gothic; better than their Strancally Castle (c.1830) in Co. Waterford and certainly far superior to Mitchelstown Castle (1823-6) in Co. Cork, a structure that will be discussed shortly.

Dromoland is a most attractive composition in early nineteenth century Picturesque and it owes its attractiveness and enchantment to several features, including the beautiful lakeside setting of the house and the parkland in which it is set with its woods, pleasant walks and gently rising grassy slopes. Externally, Dromoland Castle uses many of the features to be found in neo-Gothic architecture, for the entire complex of house and service quarters is castellated throughout, the cornices around the principal towers are extensively machicolated; the windows mullioned and decorated with Gothic tracery. But it is how the various architectural features and components are arranged, one with another, that gives Dromoland its pleasing Picturesque qualities. The whole is dominated by an imposing rounded corner tower and a strong, military-looking square tower with a number of lesser towers

⁷³ For a history of the building of Dromoland Castle and reproductions of architects' drawings see Richardson *op. cit.* pp. 140-6 and Figs. 65-7.

⁷⁴ G. O'Brien *These My Friends and Forebears* pp. 109 & 112.

and slender stair turrets to give a varied and eye-engaging medieval skyline to the structure. Nevertheless, the castle is friendly and welcoming, with the tall, elegant, slender chimneys rising from the battlements signaling to the weary traveler the prospect of warm cosy fires and comfort within. The asymmetrical nature of the castle, the varying heights of the ranges linking the turrets and towers, being one, two or three storeys high, all ensure that the visitor's attention is focused onto the castle and that from whatever angle one chooses to look at Dromoland, each and every perspective is different one from another revealing another facet of the composition, another explanation of what distinguishes excellence in Picturesque Gothic from the mere mediocre and passable. If one had to choose just a few Irish castellated mansions to survive while all others were wiped off the face of the earth by some Divine Act of Wrath, then Dromoland Castle has to be included in the list of those to be saved (Fig. 27).

Mitchelstown Castle

In 1823 the Pain brothers were approached by George King, 3rd Earl of Kingston to build a Gothic pile for him at Mitchelstown in north Co. Cork, a structure that the Earl, who was known as 'Big George', modestly requested should be the biggest house in all Ireland.⁷⁵ This stipulation meant that size predominated over proportion and, as can be seen from surviving photographs (the castle was demolished in the 1920s), Mitchelstown had a certain ponderous architectural quality about it giving the distinct feeling that, out of pure malice, the building might keel over and crush one under its sheer weight of stone (Fig. 28).

The contrast between Dromoland and Mitchelstown could not have been more marked, for if Dromoland was Picturesque, then Mitchelstown was heavy, coercive, Sublime. Whereas Dromoland was some twenty years in the making, and built with great care and attention, the great pile of Mitchelstown was thrown up in the space of just two years with little regard for aesthetics. Placed on the top of a windswept hill, its purpose was to impress the multitude. Of all the Big House Gothic projects the Pain brothers were involved with during the course of their professional careers, Mitchelstown was the least pleasing to the eye. A visitor to Mitchelstown in 1828, Hermann Ludwig Heinrich, Prince of Pückler-Muskau, who created one of Europe's most spectacular landscape gardens at his estate at Bad Muskau in Germany, made the rather apt comment, 'We were shown a huge heap of stones . . . but there was one ingredient missing . . . good taste.' A statement with which it would be difficult to disagree. The Prince also observed that the edifice stood, 'on the bare turf, without the slightest picturesque break, which

⁷⁵ B. Power *White Knights, Dark Earls* The Collins Press, Cork, 2000. p. 72; Bence-Jones *op. cit.* p. 207.

castles in the Gothic or kindred styles peculiarly need'⁷⁶ (Fig. 29). The south facade of the building, with a square tower in the centre, was plain, massive and utterly overbearing. The east front had a tall gate tower, built in the Tudor-Gothic manner, standing seven stories high!

Known as the White Tower, it was the main entrance to the castle and boasted a door some 15 feet in height standing beneath a 25-foot high arch. Everything about the building was on the grand scale with its 93 feet long Gothic vaulted gallery (Fig. 30) and suites of guestrooms that could accommodate up to 100 guests at a time for lavish house parties.⁷⁷

That the scale of the structure bordered on the grotesque is evidenced by the following description of the King's bedroom by the Hon. Mrs. Mary Robertson which reads as if it were an extract from Mervyn Peake's *Titus Groan*. Forty-one steps led to the bedroom which was, 'of such a size that on a misty night it was difficult to see across it . . . The immense canopied four-poster was like a fortress, only gained by assault, crowning, as it did, the summit of a raised platform.'⁷⁸

Given the scale of the building project, the manual nature of construction work at that time, and the speed with which the castle was erected, the building site must have been a great hive of activity with a swarm of workers and craftsmen - stonemasons, carpenters, plasterers, painters, bricklayers, carters and associated apprentices, labourers and tea-boys - all working diligently to achieve Big George's pharaonic vision,

'Brick was fired in the demesne brickfield; limestone was cut from local quarries . . . and carted to the building. The best timbers from the Baltic and India were imported through Youghal and Dungarvan and transported by road and boat along the Black water . . . The castle dominated the life and landscape of Mitchelstown for the next hundred years. Standing on a cliff edge with gently sloping woodland and lawns on the southern side, it was a spectacular sight, visible for miles around.'⁷⁹

Mitchelstown Castle was said to have cost £100,000 to build (Dromoland half that amount), a figure that would translate into many millions into today's money. But despite the huge costs involved this was not the end of 'Big George's' extravagance, for he spent a similar sum on estate improvements in both the town of Mitchelstown and on the demesne, including £3,000 allocated in 1823 to

⁷⁶ Prince Pückler-Muskau *Tour in England, Ireland and France in 1828-9 by a German Prince* Effingham Wilson, 1832. pp. 21-2.

⁷⁷ Bence-Jones *op. cit.* pp. 207-8.

⁷⁸ N. Robertson *Crowned Harp, Memories of the Last Years of the Crown* Dublin, 1960. p. 90.

⁷⁹ Power *op. cit.* pp. 72-3.

building a new market house and courtroom in the town - the designers being the ever versatile Pain brothers. However, it appears that the architects did not receive full recompense for all their labours, for in a will drawn up by James Pain on 11 January 1863 the now elderly architect in his ninth decade declares:

‘There is due and owing to me and secured by the Master in Chancery’s returns on the estate of the late George, Earl of Kingston of Mitchelstown Castle the sum of £1,096 - 19 shillings - 3 pence, or thereabouts. If this sum can be obtained’⁸⁰

According to the document, if the sum could be recovered it was to be divided equally between a nephew and two nieces. But I fear the nominated beneficiaries went without because the 4th Earl, Robert Henry King, the son and heir of Big George who had died in 1839, became embroiled in serious financial difficulties in 1844 and much of the estate had to be sold off to pay the creditors. However, it was Big George who had placed the estate’s finances into the red by his manic architectural spending spree in the 1820s. He then developed mental illness, which manifested itself in April 1830 as acute paranoia. In addition, he suffered two strokes resulting in impaired memory and speech. Packed off to a ‘lunatic’ asylum in England, he was declared insane and the management of his affairs placed in the hands of the Lord Chancellor who allowed the Earl’s son just £6,000 a year to run the great Gothic house and estate. It is possible that the debt to the Pains dates from this period.

Before his illness, ‘Big George’, according to local folklore, had a reputation for having a demonic temper and acting in a tyrannical manner to those tenants who crossed him.⁸¹ Big George, a latter day Duke of Otranto? Now here’s a curiosity: besides being an architect, George Richard Pain was also an accomplished watercolourist and in July 1831 he completed a remarkable piece depicting the dramatic climax of Horace Walpole’s Gothic novel *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) where, ‘the buildings echo Pain’s Mitchelstown Castle, all is collapsing at a thunderclap, and mighty Alphonso appears in the centre of the ruins.’⁸² Indeed, if we compare a photograph of Mitchelstown with the painting there is a certain similarity in terms of the heavy Sublime proportions of the two Gothic structures (Fig. 31). Was this imaginary destruction on the part of George Richard an expression of his aesthetic dissatisfaction with his own involvement in devising such an architectural monstrosity as was Mitchelstown? For how could a true artist be pleased with the product? Or was it a case of wishful thinking arising out of the

⁸⁰ ‘The Will of James Pain’ *Transcriptions of Wills of Limerick* Limerick Archives and Ancestry Office, The Granary, Limerick;

⁸¹ Power *op. cit.* pp. 88-90.

⁸² Crookshank & Glin *op. cit.* p. 106.

Earl's madness, his violent temper and the debt he owed to the brothers. It would be nice to think that this were true - a dreadful, prophetic curse placed on the House of Kingston by an artist of integrity. For, if by chance, George Richard Pain was harbouring malicious thoughts towards Mitchelstown then he certainly got his wish, for the pile no longer stands, being burnt and looted in The Civil War of 1922, as if in some Gothic revenge melodrama The Great Alphonso of Irish Nationalism had stormed and rent the castle asunder. A sense of grievance against the family was certainly present in the district stemming from a shooting incident that had occurred in Mitchelstown in September 1887 when police opened fire on a rioting crowd at a National League meeting, killing three people. The incident was connected to an acrimonious and bitter land dispute between the tenants on the Kingston estate and Anna, Lady Kingston and her husband William Webber. Lady Kingston died in 1909, but William Webber was still alive in 1922. Anyway, the burnt-out, derelict building was subsequently demolished in the 1920s, the stones being carted off to build a Catholic abbey, Mount Melleray, and on the site of Big George's Gothic pile there now stands a dairy creamery. A fate that no doubt warmed the cockles of all true Nationalists' hearts in the locality. The massive edifice of Mitchelstown Castle may have overawed, or appalled, those who saw it standing in its prime and glory, but all is one with Ninevah and Tyre (Fig. 32).

But the ghosts of the Anglo-Irish still linger there, conjured up by the pen of Elizabeth Bowen who, in her *Bowen's Court*, writes of a memorable garden party she attended in the castle grounds on 5 August 1914, the day following Britain's declaration of war against Imperial Germany; the castle created by the Pains providing the ideal Gothic backdrop to the opening of this final scene of the Anglo-Irish, the last garden-party of an epoch. The weather being made suitably windy, overcast and grey by that Great Director in the sky:

'Wind raced around the castle terraces, naked under the Galtees; grit blew into the ices; the band clung with some trouble to its exposed place. The tremendous news certainly made that party, which might have been rather flat. Almost everyone said they wondered if they really ought to have come, but they had - rightly; this was a time to gather. This was an assemblage of Anglo-Irish people from all over northeast Cork, from the counties of Limerick, Waterford, Tipperary. For miles around each isolated big house had disgorged its talker, this first day of the war . . . So on this day of grandeur and gravity the Ascendancy rallied, renewed itself . . .

' . . . this Mitchelstown party, it was agreed, would remain in every one's memory as historic. It was, also, a more final scene than we knew. Ten years hence, it was all to seem like a dream - the castle itself would be a few bleached stumps on the plateau. Today, the terraces are obliterated, the grass grows where the saloons were. Many of the guests, those vehement talkers, would be scattered, houseless, sonless, or themselves dead . . . The unseen descent of the sun behind the cloud sharpens the bleak light; the

band, having throbbled out God Save The King, packs up its wind-torn music and goes home.’⁸³

Patron and Architect

Clearly, from what we have said of Dromoland and Mitchelstown the personality of the various patrons that the Pain brothers encountered during their professional careers, and the nature of the personal relationship that developed between patron and architect was not a negligible factor in influencing the quality of the finished architectural product. The painstaking, patient, financially cautious approach of Sir Edward O’Brien contrasting favourably with the egotistical, money no object, I want it now! approach of the 3rd Earl of Kingston who is said to have remarked, perhaps apocryphally, to the Pain brothers shortly after he inherited the title in 1823, ‘Build me a castle. I am no judge of architecture, but it must be larger than any other house in Ireland. No delay! It is time for me to enjoy.’ The difference in approach of the two patrons having no small influence on the final appearance of the respective houses, their personalities being very much part of the buildings. So, in magisterially declaring that such and such a building designed by the Pain brothers is ‘good’, while another is ‘bad’ or ‘mediocre’, we cannot leave the patron out of the equation in allocating fault or praise.

Pain Proposals Rejected

While the Pain brothers did receive some very important commissions, they did suffer a number of rejections because their designs did not meet the requirements of the patron or sponsoring body. In 1836, for instance, they were competition entrants for the new Houses of Parliament in Westminster, but their Gothic proposal was turned-down, along with many other contestants, the prize going to Charles Barry. They also failed to gain a lucrative commission nearer to home, Glenstal Castle built near Murroe in Co. Limerick by the wealthy Barrington family. The architectural history of Glenstal is an interesting one in the context of the development of nineteenth century Irish country house Gothic, a genre in which the Pain brothers played such an important role.

If we take a broad sweeping view of the evolution of the Irish country house since the late Middle Ages we see a transition from the fortified tower houses of the Irish gentry typical of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to the semi-fortified mansions of the mid-seventeenth century (Fig. 33), for example Leamaneh Castle in Co. Clare (Fig. 34). And then onto the gentler, civilised and completely unfortified Georgian mansions of the eighteenth century with their large windows and delicate glazing bars, such as Doneraile House, Co. Cork, (Fig.35), a product of the secure and peaceful conditions to be found in Ireland for much of that century, in contrast to the turmoil, insecurities and turbulence of previous eras. Mitchelstown Castle,

⁸³ Elizabeth Bowen *Bowen's Court* The Collins Press, Cork, 1998. pp. 435-7.

and other nineteenth century Irish castellated houses, are making this architectural journey in reverse.

In fact, the Pains' Mitchelstown highlights an aspect of the neo-Gothic country house movement as it developed in Ireland - the popularity of this medieval style among sections of the Anglo-Irish landed class indicating a returned sense of insecurity engendered by a climate of agrarian violence and political uncertainty to be found in Ireland from the revolutionary 1790s into the mid-nineteenth century. This period saw the 1798 Rebellion, Emmet's 1803 Rising and a whole series of recurrent 'outrages' and land wars, especially in Munster, spearheaded by violent peasant secret societies such as the Rockites, the Terry Alts and Lady Clare's Boys - the growing crisis in agrarian society driving sections of the peasantry into conflict with landlords, 'strong' farmers and the State apparatus. The fact that an O'Brien of Dromoland Castle, William Smith O'Brien, was the prime mover in the abortive 1848 Rebellion amply proving the point that the landed classes had better look to their defences.

The comforting, reassuring attraction of the Gothic style was so strong that a number of Georgian country houses were given a feudal cosmetic face-job; a skin-deep Gothicism in which battlements, turrets and Gothic detailing were added onto an existing house. Glin Castle in Co. Limerick being one example of such a cosmetic exercise. In some instances the Gothicisation of an existing house was more thoroughgoing, as in the case of Mount Talbot at Athleague Co. Roscommon. Originally an eighteenth century Palladian house, the centre block at Mount Talbot was transformed into an impressive Gothic structure c.1820, but the Palladian arcades and wings were left as they were, producing a strange effect.

These battlemented additions and Gothic make-overs were, of course, of absolutely no defensive value in the physical sense, but they are conveying messages about power, class, ancient lineage, hereditary right to ownership of the land, loyalty to Crown as well as social status. They go beyond fancy, show and fashion, for they are making specific statements about which there is little doubt about their meaning.

The trajectory of this Gothic architectural development arrived at the logical conclusion of Dromore Castle, Pallaskenry in Co. Limerick. Built for William Pery, 3rd Earl of Limerick, it was designed by Edwin Godwin at the time of the 1867 Fenian Rising and was constructed as if the Earl expected an immediate assault by numerous legions of the Wild Irish. Although incorporating various features from medieval Irish castles and ecclesiastical sites, including a round tower inspired by Cashel, the building exudes claustrophobic paranoia (Fig. 36). The architect made the decision, 'to site his principal rooms facing into an enclosed courtyard and keeping the corridors along the outside walls, with the result that

sunlight rarely entered,' writes architectural historian Jeremy Williams.⁸⁴ The courtyard is totally enclosed by the castle buildings on two sides and thick curtain walls surmounted by walkways on the other two. This obsession with security reached ludicrous levels with the design of the main gateway into the castle, for it was too narrow and restricted an entrance to admit the family coach! Set on high ground overlooking a lake, the castle looms ominously when seen from low ground.

Castles and fortified houses of one sort or another had long been associated in Ireland with landed power and social status, and possession of a castle, even a sham Gothic one, spelt out ownership of the land going back to medieval times. In truth, there were a number of landed Irish families that could trace their landed ancestry back generations, yea, unto the Middle Ages. The O'Briens of Dromoland, for example, could trace their lineage back to Brian Boru who died at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, while the Fitzgerald Knights of Glin have been estate holders in Co. Limerick as far back as the thirteenth century. But other wealthy families were of a more recent vintage having come over to Ireland in the wake of the Cromwellian and Williamite conquests.

A prime example of an explicit statement in stone by a *nouveau riche* bourgeois family attempting to construct the image of an ancestral relationship with the land can be seen at Glenstal Castle, Co. Limerick (now a Benedictine abbey); the Pain brothers playing a minor role in its early history. It was begun in 1837 by Sir Matthew Barrington whose family claimed descent from Odo du Barentin, a Norman baron who came over with William of Normandy to conquer England in 1066. Perhaps this was so, but the branch of the Barringtons who settled in Limerick City at the time of the Cromwellian conquest in the mid-seventeenth century were associated with a number of urban trades and professions over the next two hundred years, prospering through their clock-making workshop, copper-foundry and pewter-ware dealing/manufacturing businesses as well as their mercantile activities⁸⁵. By the early nineteenth century the family had accumulated sufficient wealth to obtain a baronetcy, Joseph Barrington becoming Sir Joseph in 1831. His son, Matthew, had the good sense to become a lawyer and from about 1814/15 served as Crown-Solicitor for Munster earning a lucrative £15,000 per annum. It was Matthew who had ambitions to own a family estate, firstly leasing the Carbery estate in Co. Limerick in 1818 and then purchasing it in 1831 when his father obtained his baronetcy. It was upon this property that Glenstal Castle was

⁸⁴ J. Williams *A Companion Guide to Architecture in Ireland 1837-1921* Irish Academic Press, Dublin, 1994. p. 274.

⁸⁵ D. O'Grady 'The Barrington Normans of Limerick' *The Old Limerick Journal; Barrington's Edition* No. 24, Winter, 1988.

built as the family seat.⁸⁶ A number of leading architects, including the Pain brothers, were approached during the course of the 1830s to submit designs and their proposal, submitted in April 1833, envisaged a Picturesque castellated house in the manner of Dromoland⁸⁷ (Fig. 37). But Matthew was anxious to proclaim his Norman ancestry and he rejected the Pain proposal in favour of a design by William Bardwell that envisaged a Norman-Revivalist castle complete with a square Norman keep derived from Rochester Castle in England. Bardwell's plans called for creating the appearance of an enclosed fortress-style structure with towers, gateway and Norman keep linked by a curtain wall of ranges enclosing a large bailey (Fig. 38). The gateway was modeled on Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire⁸⁸. Romanesque window openings are a feature of the keep as well as the impressive interior Romanesque archways. Interestingly, the Romanesque main entrance to the Glenstal keep is flanked by stone figures of Henry II of England (1154-89) and his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine⁸⁹. It was during Henry's reign that the Anglo-Normans first came to Ireland in 1169, Henry II quickly establishing his formal Lordship of the country on the basis of a Papal Bull, *Laudabiliter* (1155), by which the obliging Pope Adrian IV granted the English monarch feudal sovereignty over Ireland.

On the battlements of a watch tower at Glenstal the stone statue of a Norman knight stands sentinel over the 'fortress' keeping a vigilant lookout for unfriendly foes (Fig. 39). An inscription on this tower reads '*Bardwell me fecit, 1839*' ('Bardwell made me'), but the '8' is cut in such a way that from a distance it looks like a '1', hence the date 1139 is suggested (a date preceding by 30 years the initial Anglo-Norman incursion into Ireland).

Originally designed by Bardwell in 1837, the corner round tower (which is topped by the watch tower and knight), the gateway and the eastern facing façade were constructed by 1839 and work on the main living quarters, including the keep, began in 1846 giving employment to local people during the Famine years. It was not until 1875 that the main body of the castle was completed. Interestingly enough, in order that they not be seen as merely descendants of invaders, but had a genuine stake in the country and a legitimate right to property in Ireland, the Barringtons incorporated a number of Hiberno-Romanesque/Celtic motifs into the architecture and interior design at Glenstal during its construction. Of particular note is the fact that the main entrance to the keep is a replica of the twelfth century Hiberno-Romanesque doorway at Killaloe Cathedral in Co. Clare. Although the Romanesque doorway, with motifs such as dogtooth and chevron, is commonly

⁸⁶ M. Tierney 'Sir Matthew Barrington: 1788-1861' *ibid.*

⁸⁷ M. Tierney & Cornforth 'Glenstal Castle' *Country Life* 3 October 1974.

⁸⁸ M. Tierney & J. Cornforth 'Glenstal Castle' *ibid.*

⁸⁹ A number of secondary sources state that these figures represent Edward I (1272-1307 and his wife Eleanor of Castille, but this is not the case.

found in English architecture of the Norman period, it is significant that a replica of an Irish example is used at Glenstal⁹⁰ (Fig. 40). Any doubts that the Barringtons were incorporating a touch of Irish into their constructed identity are dispelled by the fact that the statue of Eleanor of Aquitaine has the words 'Céad Míle Fáilte' inscribed on her stole! As an example of a political construct, Glenstal certainly makes a fascinating study.

Clearly, the Victorian Barringtons wanted their heritage buttered on both sides, Anglo-Norman on one side and Irish on the other. Unfortunately fate was not to be kind to the Barringtons in their efforts to romanticise and massage the historical relationship between England and Ireland, for in May 1921, Winifred Barrington, the daughter of the 5th Baronet accepted a picnic invitation from a local Black and Tan officer and was killed in an IRA ambush on the car they were travelling in (Fig. 41). This was a terrible kick in the face for the Barrington family who had done so much in terms of charitable work both for the locality and Limerick City over many years. Following this tragic incident the Barringtons left Ireland and in the 1920s Glenstal Castle and its grounds became the property of Benedictine monks. For the monks who cherish the historical continuity of their order, the antiquity of the Rule of Benedict and their beautiful Gregorian chant, the feudal Norman castle of Glenstal makes the ideal setting and theatrical backdrop.

⁹⁰ M. Tierney *Glenstal Abbey* Glenstal Abbey Publications, 2001.

CHAPTER FOUR

ARCHITECTURAL VERSATILITY

A key contributing factor to the success of the Pain brother partnership was their versatility as architects. Confident in their ability to turn their hand to any style of the day, whether it be Picturesque Gothic, Tudor-Gothic or Greek Revival, they were willing to take on any private or public commission whether it be the design of a grand country house or acting as supervising architect for a modest town courthouse. This final chapter will look at the wide variety of the Pains' *oeuvre* both as individual architects and as a partnership.

Although as Gothic architects the Pains are better known for their involvement with major projects such as Lough Cutra, Dromoland Castle and Mitchelstown Castle, this high-profile work did not exhaust their involvement in secular castellated Gothic, for they also designed Strancally Castle (c1830) in Co. Waterford⁹¹ (Fig. 42) and Elm Park at Clarina, Co. Limerick. The latter a pleasing sight consisting mainly of two storeys over a basement with square and round towers⁹² (Fig. 43). Unfortunately the house no longer stands.

James and George Richard were also responsible for designing Blackrock Castle, Cork, a most romantic and delightfully appealing sham castle situated on a rocky outcrop on the shore of the Lee overlooking both the inner and outer harbour. Built in 1827-9 for Cork Corporation, Blackrock Castle was used for many years as a residence by the Lord Mayor of the City. The interior layout included a magnificent ground floor banqueting room. It was here that the Corporation held civic events such as the annual mayoral banquet; occasions which, tradition has it, often became rowdy affairs. Indeed, the original Corporation-owned castle on the site was burnt down in 1827 after an accidental fire broke out at that year's mayoral banquet. £1,000 was raised to build a replacement in grand Gothic style, the Pain brothers completing the task in 1829. A huge wine cellar was incorporated into their design, an architectural detail that adds credence to the story of rowdy parties enjoyed by the good burghers of Cork. Complete with a boat slip and an imposing castellated gateway facing the Lee, this turreted and battlemented composition of Romantic Gothic was a jewel in the crown of Cork Corporation. By the 1920s the building

⁹¹ Bence-Jones *op. cit.* p. 63

⁹² Obituary of James Pain *Irish Builder* 20, 1 January 1878.

had sadly fallen into disrepair, was being leased by 1930 by a professor of botany at UCC and was privately acquired in the 1960s⁹³.

Although Blackrock is one of the Pain brothers' most romantically sited castles (Figs. 44 a & b), it must be admitted that it was not to everybody's taste. Indeed, the folklorist and collector of fairy legends Thomas Crofton Croker thought it a very bad day that such a thing be built at Blackrock, for in 1833 he wrote in a letter to his friend, Cork architect Thomas Deane, that the whole thing was a 'flimsy specimen of Cockney Gothic'. A snide little remark that architectural historian Frederick O'Dwyer interprets as a reference to the Pain brothers' London origins.⁹⁴ In making such a comment to Deane, Croker was on safe ground for there was fierce professional rivalry in Cork between the Pain brothers and Thomas Deane, partly based on professional rivalry, but also because the English-born architects enjoyed the patronage of the Cork county aristocracy whereas Deane's political allegiance lay with the conservative, Anti-Repeal section of Cork City's Protestant middle classes who were deeply suspicious of the political motives of the landed interest.⁹⁵

Not all of the Pains' Gothic work was on the grand scale, for they could also cater for those estate holders anxious to establish medieval roots, whether authentic or imaginary, but who did not wish to spend vast sums of money on a Gothic Big House. The job was made much easier for the architects if one had a genuine tower house on one's property, for they could obligingly tack on nineteenth century 'feudal' additions to the original medieval structure. For instance, about 1850 James carried out work for Lord Dunboyne on a late medieval tower house at Knappogue near Quin in Co. Clare. Originally owned by the McNamaras, Knappogue Castle had fallen into ruins by the start of the nineteenth century and Pain was commissioned to renovate with Norman Revivalist additions. This work involved raising the corner towers of the stable block and linking them with a windowless, medieval style curtain wall⁹⁶ (Fig. 45). At Castlegarde, Pallasgreen in Co. Limerick both brothers are believed to have collaborated together about 1820 on modernising a sixteenth century tower, adding a castellated wing to the structure and restoring the walls of the old castle bawn giving them battlements and a castellated gateway⁹⁷ (Fig. 46).

⁹³ M. Keenan 'Landmark Reflections' *The Sunday Tribune* 2 July 2000.

⁹⁴ F. O'Dwyer *The Architecture of Deane & Woodward* Cork University Press, Cork, 1997. p. 18.

⁹⁵ *ibid.* 15-18.

⁹⁶ J. Williams *A Companion Guide to Architecture in Ireland 1837-1921* Irish Academic Press, Dublin 1994. p. 54.

⁹⁷ Bence-Jones *op. cit.* p. 69.

First Fruits Gothic

The Pain partnership is heavily identified with ecclesiastical Gothic, for about 1822 James was appointed as architect to the Board of First Fruits for the Province of Cashel, with responsibility for all the churches and glebe houses in the province. The Board of First Fruits was a Church of Ireland body responsible for financing, by loans, the construction and repair of parish churches and glebe houses. This body was first established in 1711 during the reign of Queen Anne and the term 'First Fruits' derives from the obligation of newly appointed clergy to present their first year's salary to the Board. Perhaps this practice was to ensure that the curates and parish clergy of the Church of England were persons of good family and able to fit into local Society, and not rabble-rousing divines who had caused so much trouble for Church and State in the previous century. It is said that John Nash exercised influence in the appointment of James to the Board, a position that proved a steady source of income for the Pain brothers; for at the close of the eighteenth century and up until the Famine, church building among the Protestant community in Ireland became prolific, especially in rural areas. During the period 1777-1829 the Board of First Fruits built, re-built, or enlarged, a total of 697 churches. Many of the Church of Ireland churches we see today in the Irish countryside and provincial towns, whether they be in ruins, converted to secular uses or still serving a religious function, date from this period of architectural renewal. In 1833 the Board was replaced by Parliamentary Act (The Church Temporalities Act of 1833) by the Board of Ecclesiastical Commissioners that carried on the Godly work of architectural renewal, this successor body continuing to utilise the skills of James and George Pain.

Many of these Irish 'First Fruit Churches' were quite similar in design, being plain and rectangular with a square, pinnacled West tower with, or without, a surmounting spire. Internally, the church is usually a simple hall in form with a small gallery at the West end and a shallow rectangular sanctuary at the East end, the walls being punctuated by simple pointed-arch tracery windows. Built in a spare and rather austere Gothic, this style is sometimes known as 'First Fruits Gothic', or 'Simple Gothic', to distinguish the style from the more elaborate Gothic Revival style that became fashionable later on in the century. It would be more accurate to describe many of the Simple Gothic churches to be found in Ireland as being 'produced' according to formula rather than being 'designed'. The employment of Gothic for the Established Anglican Church in Ireland was a deliberate choice for it denoted historical continuity with mainstream Christianity going back to the period prior to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. The more that those who worshipped in the Established Church felt threatened or uneasy by events such as Catholic Emancipation and Tithe Wars, the more comforting and legitimising Gothic became.

During their association with the Board of First Fruits and its successor body, the Pain brothers were involved in the design of many churches in the Archdiocese of

Cashel, an area that covered the civil province of Munster with the addition of parts of counties Offaly, Kilkenny and Galway. So many Anglican churches did they design and renovate that it is difficult to compile a fully accurate list of all their work and there is little point in describing each church in detail. A listing of their known ecclesiastical work is included within Appendices I, II & III dealing with the architectural works of the two brothers. Although James Pain drew up six volumes of survey plans of churchyards in the Archdiocese of Cashel, with plans and elevational drawings of the churches in them, it is not always possible to distinguish those churches that originated off the drawing boards of the Pain brothers from those designed by other architects commissioned by the Board during the 1820s, '30s and '40s. The six volumes of James' survey, dating from the 1820s to the 1840s, are presently in the archives of the Representative Church Body Library, Dublin.

Virtually all the work that the Pains carried out for the Church of Ireland was in Gothic and a representative example of their work can be seen at St. Munchin's, King's Island in Limerick City (Fig. 47). Built in 1827 to replace an earlier church, it is virtually identical to their Rathkeale Holy Trinity (1825) in County Limerick. Built in a 'rectangular' style, with the main body of the church rectangular in plan, St. Munchin's is constructed of local squared limestone and measures approximately 22 metres in length by 9 metres in width. The western section consists of a tower narrower in width than the main body of the building. With diagonal, staged buttresses attached, the square tower measures more than 15 metres in height and adorned with eight pinnacles. All the doors and windows have hooded or drip mouldings. With the decline of the Church of Ireland population in Limerick during the twentieth century St. Munchin's was de-consecrated c1970 and came under the care of Limerick Civic Trust. It now houses the rehearsal and props rooms of the Island Theatre Company, presently the city's only professional theatre company. In the year 2000 Limerick Civic Trust carried out restoration work on the tower, cleaning the exterior stonework, repairing the stairs and making safe some of the pinnacles that were in danger of falling.

Great numbers of churches employing this rectangular-box pattern came off the Pain brothers' production line drawing board and there were basically two models associated with the technique. One, as with St. Munchin's, with just a western tower attached, and another that was slightly more developed in style. This latter model featuring a western section consisting of a tower that was flanked by two, single-storey, cubic architectural features; these attachments projecting beyond the sides of the main body of the church and invariably housing the vestry and a stair hall leading to the gallery. An example of this type is Kilcornan (1830-2) in Co. Limerick (Fig. 48).

It was the Pain brothers' who drew up the plans for St. Michael's in Pery Square in Limerick City. Originally conceived in 1838 with a tower surmounted by a spire, St. Michael's was not completed until 1844 *sans* spire (Fig. 49 a & b). The church was modified later on in the century and is still in use for religious services. In terms of the Battle of the Styles that developed in the 1830s and '40s, the Gothic of St. Michael's makes a fine contrast with the Classical lines of the nearby Pery Square Tontines (1838).

Although much of their work for the Church of Ireland conformed to the rectangular pattern, the Pain brothers also carried a number of commissions that were cruciform in plan. One of these being St. John's Church in Buttevant, Co Cork.

Versatility

Unlike Augustus Pugin, the Pain brothers were not ideologically committed to any one particular architectural style and had no particular 'devotion' to Gothic. They were perfectly willing to carry out commissions for those whose preference was for the Classical and they generally 'went with flow' when it came to discussions with patrons. For instance, in Co. Cork James and George drew up the plans for Convamore House, Ballyhooly, the seat of the Earls of Listowel. Convamore was the brothers' largest non-Gothic country house, Bence-Jones describing the mansion as being in the, 'plain, post-Georgian style which might be called "Irish Vernacular"'.⁹⁸ A plain, fairly rectangular structure, this early nineteenth century house was embellished with a single-storey Doric portico, while Doric pilasters were incorporated into the elevation facing the River Blackwater (Fig. 50). The Pains' work in Greek also includes James' association with the remodelling of Mount Shannon c1813 (work that included the addition of an imposing Ionic portico) and the two brothers' 'Temple of Theseus' design for the entrance to the Cork House of Correction (1818).

As noted previously, George Richard Pain had moved permanently to Cork City by the early 1820s, if not slightly before, for Pigot's 1824 Directory gives his address as 5 Patrick's Hill, Cork. Having one member of the family partnership with an address and office in Limerick while another was based in Cork (the two most important urban centres in Munster) gave the brothers a distinct advantage in establishing contact with potential clients and maintaining a circle of influential friends and acquaintances among the aristocracy of the province. Cork was to prove

⁹⁸ M. Bence Jones 'Ravages of Time and Neglect: Lost Irish County Houses - II' *Country Life* 30 May 1974; M. Bence-Jones *A Guide to Irish Country Houses* Constable, London 2nd Revised Edition, 1990. p. 89.

fairly good to the brothers as a number of commissions came their way from that part of the world, particularly to George as an architect in his own right. One of their most prestigious projects in Cork was the City and County Courthouse (1830-35) on Great George's Street. Described as the Pains' Classical masterpiece⁹⁹ and the 'finest structure of the kind in the south of Ireland,¹⁰⁰ it boasts an immense Corinthian portico with 30 foot high columns resting on a platform gained by ascending a flight of eleven steps from street level (Fig. 51). Projecting 20 feet from the main building, the portico has a length of 72 feet. Both frieze and tympanum are left bare, but there is a dramatic group of carved stone figures at the apex of the pediment that represent Justice pondering profoundly between Law and Mercy. If the purpose of this imposing edifice was to impress on the mind of both felon and public alike the full majesty and power of the legal system, then the Pain brothers certainly earned their fee. It certainly impressed the historian Thomas Macaulay who wrote that the portico, 'would do honour to Palladio.'¹⁰¹

Among the other commissions carried out by the Pain partnership in Cork City, other than the House of Correction and the City and County Courthouse, can be counted the New Independent Chapel on George's Street (1831), Wellesley Bridge on Western Road and the Cork and County Club on South Mall (1831). This latter building serving as a meeting place for the county aristocracy¹⁰²; those arbitrators of architectural taste and dispensers of patronage.

As well as work carried out in partnership with his brother, George Richard Pain also made an important contribution to Cork, his adopted city as an individual. Among his works can be counted the Capuchin church of the Holy Trinity on what is now Fr. Mathew Quay. Commissioned by Fr. Mathew, the Apostle of Temperance, in 1825, Holy Trinity features a marvelous Gothic portico that soars to the heavens (Fig. 52). Although the main body of the church was completed about 1847, ten years after George Pain's death, it was not to be until 1889¹⁰³ that his ethereal vision of celestial lantern and spire set upon a soaring portico was to be finally realised. Another architectural association with the Apostle of Temperance is George's design of the Fr. Mathew memorial tower at Glanmire, a circular battlemented Gothic tower, three storeys high, surmounted by a circular stair turret built in 1843 overlooking the Lee¹⁰⁴ (Fig. 53).

⁹⁹ M. Bence-Jones 'Two Pairs of Architect Brothers' *Country Life* 10 August 1967.

¹⁰⁰ Windele *op. cit.* p. 19.

¹⁰¹ T. Macaulay *The History of England from the Accession of James II* Vol. II.

¹⁰² O'Dwyer *op. cit.* p. 17.

¹⁰³ Williams *op. cit.* pp. 59-60.

¹⁰⁴ Howley *op. cit.* p. 54; Williams *op. cit.* pp. 75-6.

George Richard was awarded a number of other church commissions in Cork including the Catholic church of St. Patrick's¹⁰⁵. This design also featured an imposing Corinthian portico, although it was not built on quite so immense a scale as the Cork City and County Courthouse. The frieze and tympanum are similarly left bare and the church is topped by a Classical lantern. A listing of other of G. R. Pain's known ecclesiastical works is to be found in Appendix III.

When one compares the body of work that the Pain brothers carried out in Cork City with that in Limerick City it does seem that the Cork architecture was on a more grandiose scale. An indication, of course, of the greater wealth to be found in Cork, but not always necessarily of superior taste as shown by the City and County Courthouse which was built for sheer size and quantity, not for aesthetic quality. Of further interest in relation to G. R. Pain's Cork *oeuvre* is that his Catholic churches are far more adventurous and imposing in design than the drearily repetitious, emotionless, and predictable production line work the Pain partnership carried out for the Church of Ireland.

Battle of the Styles

As we have seen in relation to the work of the Pains, the Gothic advance in the early nineteenth century did not crush everything under its sheer weight of stone, for during the Regency period, and up until the Famine, public buildings, Irish Catholic churches and upper and middle-class houses in Ireland, whether urban terraces or country homes, continued to be built in the traditional Classical manner. For not everybody had the taste or, more to the point in relation to country houses, the purse, to build in Gothic. There was also an echo in Ireland of the 'Battle of the Styles' that raged in Britain during the 1830s and '40s between the Gothic Revivalists and 'Medievalists' ranged on one side of the architectural and ideological argument, and the admirers of the Greco-Roman tradition on the other. To confuse matters slightly, there were also movements for the revival of Tudor-Gothic and Elizabethan. An eclecticism of taste that meant that to be successful architects working in Ireland had to be equally *au fait* with all of these styles.

We can see evidence in Limerick City of this stylistic argument where a number of differing architectural styles vied and jostled with one another for public attention. In Glentworth Street we can find the Greek Revival Savings Bank (1840) built in the manner of a Doric Temple (presumably to express prudence, a proportionate life, financial order and moderation) by William Owen, whilst on Hartstonge Street we have Leamy's School (1843) by William Fogerty who created a Tudor structure in mellow red-brick complete with oriel windows, a Tudor-Gothic arch over the main entrance and a central crenellated tower complete with grotesque gargoyles. A fine reminder to the people of Limerick of the glories of the English Tudors.

¹⁰⁵ M. Bence-Jones 'Two Pairs of Architect Brothers' *Country Life* 10 August 1967.

The Pains' adaptability is well illustrated by James' 1828 and 1829 proposed designs for Adare Manor in Co. Limerick where the architect presented William Henry, 2nd Earl of Dunraven, with alternative schemes including a traditional Classical design with pedimented Ionic portico and a Tudor-Gothic one – the Tudor won (Fig. 54 a & b). This structure was to replace an earlier eighteenth century house on the site. Construction on Adare Manor commenced in 1832, but by the late 1830s the services of James Pain were dispensed with when the building was still only half complete. Work was continued by a number of other architects and designers, including Augustus Pugin and Philip C. Hardwick, and the building was not to be being entirely finished until c1870 by the 3rd Earl of Dunraven.

That phase of the design process associated with the Pain brothers includes the Kitchen wing, the northern facing Long Gallery range consisting of the Dunraven's private apartments on the ground floor and the impressive 132-foot Long Gallery on the first floor (Fig. 55), and the main entrance section of the house as laid-out in a plan (signed by James Pain) that is extant in the Dunraven Papers now held in the Archives of the University of Limerick. The Tudor-Gothic entrance to this baronial edifice writ large was modeled on the gatehouse to Eton College. That work on the project commenced in the early 1830s is vouched for by the date '1832' which is to be seen clearly carved on the chimney gable of the kitchen wing, that section of the house to be first built. The actual construction work was carried out under the supervision of James Mason, an accomplished master mason who acted as the supervising architect and who successfully co-ordinated the efforts of a team of highly skilled craftsmen. The high water-mark of the Pain brothers' architectural involvement in Adare Manor is indicated by a 1837 watercolour of the western front that shows the Tudor-Gothic entrance and the unfinished Hall standing adjacent to the Dunraven's eighteenth century house. This latter building was demolished about 1839 to make way for the southern section of the Manor (Fig. 56).

As previously stated, sometime in the late 1830s the services of James Pain were dispensed with (the date is not certain), for there is a letter dated 21 February 1840 from Lord Dunraven to James Pain politely but assertively saying, 'I did not cease to employ you professionally, for the purpose of placing myself in any other professional hands. Building is my amusement and I am a dabbler in architecture and I have now for some years been carrying on the new work entirely from my own designs and without any assistance whatsoever.'¹⁰⁶

Unfortunately, the 2nd Earl of Dunraven's 'dropping' of James Pain when Adare Manor was still only half completed, and Dunraven's hogging of the architectural limelight, has meant that the names of James and George Pain are little known

¹⁰⁶ D. FitzGerald, Knight of Glin 'Adare Manor' in *Adare Manor, Ireland* Christie's, Manson & Woods Ltd., London, 1982.

today in connection with one of the most interesting country houses in Co. Limerick.

The completion of the Hall was to be carried out by Pugin and that section of the Manor which replaced the Georgian house was not to be designed until the early 1850s by P. C. Harwick, a colder, more formal Victorian design when compared to the more pleasing Tudor-Gothic portion of the Manor as conceived by the Pains.¹⁰⁷ Harwick's work included the construction of the square, harder-edged Wyndham Tower that stands rather inelegantly in close proximity to the Pain's Tudor-Gothic gatehouse (Fig. 57).

Other Tudor-Gothic work by the Pain partnership includes Castle Bernard (1833) at Kinnitty in Co. Offaly.¹⁰⁸

Pery Square Tontine

In Limerick the brothers' contribution to the city's store of architectural eclecticism arising from the Battle of the Styles includes their First Fruits Gothic churches, their Gothic toll house on Thomond Bridge (1840) and the Tudor-Gothic Villiers Arms Houses (1827) adjacent to their St. Munchin's church on King's Island (Fig. 58). But it is in the building of the Tontine terrace at Pery Square that we see a masterpiece of domestic Greek Revival that stands as a clear victor in Limerick's stylistic conflict.

In the Georgian New Town district of Limerick the most opulent range of early nineteenth century terraced architecture is to be seen at Pery Square.¹⁰⁹ Built by the Pery Square Tontine Company, it is believed that James Pain had an input into the design of this terraced development of six town houses built in 1838. The overall design of the terrace exemplifies the Classical ideals of proportion, order and symmetry, the window arrangement in particular binding the composition together with strong horizontal and vertical lines. As such, the Pery Square Tontine is in complete contrast with the Picturesque, asymmetrical lines of Dromoland Castle (Fig. 59).

¹⁰⁷ J. Cornforth 'Adare Manor, Co. Limerick – I', 'II' & 'III' *Country Life* 15 May; 22 May; 29 May 1969.

¹⁰⁸ Bence-Jones *op. cit.* p. 266.

¹⁰⁹ For a fuller discussion of the Pery Square Tontines see D. Lee *The Georgian House & Garden* Limerick Civic Trust, Limerick, 2001; J. McMahon *The Pery Square Tontine* Limerick Civic Trust, Limerick, 1999.)

Among the original 23 shareholders of the Tontine Company formed in the mid-1830s to finance the construction of the terrace were leading members of Limerick's middle and upper-middle classes including Daniel Barrington, State Solicitor for Limerick and Land Agent for the Pery Estate, who held 20 of the 89 shares issued.¹¹⁰ It was on family property, leased from the Pery Estate, that the Tontine was built. Daniel's brother, Matthew Barrington, who served as Crown Solicitor for Munster with an annual salary of £15,000 and who had lucrative legal connections with an Irish railway company, the Great Southern Railway, was also involved in the Tontine.

It was Matthew who, in 1839, commissioned architect William Bardwell to build Glenstal Castle near Murroe, Co. Limerick in the Norman Revival style. The Barrington family had also financially sponsored a number of other important building projects in Limerick City including Barrington's Hospital (1831) on George's Quay and the erection of the Spring Rice monument (1829) that still stands today in Peoples' Park adjacent to Pery Square. Given their social prestige and previous experience in discussing matters of architectural style and detail with architects, it is probable that Daniel and Matthew Barrington may have had some say in the design of the Pery Square terrace. The fact that Daniel Barrington was the first tenant of No. 1 Pery Square and that a range of offices facing onto Barrington Street were purposely built onto his house is strong circumstantial evidence to support this view. It was in these offices that Daniel Barrington stored important documents and papers relating to his State Solicitor's practice and his role as Land Agent for the Pery Estate.

However, the fact that the Tontine terrace is far superior in architectural design to any other Georgian terrace in Limerick, indeed superior to virtually every other Georgian terrace built in Ireland, argues for the case that an architect of quality, rather than a mere jobbing builder following pattern books by rote, was involved in the design process. As a fashionable architect with six shares in the company¹¹¹ it does seem likely that James Pain would have been involved in drawing up plans and overseeing the construction work. Unfortunately, the early records and minutes of the Pery Square Tontine Company are missing. However, the name of James Pain is closely identified with discussions held at the commencement of the project in 1836, as evidenced by various newspaper reports. The *Limerick Chronicle* reporting in May 1836 that, '*meetings re the Pery Square Tontine Company were held at the offices of D.F.G. Mahony & Sons and that share instalments were due to be paid.*' The report went on to say, '*that a meeting was called for Tuesday 31st May 1836 when an official report is to be laid before the meeting from Mr. James*

¹¹⁰ Share Register of the original share holders of Pery-Square Tontine Company, 1840, Limerick Civic Trust Collection.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*

*Pain, architect, as to the progress of the development.*¹¹² In addition, an announcement dated 17 May 1836 placed in the *Limerick Chronicle* by the Tontine Company mentioned that James Pain, among others, had attended a General Meeting held that day and that another General Meeting was to be held on 31 May 1836 at which, ‘*an Official Report is to be laid before them by Mr. PAIN, as to the progress of the Buildings.*’¹¹³ Construction work continued until the spring of 1838 and the role of Pain as architect is confirmed in an advertisement in the *Limerick Chronicle* dated 28 April 1838¹¹⁴. Armed with this knowledge, it seems reasonable to discuss the general design and construction of the Pery Square terrace as work that can be attributed to James Pain as a supervising architect.

A detailed discussion of the principal architectural features of the Tontine terrace is useful to balance the emphasis on Gothic in this thesis and to highlight that even in the 1830s the victory of the Goths in British and Irish architecture had not been total and that the magnetic pull of the Greco-Roman world still strongly influenced men of wealth, culture and discernment. The Battle of the Styles was being fought-out, and in the immediate vicinity of the Greek Revivalist Tontine can be seen other competing contemporary styles including the Pain brothers’ own St. Michael’s (1844) in Church Gothic in Pery Square itself, around the corner in Hartstonge Street we find the delightful Tudor Revival Leamy’s School (1841) and Barrington’s Street, laid down in the 1830s, contains a Georgian terrace with neo-Classical honeysuckle balconettes, a Regency motif style that had long been out of fashion in London.

Greek Revival

The Tontine may be regarded as the flagship of Limerick’s Georgian terraced architecture for the excellence of its design, its attractive appearance and the consistently high standard of workmanship throughout.¹¹⁵ The terrace consciously, but without ostentation, presents an image of privileged, elegant and cultured living combined with a feeling of strength, security and permanence. The two end houses of the terrace, by projecting slightly forward, give a sense of country house grandeur to the front elevation, an intentional feature given that the prospect from the house is towards a leafy park. By placing the doorways to the end houses in side pavilions further emphasis is given to the ‘wings’. The finely crafted ashlar work on the ground and basement floors creates a sense of strength and enduring permanence recalling the lower levels to be found in Italian Renaissance palatial

¹¹² McMahon *op. cit.* p. 9.

¹¹³ *Limerick Chronicle* 21 May 1836.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.* 28 April 1838. See text of advertisement in Note 1, p.58.

¹¹⁵ Lee *op. cit.*

architecture and Palladian villas. Above the ashlar, the brickwork, red/brown in colour, is well laid, the parapet of the front, side and rear elevations hiding the double-pitched roof from view.

At street level, iron railings, set in limestone plinths, protect the unwary passer-by from toppling over into the deep, open air, basement areas. The finials on the top of the railings are in the form of spear heads and the iron work would have been typically painted green to recall patinated bronze weapons associated with the heroic, warrior nobility of Antiquity:

Achilles began to arm for battle . . .
 He strapped the breastplate around his chest
 Then over his shoulder Achilles slung his sword,
 The fine bronze blade with its silver studded hilt . . .
 Then lifting his rugged helmet
 He set it down on his brows, and the horsehair crest
 Shone like a star and the waving golden plumes shook . . .
 And then, at last, Achilles drew his father's spear
 From its socket stand – weighted, heavy, tough,
 No other Achaean fighter could heft that shaft,
 Only Achilles had the skill to wield it well. ¹¹⁶

At intervals along the railings can be seen finials in the form of Grecian urns that are restrained in style in keeping with the architecture of the terrace. The open area in front of the basement served a functional purpose in that it permitted steam and the smell of cooking to escape from the kitchen without wafting up through the house. In addition, the moat like appearance of the area kept the socially undesirable at bay. This notion of the area as defensive moat is not pure fancy, for there were at least two occasions, in June 1830 and June 1840, when mobs from the socially derived Englishtown and parts of Irishtown surged into the Georgian district breaking into provisions stores and bakeries and looting ships moored by the quays in sustained food rioting that required all the Sovereign's horses and all the Sovereign's men to quell the disturbances. In 1840 the high tide of the looting reached as far as a bakery in The Crescent, the other side of the block on which Pery Square is situated. Terrified shopkeepers closed their stores and respectable citizens bolted and shuttered their homes as the streets filled with the desperate denizens of the slums. ¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Homer *The Iliad* Book 19, Lines 430-60. Translated by Robert Fagles, Viking Penguin, 1990.

¹¹⁷ *Limerick Chronicle* 25 June 1830; *Limerick Reporter and Tipperary Vindicator* 2 June 1840.)

A building's character and aspect (its appearance) is very much defined by the arrangement of its openings - its doorways and windows. The plain and masculine approach of the Greek Revival style towards Classical decoration is very much in evidence in the layout of the door-cases of Nos. 2-5 Pery Square with their stone Doric columns that stand forth separated from the wall. The robust Doric order recalls the glory days of Fifth Century Athens when the style was used in great public buildings such as the Parthenon and the Temple of Theseus (Fig. 60). It is in the window arrangement of the terrace that the ideals of Classicism are also expressed, the fenestration making a significant contribution to the harmony, proportion and balanced elegance of the composition. The window bays are all perfectly aligned vertically from basement to top floor suggesting the monumental columns of the Ancients. The Classical character of the exterior of the terrace was continued on into the interior of No. 2 Pery Square where the original marbled paint work in the hall and on the stair walls imitates the marbled walls of Greece, Rome and Egypt.

The Pery Square Tontine terrace stands alone in Limerick for its grandeur among the more prosaic Georgian terraces that populate much of the rest of the city's Georgian quarter. To build the majority of such structures no art or architectural skill was required as the techniques of constructing terraces had long been established. All that the master builder and his contracted craftsmen needed were the easily available pattern books that laid down architectural details and dimensions so that the set pattern could be simply repeated, almost *ad nauseam*. It was only in the grander, more expensive terraces that a freer interpretation comes into play and an architect, such as James Pain, called upon.

It is by looking at the typically austere, rather dull, symmetrical Georgian terraces of provincial Limerick that one can fully understand why the wealthier landed classes, such as the O'Briens of Dromoland, had become increasingly drawn to the more imaginative and asymmetrical style of Gothic. A style that allowed both architect and patron to fully indulge their Romantic tastes by composing individualistic and distinctive mansions that drew upon the military and ecclesiastical architecture of the Medieval era. Gothic also had the added advantage of enabling the upper classes to clearly mark themselves off from the common, middle-class herd.

Death of George Richard Pain

George Richard Pain died in Cork in 1838 on 26 December aged 45 and was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Shandon.¹¹⁸ He had a number of children including a daughter Sally who married Henry Vereker and lived at Wellington Villa, Military Road, Limerick.

¹¹⁸ *Pain, George Richard: Index of Irish Architects* Irish Architectural Archive, Merrion Square, Dublin.

Following his brother's death in 1838 James, by now 58 years old, was not as prolific professionally. But this was but the continuation of a trend that had set in as early as the mid-1830s when the number of major commissions awarded to the brothers seems to have tailed off. James nevertheless maintained his architectural practice until the early 1850s. Firstly, joint projects on which the brothers had been working on needed to be seen through to completion. One of these was the replacement of the Fourteenth century Thomond Bridge at Limerick with a new structure. This civil engineering contract, commenced in 1837, was not finished until 1840. A plaque on the bridge parapet credits both George and James with the architectural work.

There is extant an architect's Plan and Elevation, dated 1837 and signed James and George Pain, detailing the design of the replacement bridge whose seven elliptical arches replaced the fifteen arches of the original medieval structure¹¹⁹ (Fig. 61). Reading the drawing from left to right, from the Thomondgate shore to King's Island, reveals that while the left-hand piers of the new bridge rested on the old foundations exactly, as the structure progressed to the right the piers of the new bridge 'drifted' off centre from those of the old. This was a modification of James' 1814 design whereby the new piers sat exactly on the old¹²⁰ (See Fig. 17). Thomond Bridge still stands today under the stress of modern traffic, as does two other Limerick bridges of Pain design, Athlunkard Bridge (1833) and Baals Bridge (1831), proof that the Pain brothers were competent as civil engineers.

As bridge builders the Pain brothers made an important contribution to improving the infrastructure of Limerick so as to allow the freer movement of goods and vehicles into and out of the city. Their work on Baals Bridge being a prime example. Old Baals Bridge, another structure of medieval origin, was proving totally inadequate for an expanding commercial city by the nineteenth century. Up until 1777 this bridge supported two rows of houses on either side of a narrow traffic-way. The removal that year of just one row of these houses relieved some of the traffic congestion, but the entire structure was in woeful need of replacement. Upon hearing in December 1829 that the bridge was to be replaced and a new one designed by the Pains, a local newspaper commented,

'We are glad to find that measures are in progress for re-building this bridge, which in its present is an abominable nuisance. The removal of the houses, now a disgrace to that entrance, and erecting a new one arch bridge across, will open a delightful view of our quays from the Dublin approach, and afford a free circulation of air to that part of the city.'

¹¹⁹ 'Plan and Elevation of Thomond Bridge' Limerick Museum, LM 1991. 0005.

¹²⁰ 'Plan and Elevation of Thomond Bridge. Drawings made by Mr. James Pain, Architect, in 1814' reproduced in J. Hill *The Building of Limerick*, The Mercier Press, Cork, 1991. p. 147.

Additionally, the journalist reported in relation to Athlunkard Bridge then being constructed under the direction of the Pains, 'The second arch is now completely turned, and the workmanship is of the first kind.'¹²¹

Death of James Pain

No major architectural projects are associated with the name of James Pain after the construction of the Pery Square Tontines, the building of Thomond Bridge and the completion of St. Michael's Church, Pery Square (designed 1838, completed in 1844). His body of work from 1840 to c1850 seems to consist of just a few churches, schools and renovation work such as that carried out on Knoppogue Castle. Of course, besides coinciding with his professionally declining years, the 1840s marked the Great Famine. Commencing in 1845 with its heavy financial drain on landlords, this period was not conducive to the commencement of major building projects promoted by the gentry and aristocracy.

James survived his younger brother by almost forty years until, at the age of ninety-seven, he died at his house at 17 Upper Glentworth Street on 13 December 1877 from apoplexy and was laid to rest in the Vereker vault at St. Mary's Cathedral four days later. It has generally been assumed that he never married, but this could not have been the case, for both his death and church burial certificates record his marital status as 'widower'.¹²² Also, a notice in the *Limerick Chronicle* dated 12 April 1834 reports the death on, '7th inst. In Ludgate St., London, Harriet Henman, the beloved wife of James Pain of this city.'¹²³

Judging by his Will, drawn up in 1863, James died in reasonable financial comfort, for, according to a manuscript copy of the document, he held £5,662 of Bank of England 3% stock. At the time of his Will his housekeeper, Mrs. Moloney, received a salary of £10 per annum while his other female domestic, Anne Donnelly, was paid £7 per annum.¹²⁴

Among the items of interest mentioned in the Will is a model of Mitchelstown Castle that James bequeathed to his niece, Sally Vereker. Sally was also to receive the, 'small marble Bust of her late father G. R. Pain,' and, in addition, was to inherit a portrait of James Pain painted by Joseph Patrick Haverty and 'my bust by

¹²¹ *The Limerick Evening Post and Clare Sentinel* 18 December 1829.

¹²² *Civil Death Record and Burial Death Record* of James Pain, Limerick Archives and Ancestry Office, The Granary; *Limerick Chronicle* 15 December 1877.

¹²³ *Limerick Chronicle* 12 April 1834.

¹²⁴ 'The Will of James Pain' *Transcriptions of Wills of Limerick* Limerick Archives and Limerick Ancestry Office, The Granary, Limerick.

Henry Vereker and the marble on which it stood in the hall.’¹²⁵ The present location of these items is not known.

We know much about the architecture of James Pain, but little of his personality. An insight, perhaps, is offered in the obituary that appeared in *The Irish Builder* shortly after his death: ‘He enjoyed a deservedly high reputation for his upright and honourable course of conduct, both among his employers and professional brethren, and, it may be added, was highly respected by the working men of the local building trades as a just and impartial judge of the questions which so often arise between them and their employers.’¹²⁶

Summary

Architecture is an integral part of society expressing aspects of its political, economic and social structure and the subject cannot be compartmentalised into a box labelled ‘Culture and Aesthetic Taste’. It is the politics of architecture that is so fascinating to study and in looking at the architectural practice of the Pain brothers it is difficult not to draw the conclusion that the bulk of their work served the interests of the Anglo-Irish landed establishment in trying to preserve the status quo, whether it be building prisons to contain social unrest, peppering the landscape with the churches of a minority religion on the defensive, or building battlemented houses that sought to convince the world of the permanence of a landed Ascendancy social order. While George Richard Pain was very much involved in this work, his independent commissions for the Catholic Church in Cork may indicate that George may have been a little more liberal in his views than his elder brother.

But the work of the Pains for the dominant Anglo-Irish providers of patronage in pre-Famine Ireland does not detract from the legacy left behind by these two men in Munster. A legacy that forms part of the rich and diverse cultural, artistic and architectural history of this country. Architecture is one of the most important primary sources we have for understanding the past and to lose even one derelict Church of Ireland church without attempting to restore or stabilise the structure is to lose a window into the past. Documents may lie, oral histories distort, but stones hold the truth of their founders, for they can often speak to the generations to come far more eloquently and convincingly than the words of men. John Ruskin, the Victorian art and social critic once memorably remarked, ‘Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the other two, but of the three the only trustworthy one is the last’ (Figs. 62 & 63).

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

¹²⁶ *The Irish Builder* 1 January 1878. The obituary was signed W. F., probably William Fogerty, a Limerick architect.

Note 1 re. Footnote 114, p. 52:

'Pery Square Tontine.

Proposals in writing will be received by Alderman D. F. G. MAHONY for FLAGGING in FRONT of the Houses, specifying the rates required for best Western Flags, proper curb stones and Frames for Coal Openings, with suitable Iron Covers, finding all Materials and Workmanship.

To be executed to meet the approval of James Pain, Esq.'

Limerick Chronicle 28 April 1838.

Appendix I

Works Attributable to the Pain Brother Partnership

Cork House of Correction, 1818-19.

Repairs to The Exchange, Limerick, 1819.

Dromoland Castle, Co. Clare, 1819-35.

Mungret Church of Ireland, Co. Limerick, 1822-4.

Carrigaline Church of St. Mary (Church of Ireland) 1823.

Midleton Church of Ireland, Co. Cork, 1823.

Cathedral of St. Mary, Limerick, monument to Rev. William Deane Hoare, 1823.

Mitchelstown Castle, Co. Cork, 1823-5.

Castlehaven Church of Ireland, Co. Cork, 1824-6.

Castletownroche Church of Ireland, Co. Cork, 1825.

Rathkeale Holy Trinity (Church of Ireland), County Limerick, 1825.

Buttevant Church of St. John (Church of Ireland), 1826.

Villiers Alms House, Limerick, 1826.

St. Munchin's Church of Ireland, Limerick, 1827.

Emly Cathedral (Church of Ireland), Co. Tipperary, 1827.

Blackrock Castle, Cork, 1828-9.

Clonmel Free School, Co. Tipperary, 1829-30.

Independent Chapel, Oliver Plunkett Street, Cork, 1829-31.

County Club House, South Mall, Cork, 1829-31.

Strancally Castle, Co. Waterford, c. 1830.

City and County Court House, Washington Street, Cork, 1830-35

Baals Bridge, Limerick, 1831.

Adare Manor, Co. Limerick. (Work from 1832 to late 1830s.).

Athlunkard Bridge, Limerick, 1831-33.

Castle Bernard, Co. Offaly, 1833.

Killaliathan Church of Ireland, Co. Limerick, 1834.

Thomond Bridge, Limerick, 1837-40.

Church of St. Michael (Church of Ireland), Limerick, 1838. Built without spire 1844.

In addition:

Convamore House, Co. Cork. (Date not known).

Wellesley Bridge, Cork. (Date not known).

Elm Park, Clarina, Co. Limerick. (Date not known).

Appendix II

Works Attributable to James Pain

Lough Cutra Castle, Co. Galway. (Supervising work of Nash design) c1811.

City Gaol, Limerick. (Supervising work of Nash design) 1812-3.

Rockingham Castle, Co. Roscommon. (James may have supervised the work of this Nash design), c1811.

Mount Shannon. (Associated with renovation work) c1813.

Repairs to The Exchange, Limerick, 1815.

St. Saviour's, Baker Place, 1816.

Swiss Cottage, Cahir, Co. Tipperary. (Possibly the work was supervised by James Pain to a Nash design.), Prior to 1816.

St. Paul's (Church of Ireland), Cahir, Co. Tipperary. (A Nash design. Possibly James Pain supervised the work), c.1817.

County Gaol, Mulgrave Street, Limerick (Designed by James Pain. George Richard Pain assisted his elder brother on this project.) 1817-22.

Drumcliffe Church, Ennis, Co. Clare (Renovation work after lightning strike), 1817.

Dunraven Family Mausoleum, Augustinian Abbey, Adare, Co. Limerick, 1825.

St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick. Restoration work. 1820s.

Pery Square Tontine, Limerick (Architect to the Tontine Company), 1836-8.

Kilkee Church of Ireland, Co. Clare 1840

Killenaule Church of Ireland, Co. Tipperary 1840

Kilbehenny Church of Ireland, Co. Limerick, 1840-44.

Pallasgreen Church of Ireland, Co. Limerick 1841.

Knoppogue Castle, Quin, Co. Clare (Renovations), c1850.

Mount Rivers, Co. Tipperary (Additions), 1850.

Cratloe Woods House, Co. Clare (Additions, possibly to the design of James Pain), c1850.

Doon School, Co. Limerick 1851.

Pallasgreen Schools, Co. Limerick, 1852.

Appendix III

Works Attributable to George Richard Pain

Manch House, Co, Cork, 1824.

Church of the Holy Trinity, Capuchin Friary, Fr. Mathew Quay, Cork, 1825.

Killarney Court House, Co Kerry, 1826.

Bantry Court House, Co. Cork, 1826.

Clonakilty Court House, Co. Cork, 1826.

Macroom Court House, Co. Cork, 1826.

Midleton Court House, Co. Cork, 1826.

Skibbereen Court House, Co. Cork, 1826.

Church of St. Augustine (Roman Catholic) Washington Street, Cork. Minor works 1827.

Cathedral of St. Mary (Roman Catholic), Cathedral Road, Cork. (Remodelling) 1828.

Christ Church of Holy Trinity (Church of Ireland), Main Street, Cork. (Internal alterations and removal of tower) 1828.

Castle Hyde Church (Church of Ireland), Co. Cork. (Additions) 1830.

Mitchelstown Church (Church of Ireland) Co. Cork (addition of spire), 1830.

Dungarvan Church (Roman Catholic) Co. Waterford, 1831.

Holy Trinity, Fr. Mathew Quay, 1832.

Church of St. Luke (Church of Ireland), Summerhill, Cork, 1834-6.

Church of St Mary Shandon (Church of Ireland), Shanakiel Road, Cork, c1834.

Church of St. Patrick (Roman Catholic), Glanmire Road Lower, Cork, 1836.

Frankfield Church (Church of Ireland) Co, Cork, 1839.

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With special thanks to Ferga Grant.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1 Classical garden temple (pre-1740) at Dromoland, Co. Clare.



Fig. 2 Palladian mansion: Russborough, Co. Kildare.

Fig. 3 The Gothic Temple (1741)
at Stowe, Buckinghamshire by
James Gibbs.



Fig. 4 Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (1752 to mid-1770s).



Fig. 5 (a) Castle Ward (c. 1762). Front elevation in Classical mode. Castle Ward was built to a design by Bernard Ward and his wife Lady Anne.



Fig. 5 (b) Castle Ward - Gothic inspired garden elevation.



Fig. 6 Gothic ruin (1770s) at Heywood, Co. Laois.



Fig. 7 Bodiam Castle (fourteenth century), Sussex.



Fig. 8 Fonthill Abbey (late 1790s) by James Wyatt to a design by William Beckford. The tower collapsed in 1825.

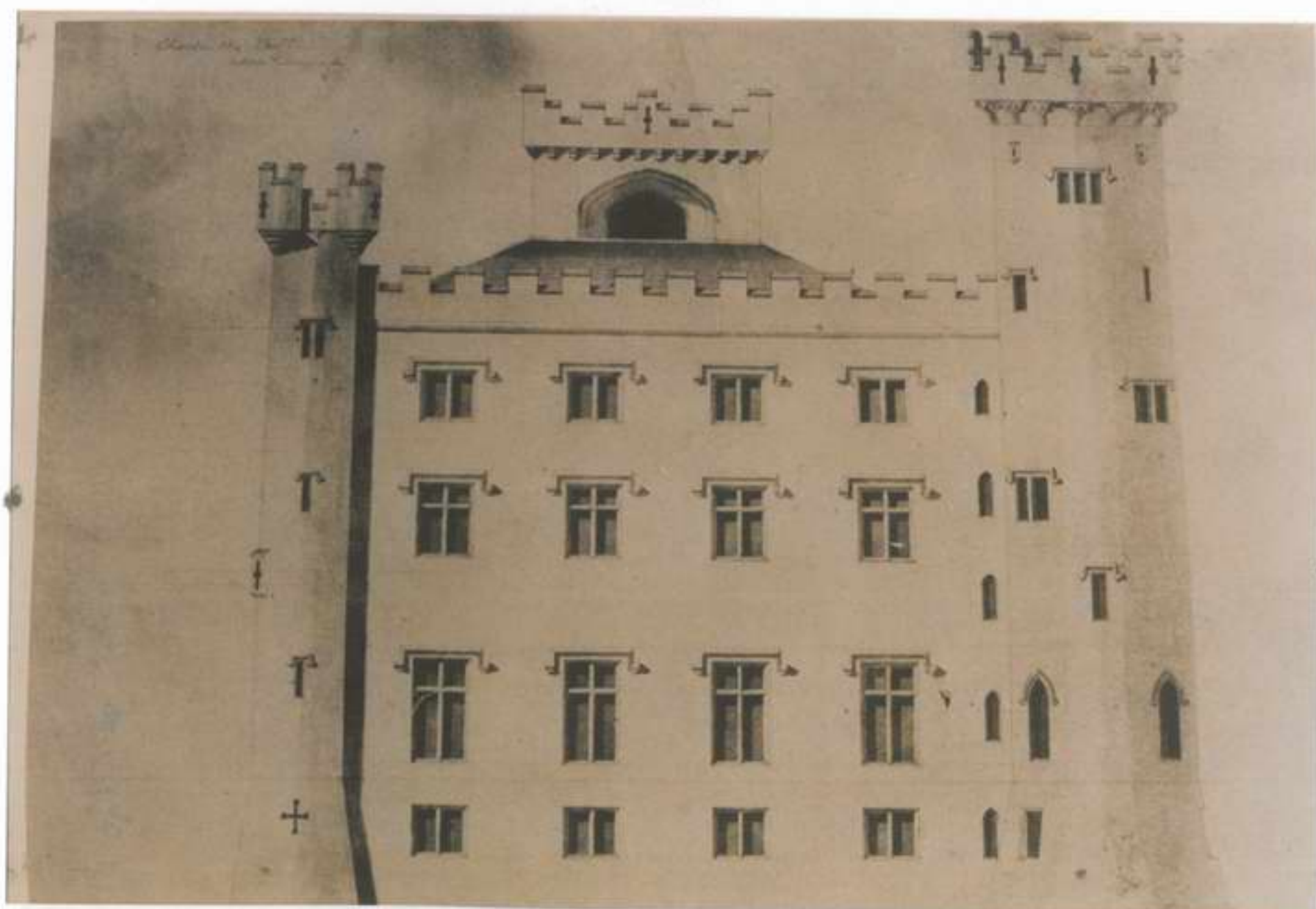


Fig. 9 Francis Johnson's Charleville Castle (1801-12) Co. Offaly - the East elevation. An example of Sublime Gothic.



Fig. 10 Luscombe Castle, Devon (1799) by John Nash
in Picturesque Gothic style.

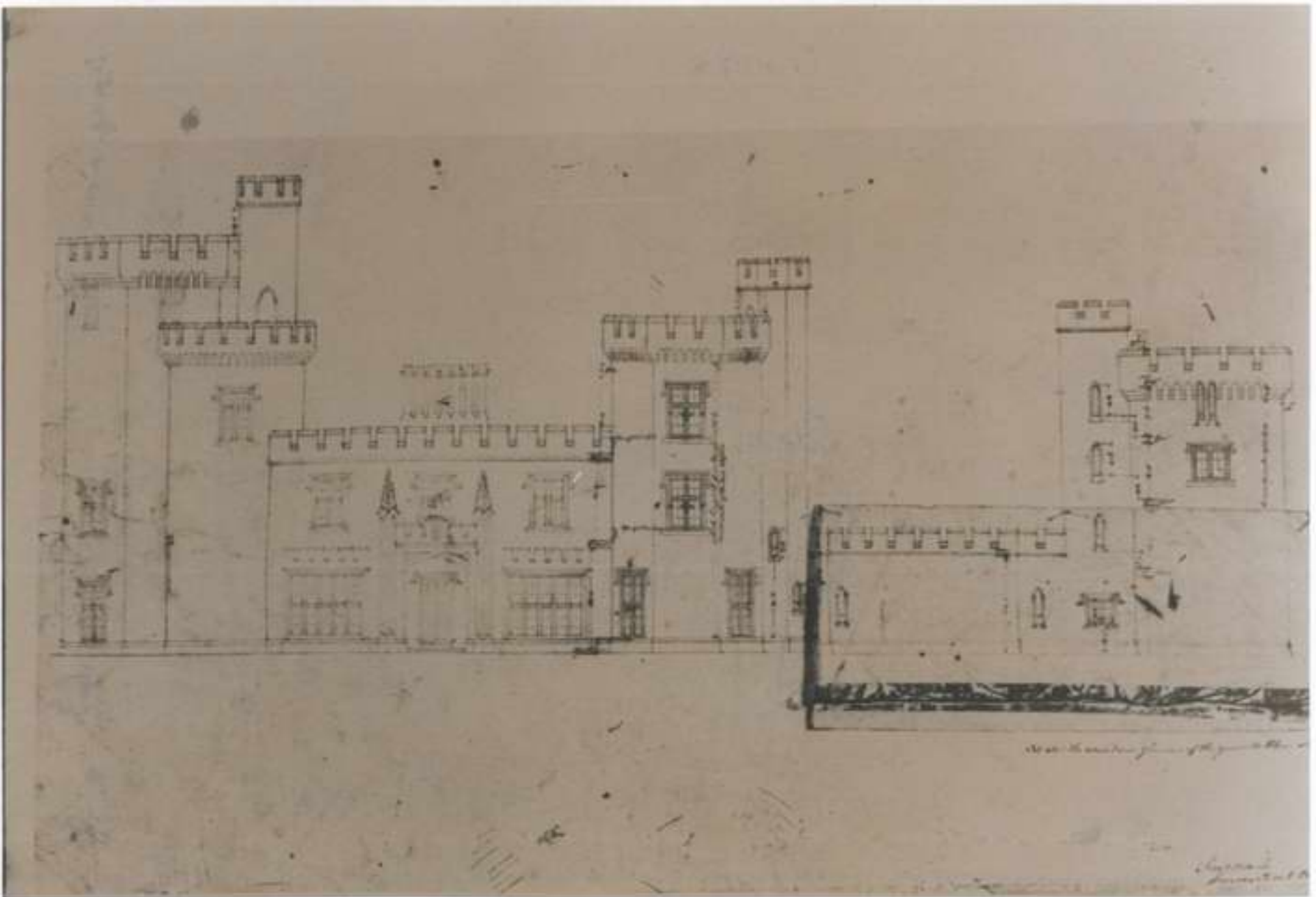


Fig 11 Nash's front elevation (1811) for Lough Cutra Castle.

Fig. 12 Colonel
Charles Vereker.



Fig. 14 Lough Cutra Castle (1811), Co. Galway, by John Nash.
Supervising architect – James Pain.

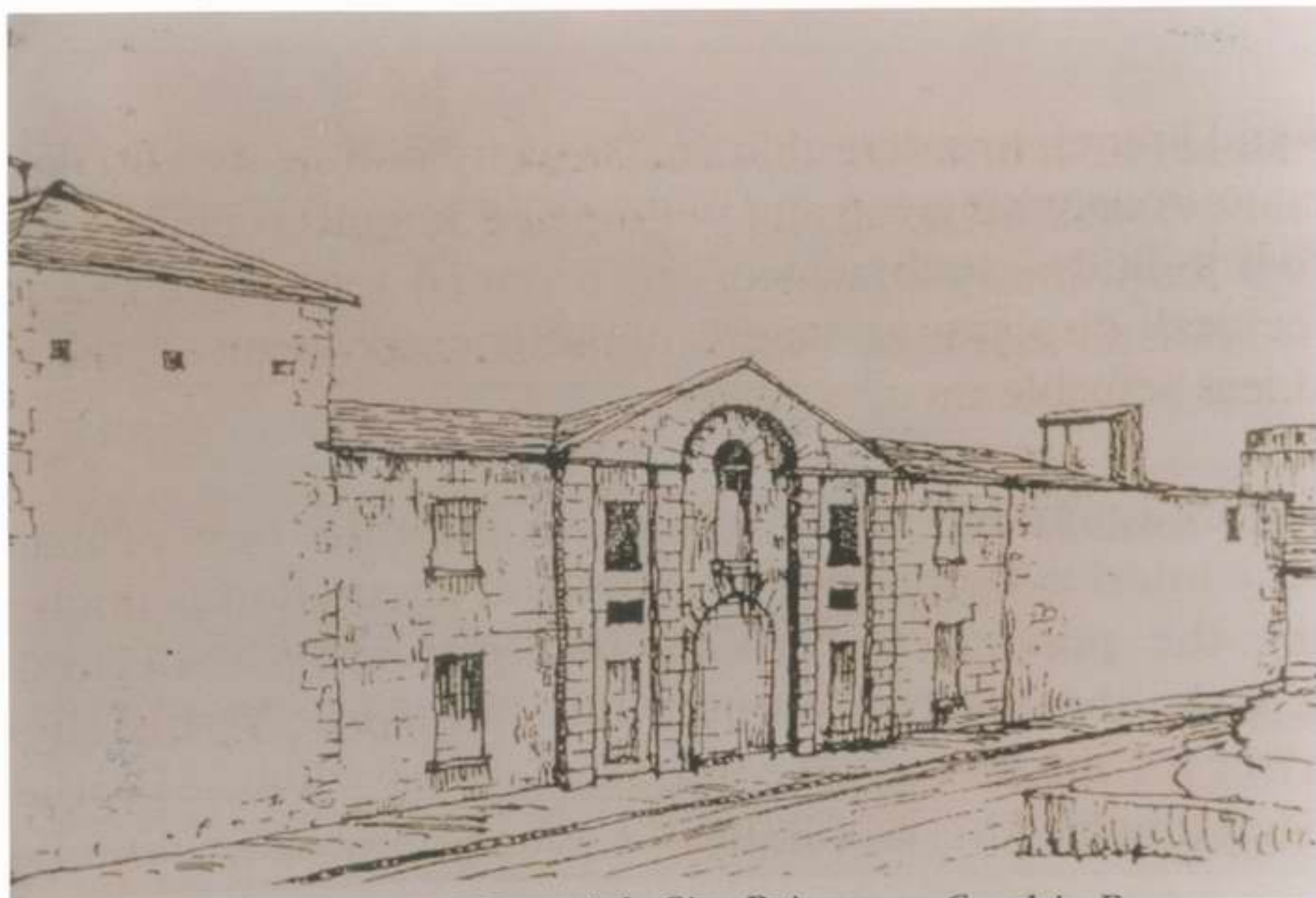


Fig. 15 Facade of Limerick City Gaol facing Crosbie Row. John Nash laid out the plans and the supervising architect was James Pain.



Fig. 16 James Pain's 1813 proposal for Dromoland.

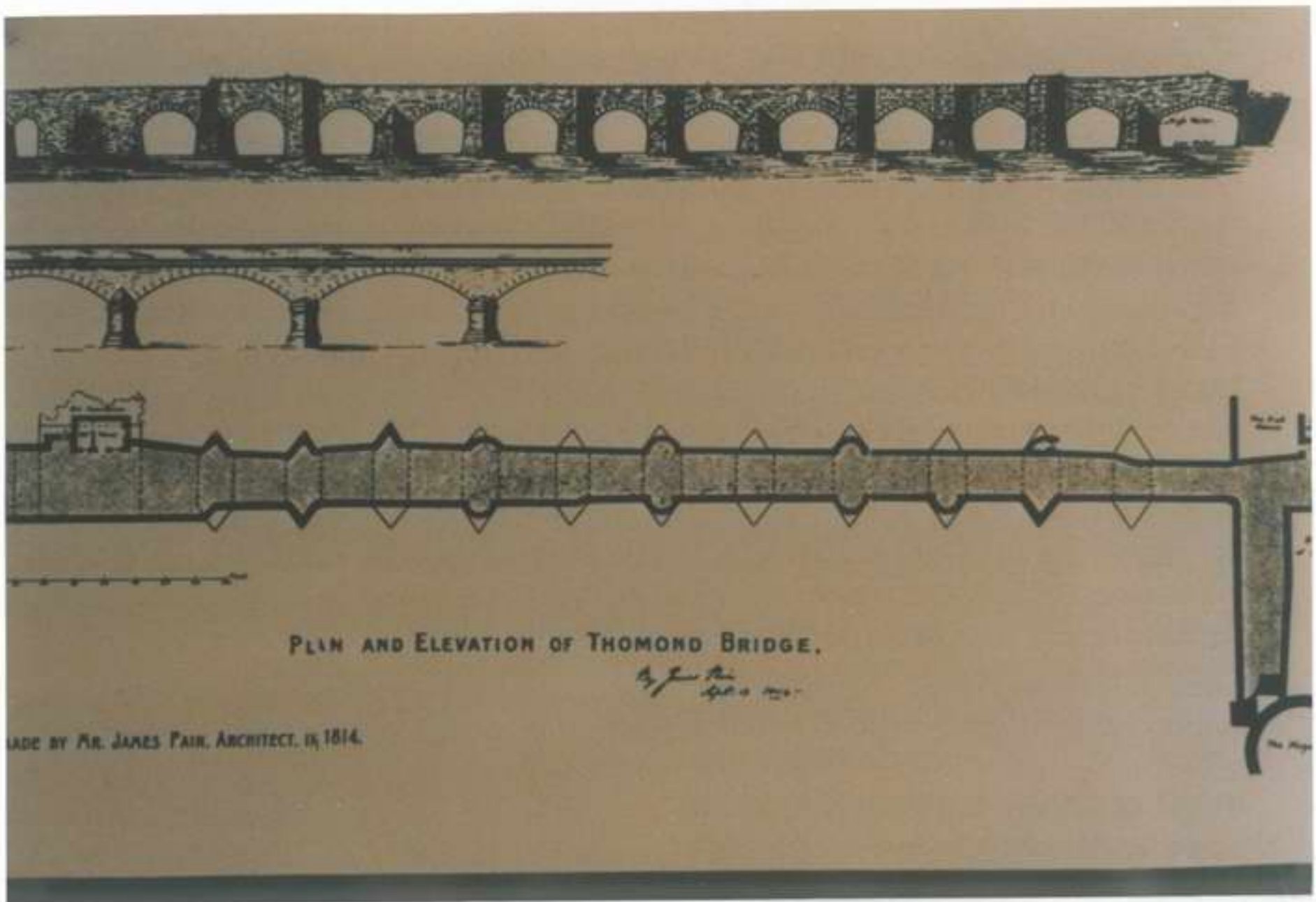


Fig. 17 James Pain's 1814 Plan and Elevation for proposed new Thomond Bridge.



Fig. 18 Mount Shannon, now in ruins, with Ionic portico (c1813). James Pain is believed to have supervised Classical additions to this house.

Fig. 19 St. Paul's (c1815),
Cahir, Co. Tipperary by
John Nash. James Pain
may have been the
supervising architect.

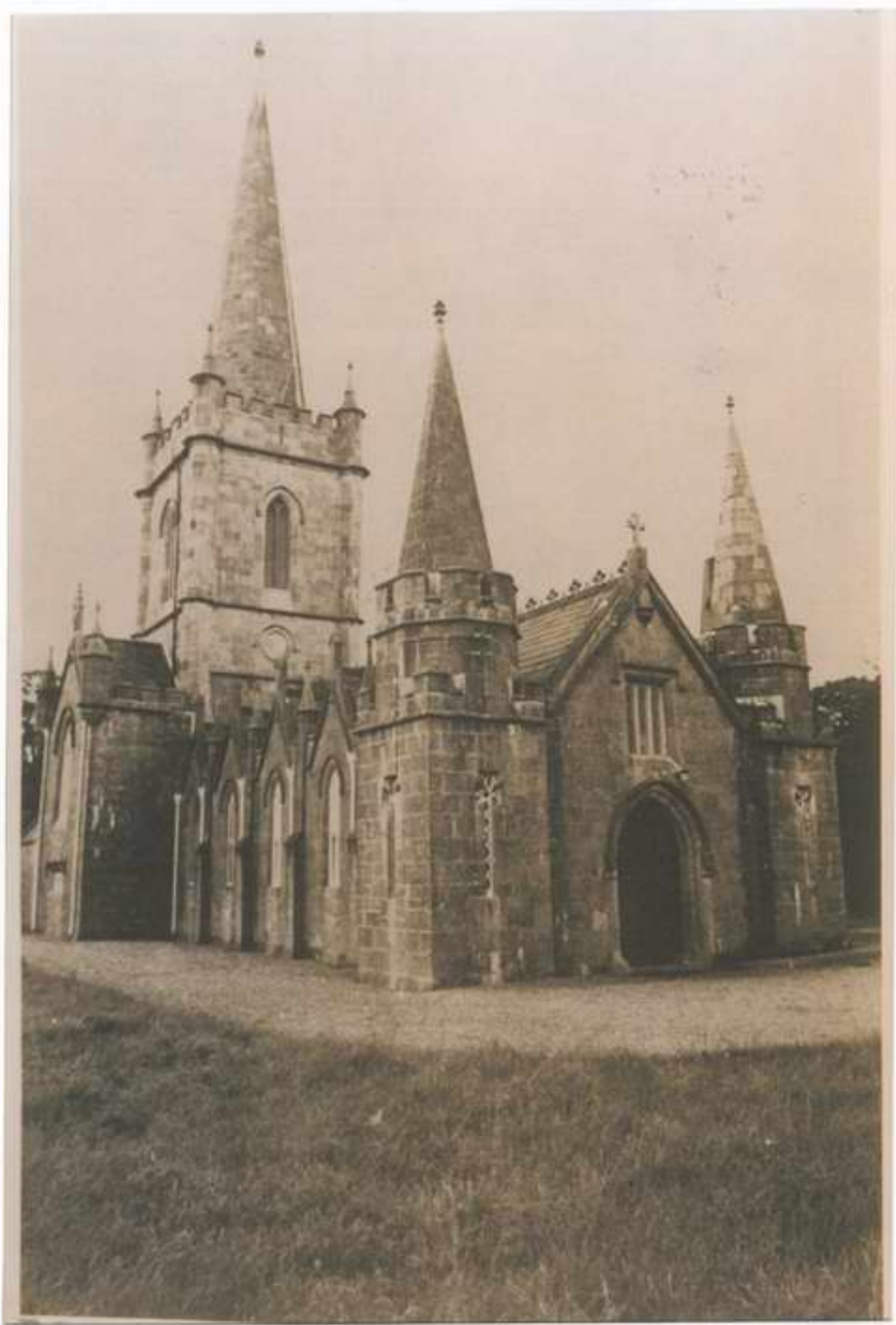


Fig. 20 Swiss Cottage (c1815) near Cahir, Co. Tipperary, by John Nash.
James Pain was possibly the supervising architect.



Fig. 21 St. Saviour's (1816) by James Pain.



Fig. 22 Present-day St. Saviour's.

Fig. 23 Plan elevation of Limerick Prison (1870 Ordnance Survey). The southern cell-block of the original structure (1822) has been demolished.

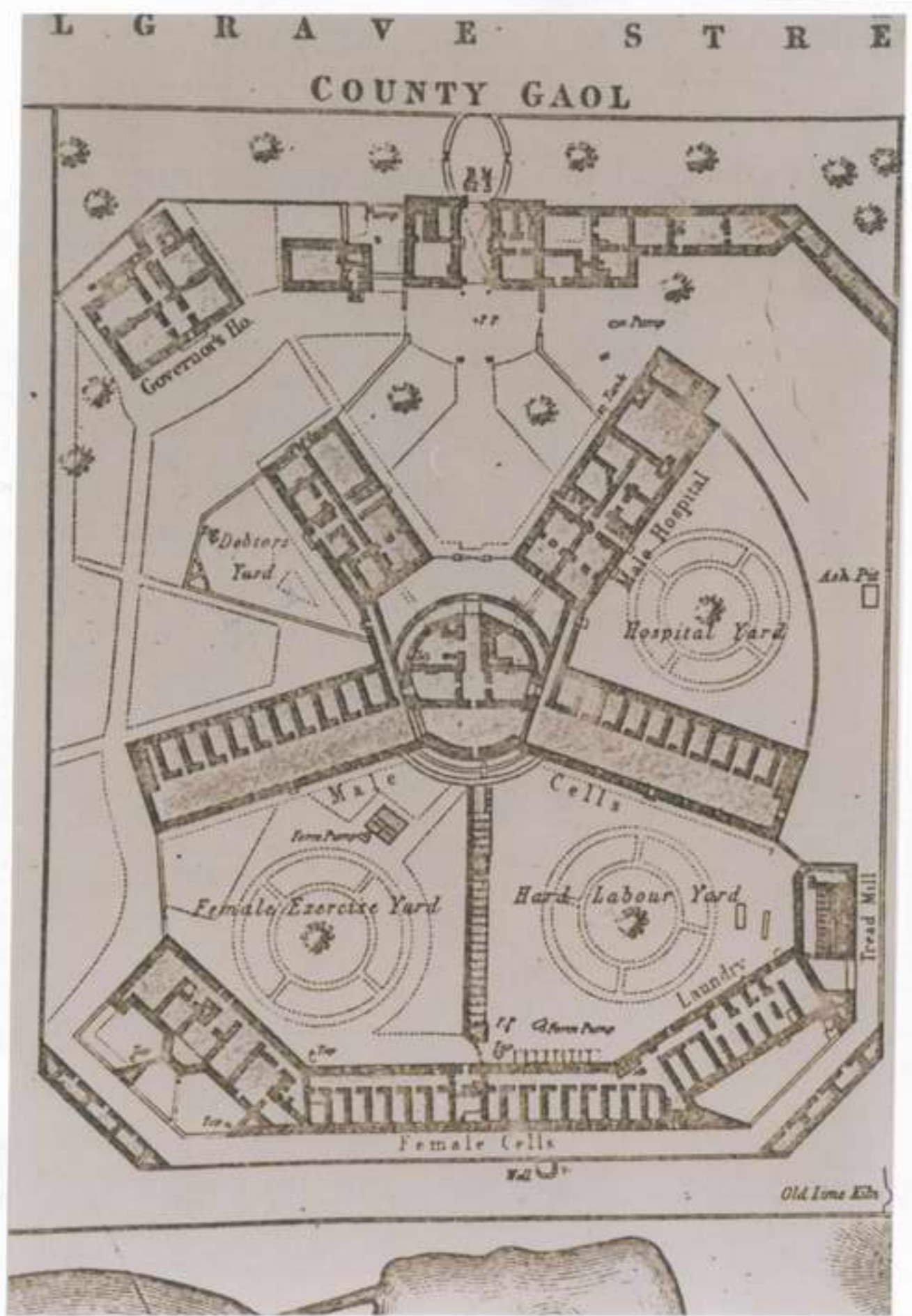


Fig. 24 Entrance, Cork House of Correction (1819) by James and G. R. Pain.



Fig. 25 (a) Dromoland Castle (1819-35) Co. Clare.
Northeast elevation (1832) by James and G. R. Pain.

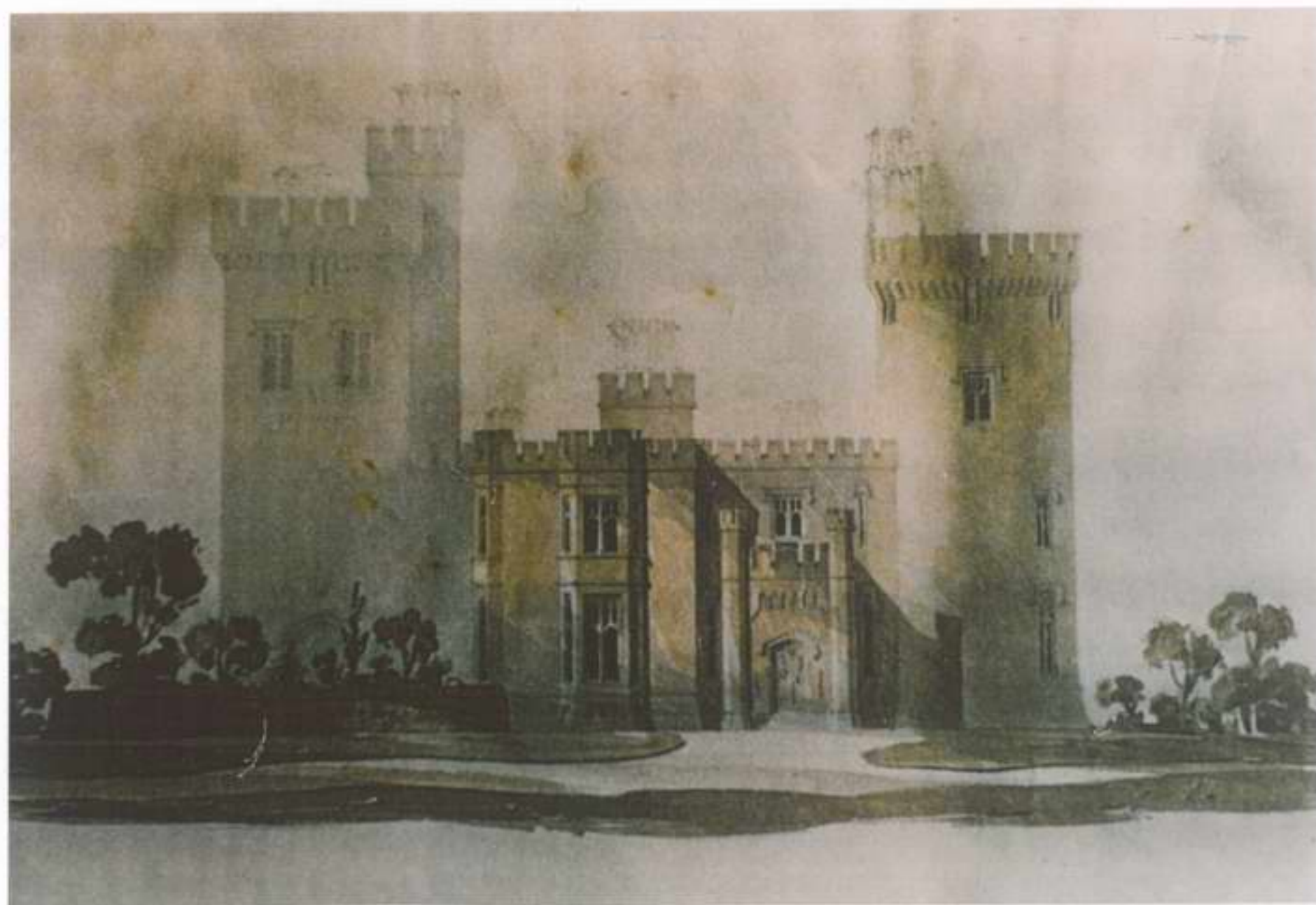


Fig. 25 (b) Dromoland Castle (1819-35), Co. Clare.
Southeast elevation (1832) by James and G. R. Pain.

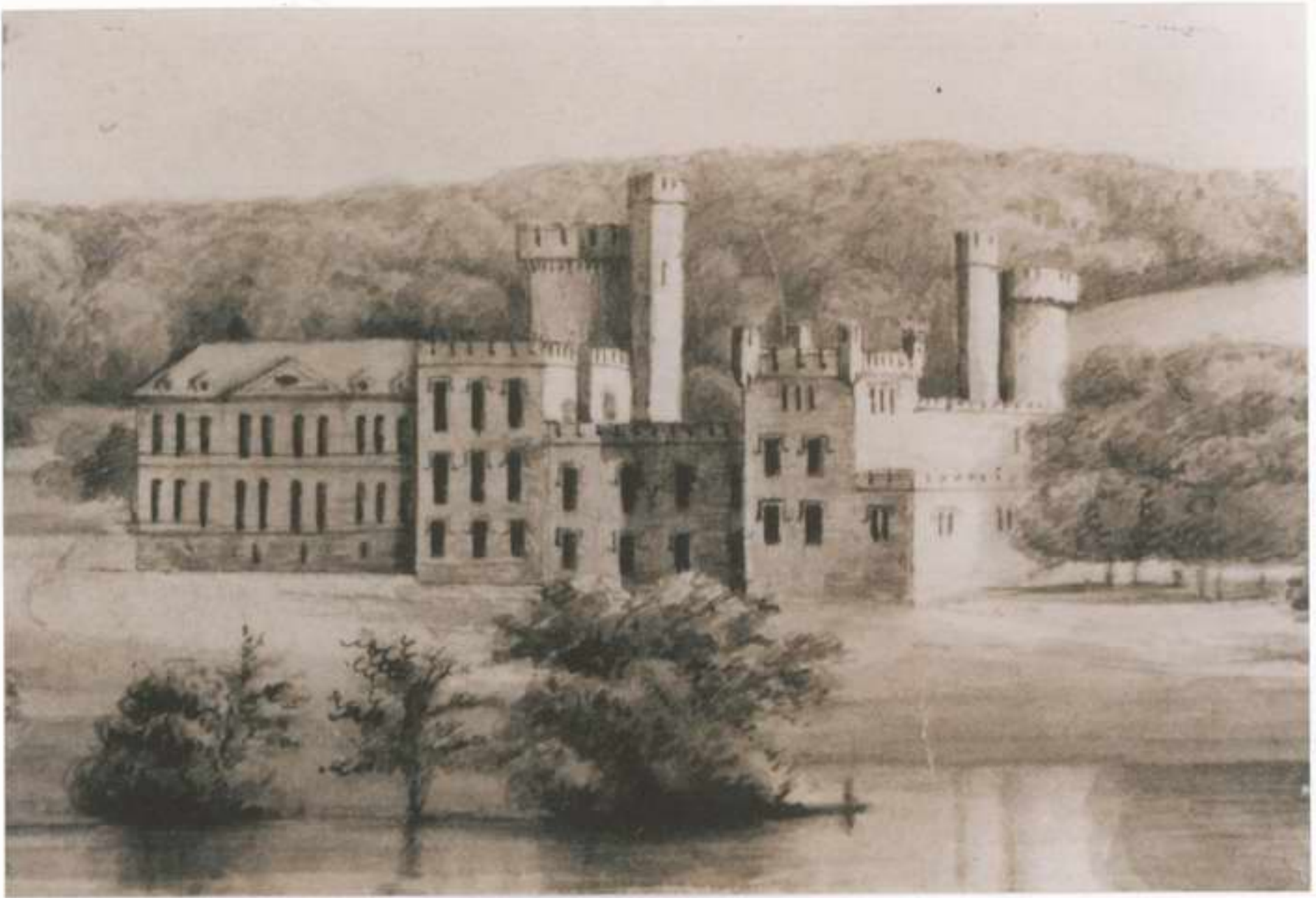


Fig. 26 Watercolour (c1830) of Dromoland showing completed Western section of Castle standing beside the 18th century mansion before the latter was demolished.



Fig. 27 Dromoland Castle today, now a hotel.

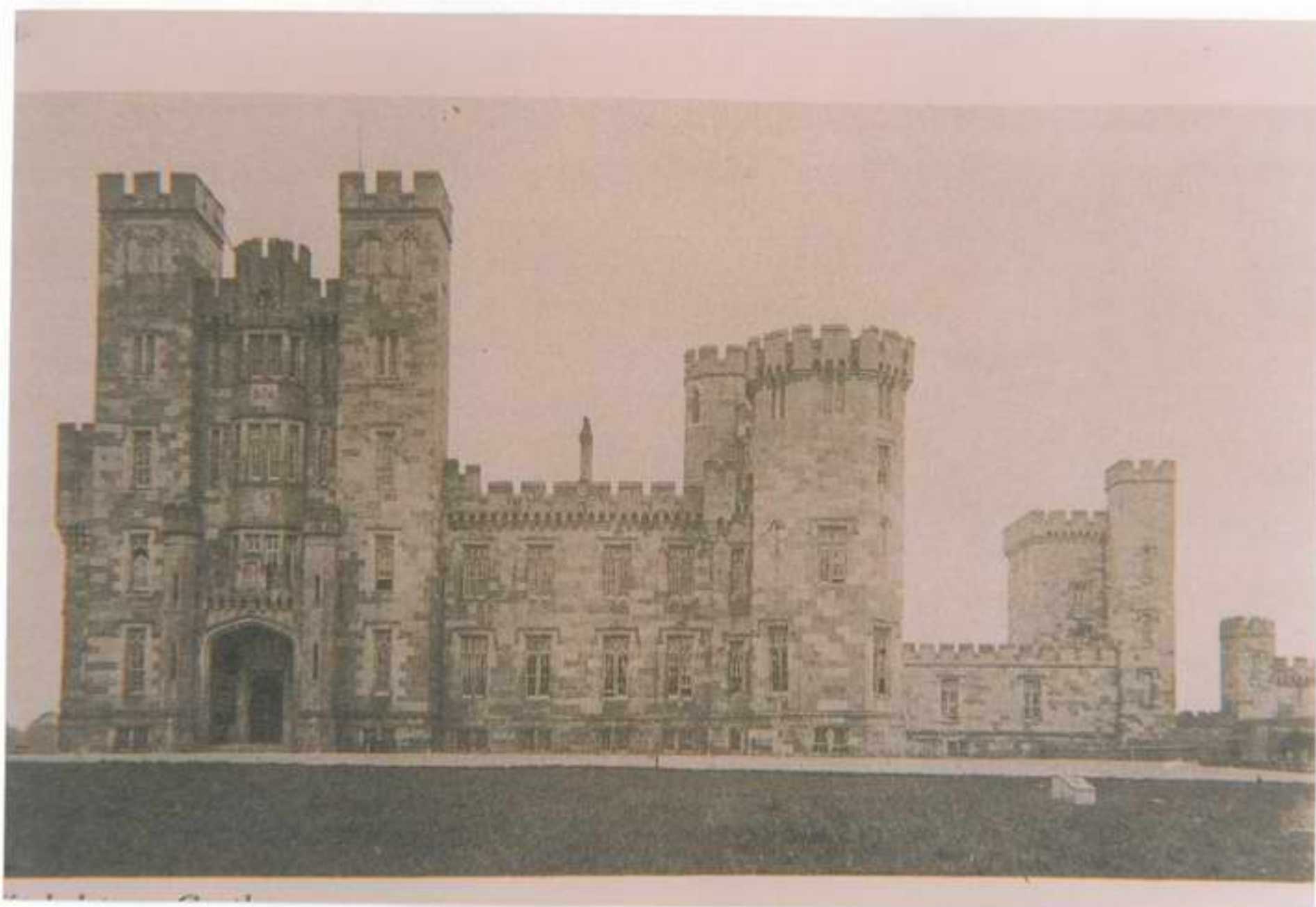


Fig. 28 Mitchelstown Castle (1823-5), Co. Cork by James and G. R. Pain.
Photograph illustrates the sheer size of the seven-storey White Tower.

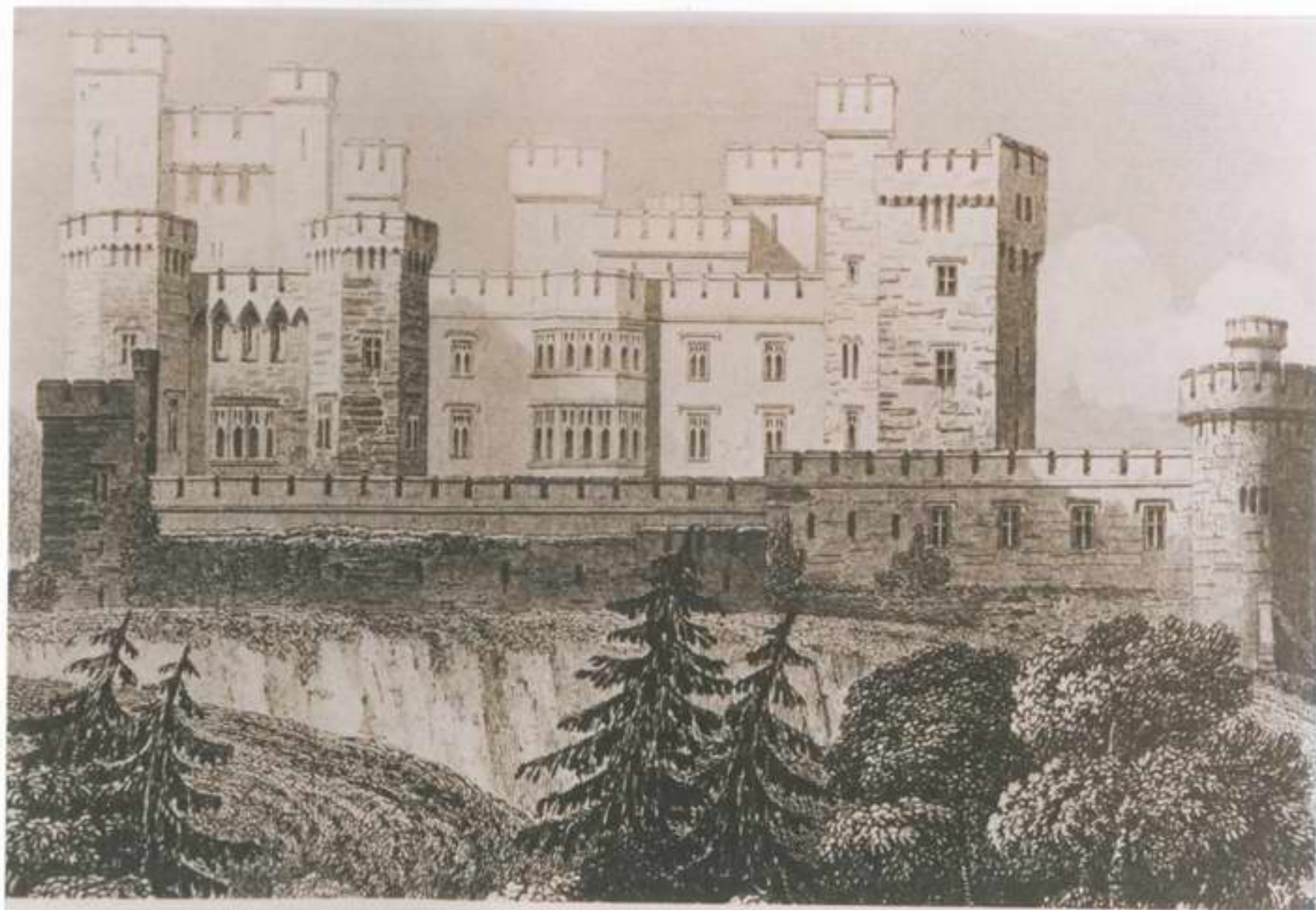


Fig. 29 Engraving of Mitchelstown Castle from Neale's
Views of Seats (1824-9).



Fig. 30 The Gallery at Mitchelstown Castle.



Fig. 31 *The Castle of Otranto* (1831). Watercolour by George Richard Pain.

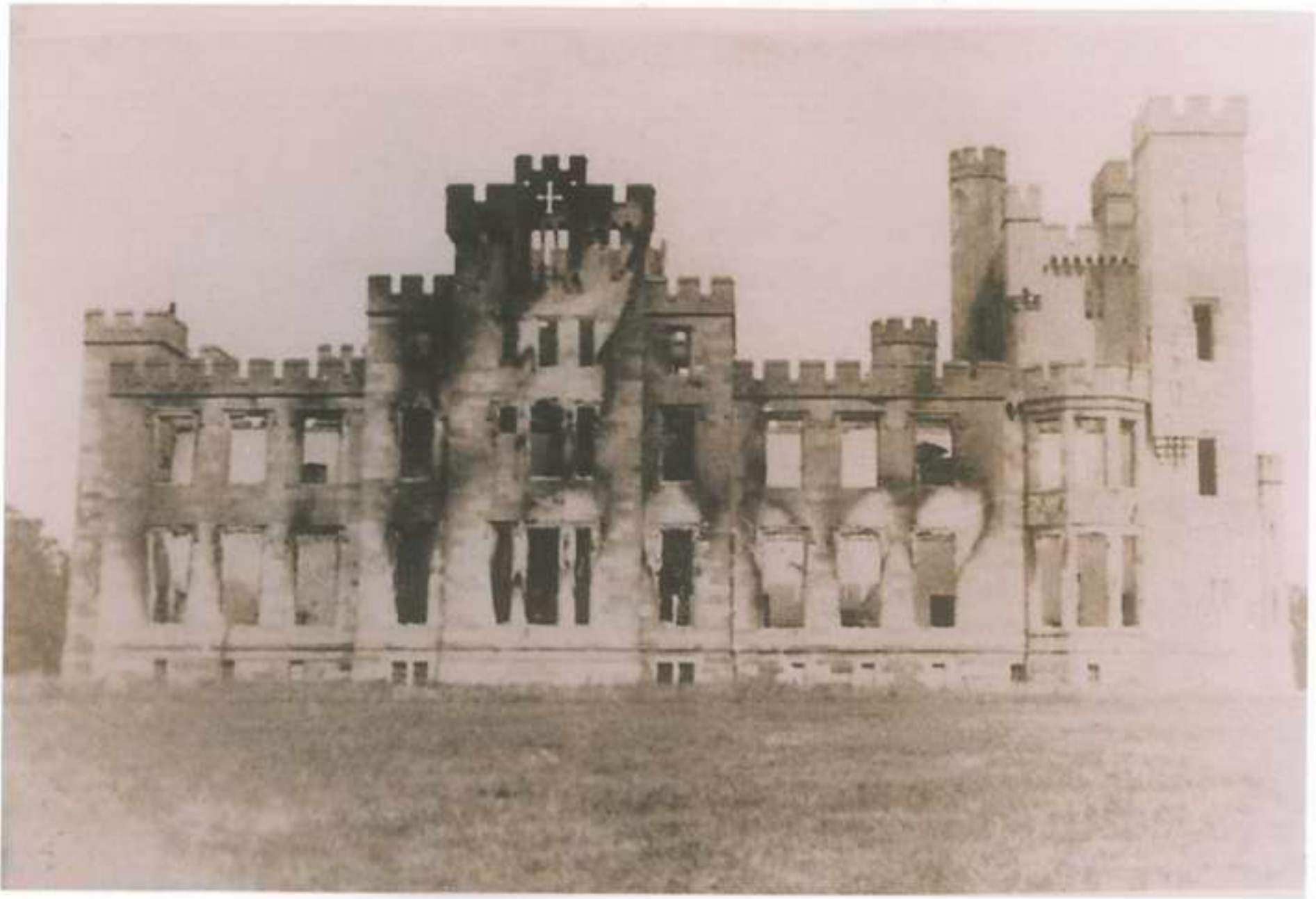


Fig. 32 Mitchelstown Castle after the fire, 1922.



Fig. 33 Gleninagh
tower house, Co.
Clare.



Fig. 34 Leamaneh house (mid-17th Century)
grafted onto late medieval tower house.



Fig.35 18th Century
relaxed mood –
Doneraile House,
Co. Cork.



Fig. 36 Dromore Castle (1867), Co. Limerick by Edwin Godwin.



Fig. 37 Glenstal Castle - William Bardwell's interpretation of Sir Matthew Barrington's romantic Norman vision.

Fig. 38 Glenstal
watch tower (1839)
with sentinel.

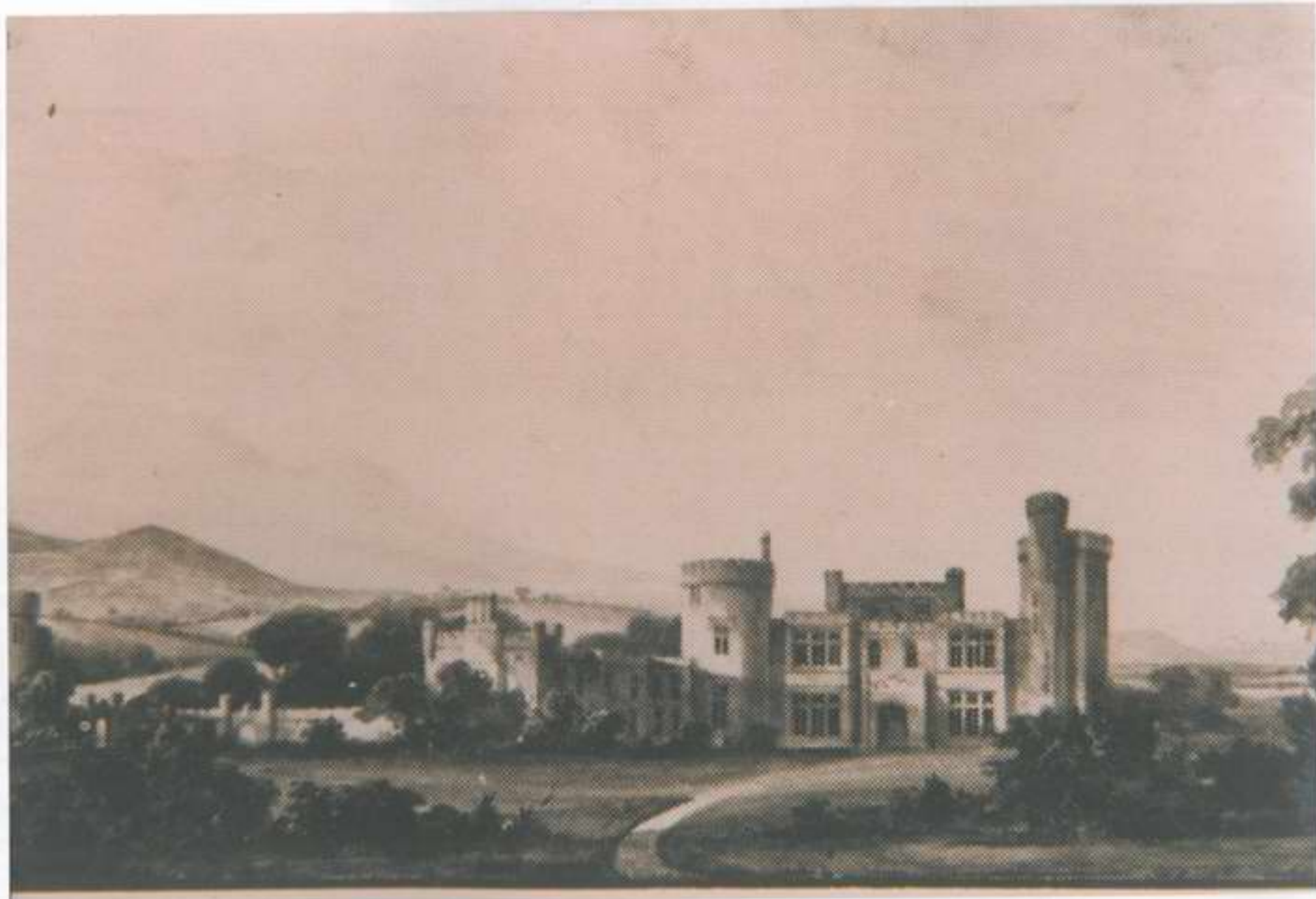


Fig. 39 The Pain brothers' Picturesque perspective (1833)
for their Glenstal proposal.

Fig. 40 Hiberno-Romanesque doorway at Glenstal flanked by Henry II and his queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine



Fig 41 An IRA ambush, May 1921.

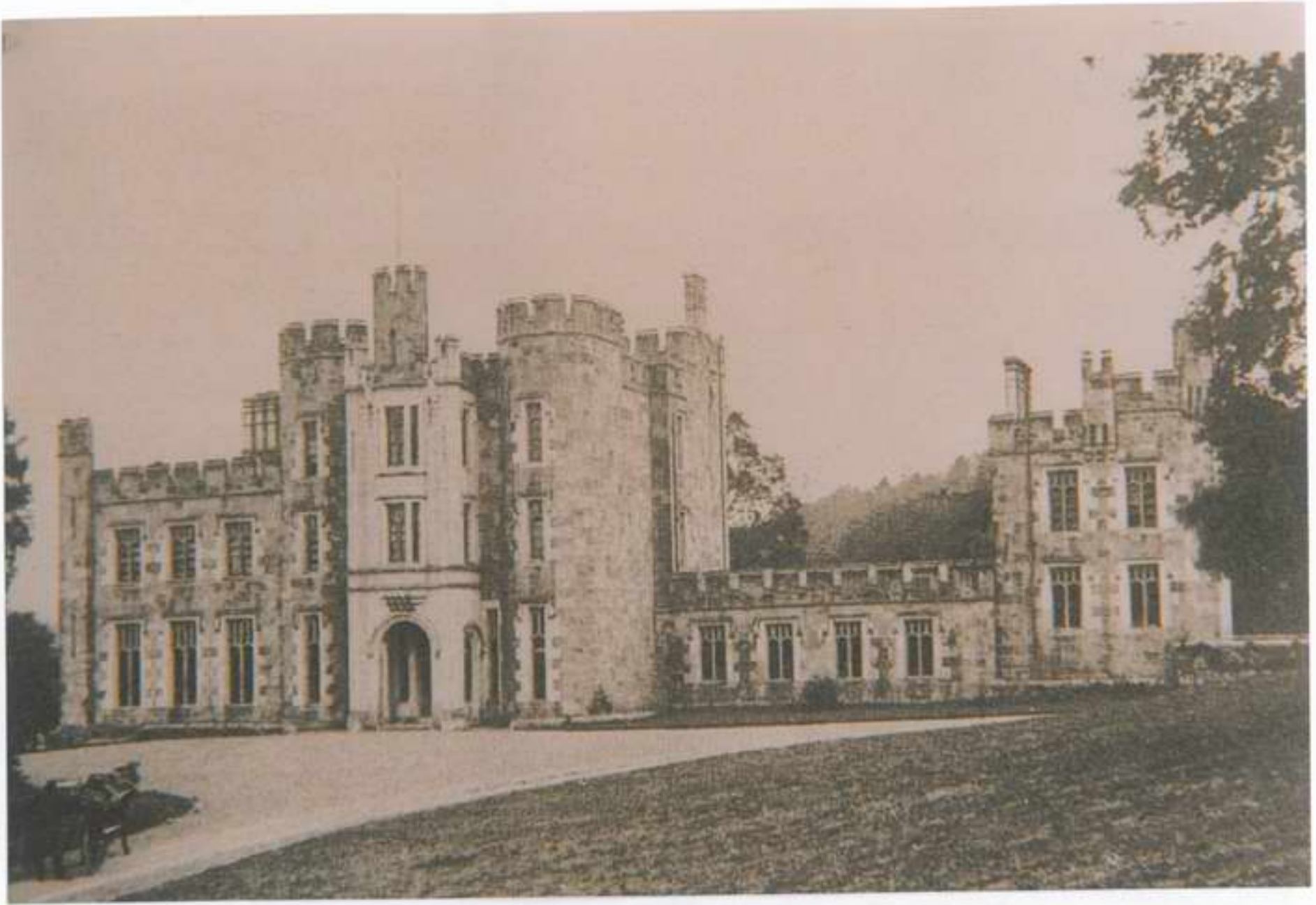


Fig. 42 Strancally Castle (c1830), Co. Waterford by James and G. R. Pain.

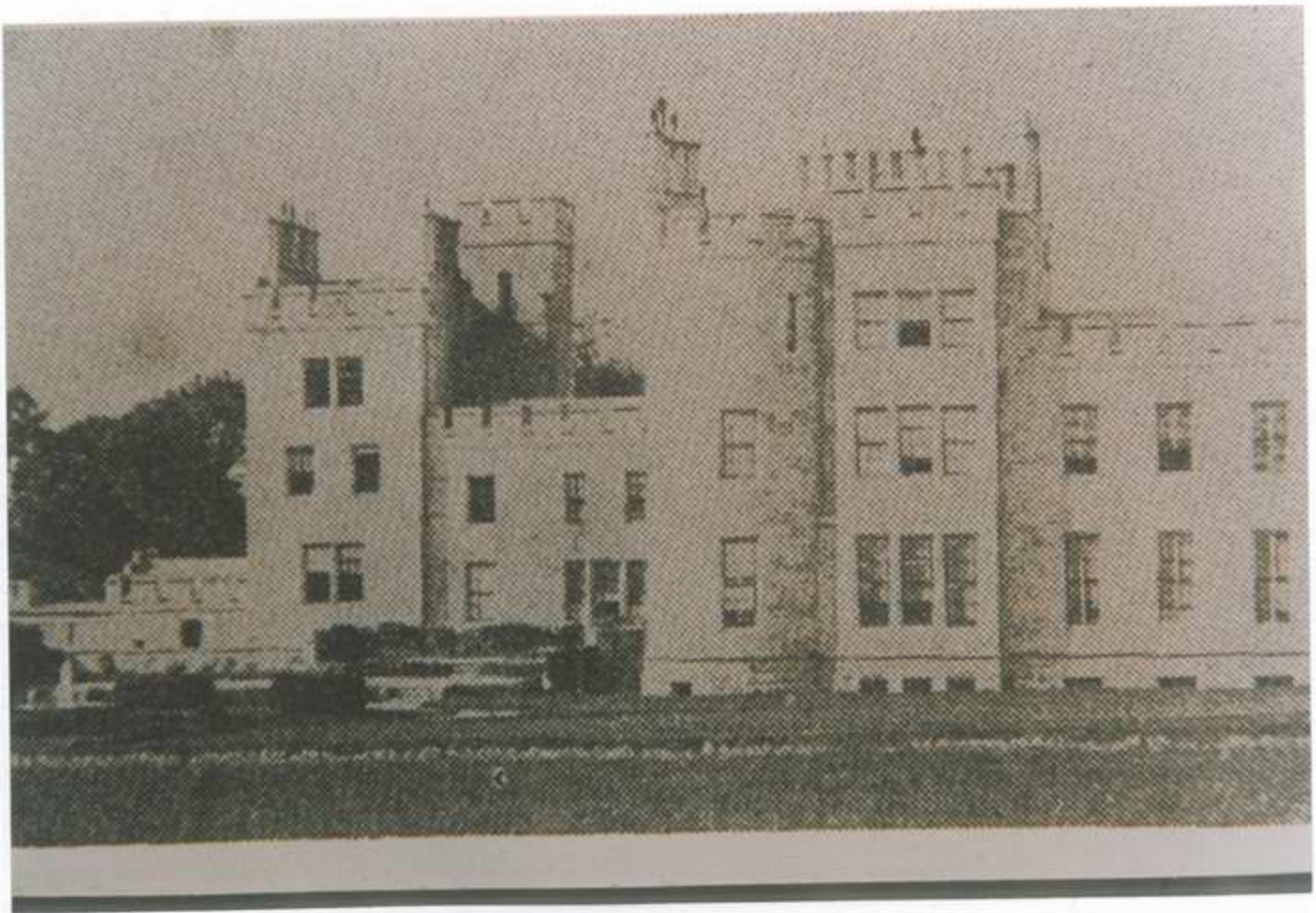


Fig. 43 Elm Park (c1830), Clarina, Co. Limerick by the Pain brothers.



Fig. 44 (a) Blackrock Castle (1827-9), Co. Cork by James and G. R. Pain.



Fig. 44 (b) Blackrock Castle (1827-9), Co. Cork by James and G. R. Pain.



Fig. 45 Knappogue Castle, Co. Clare. Late medieval tower house with nineteenth century castellated range believed to be by James Pain.



Fig. 46 Castlegarde, Co. Limerick. – early nineteenth century additions (c1820) believed to be by James and G. R. Pain.



Fig. 47 St. Munchin's Church of Ireland (1827), King's Island, Limerick by James and G. R. Pain.

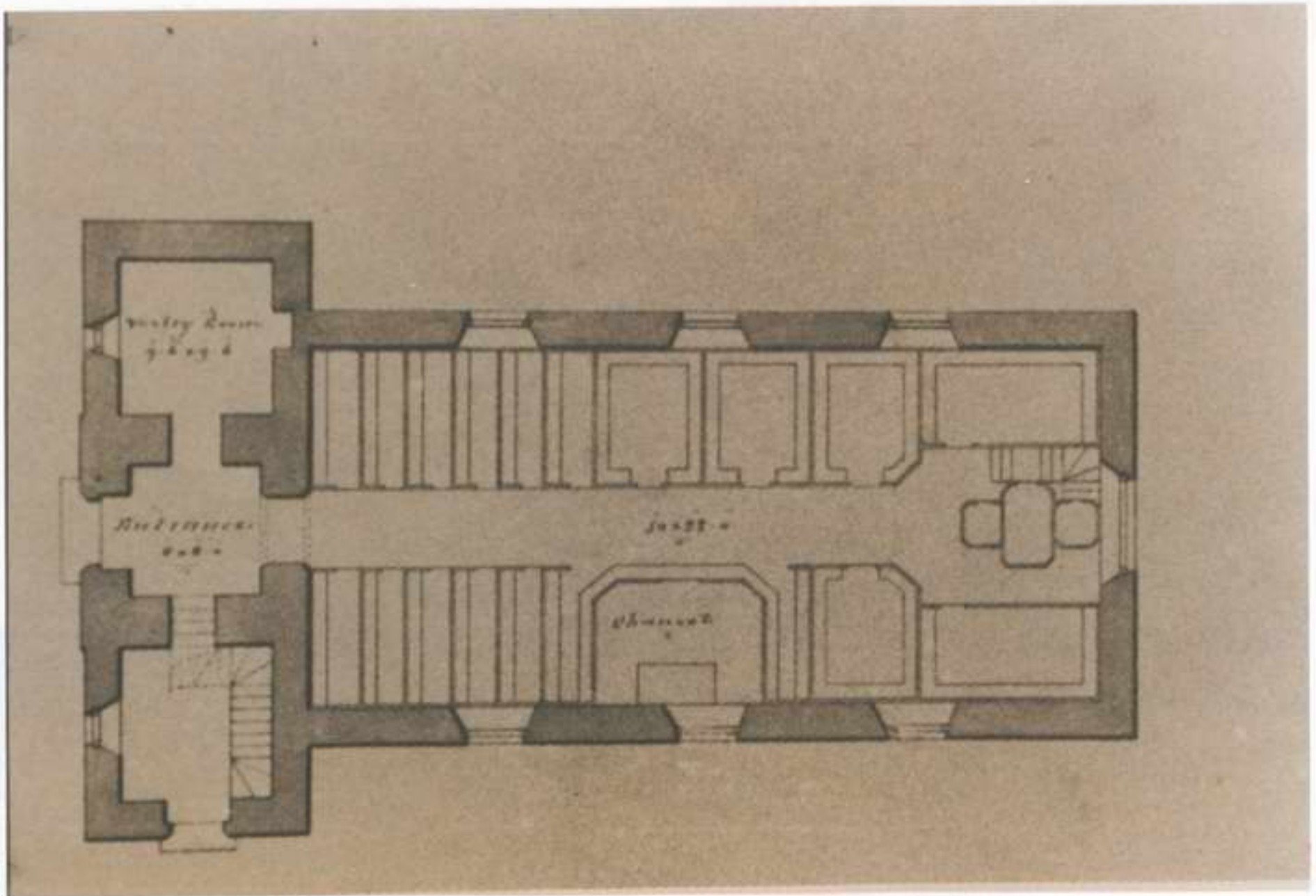


Fig. 48 Plan of Kilcornan Church of Ireland, Co. Limerick.

Fig. 49 (a) Pain brothers' design (1838) for St. Michael's Church of Ireland, Pery Square, Limerick.

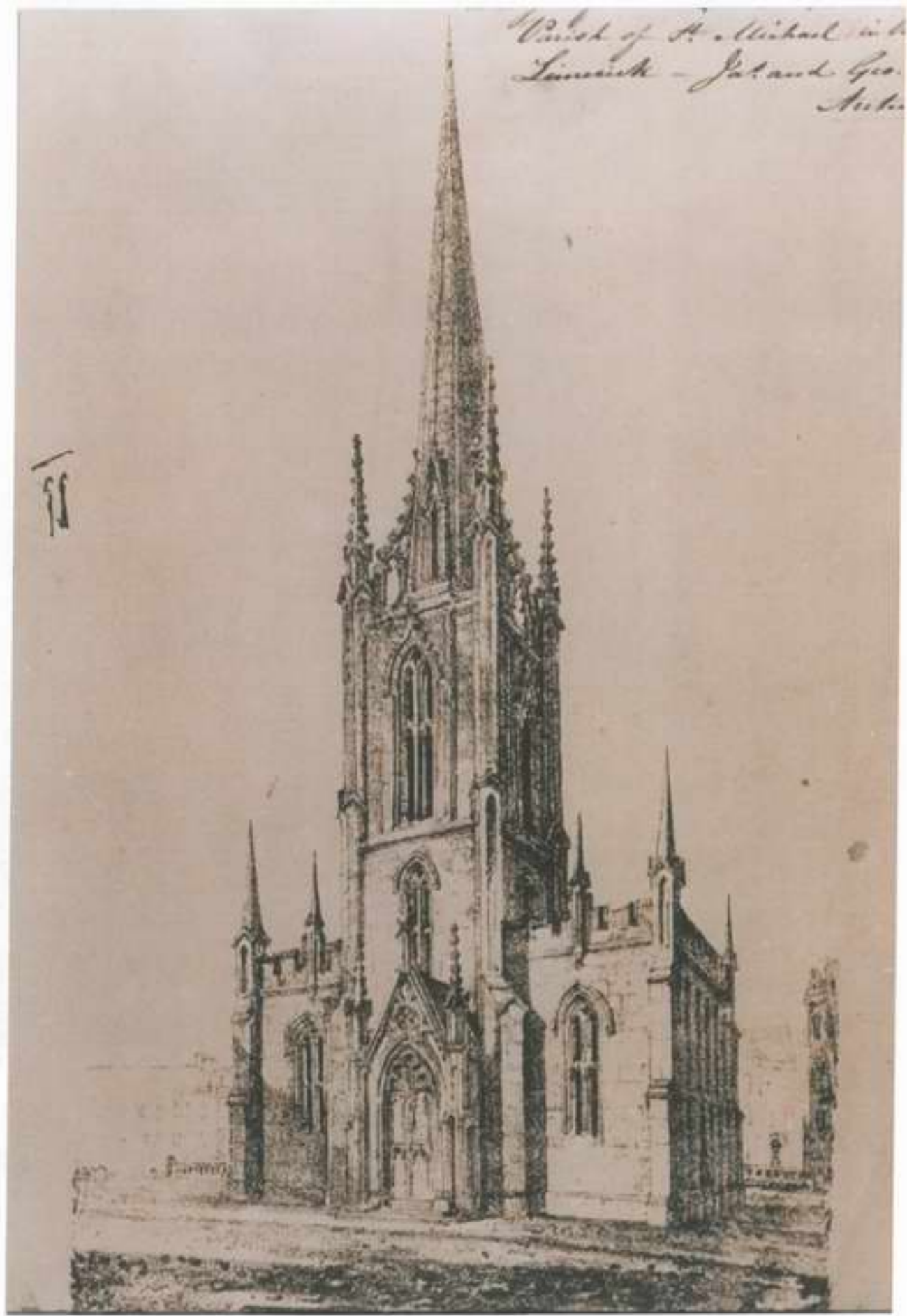


Fig. 49 (b) St. Michael's as it is today.



Fig. 50 Convamore House, Co. Cork.



Fig. 51 City and County Courthouse (1830-35), Cork
by James and G. R. Pain.

Fig. 52 Holy Trinity,
Fr. Mathew Quay, Cork
by G. R. Pain (1825).

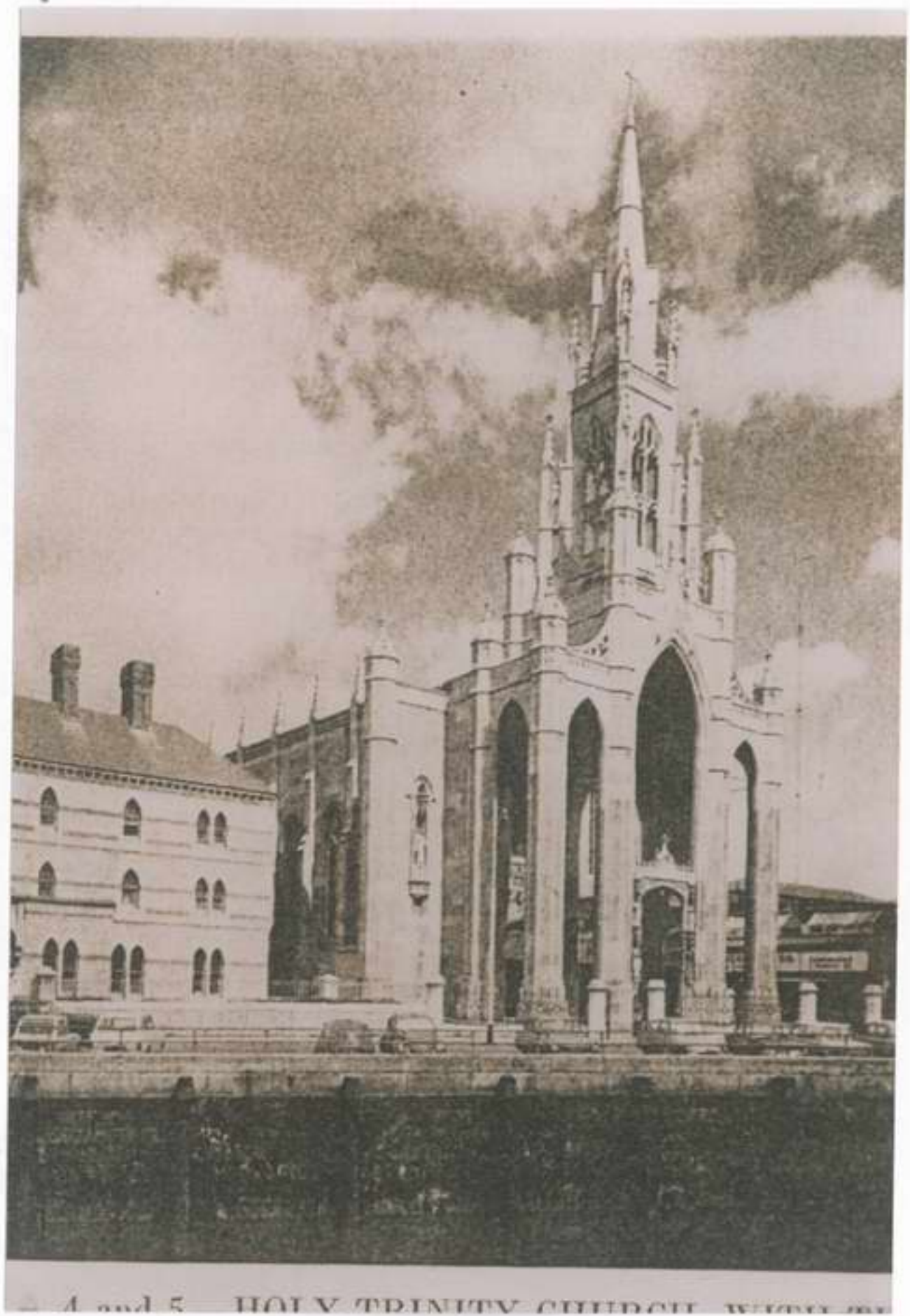


Fig. 53 Fr. Mathew memorial tower (1840s), Glanmire, Cork. (G. R. Pain).



Fig. 54 (a) Proposed Classical design for Adare, Co. Limerick
by James and G. R. Pain.

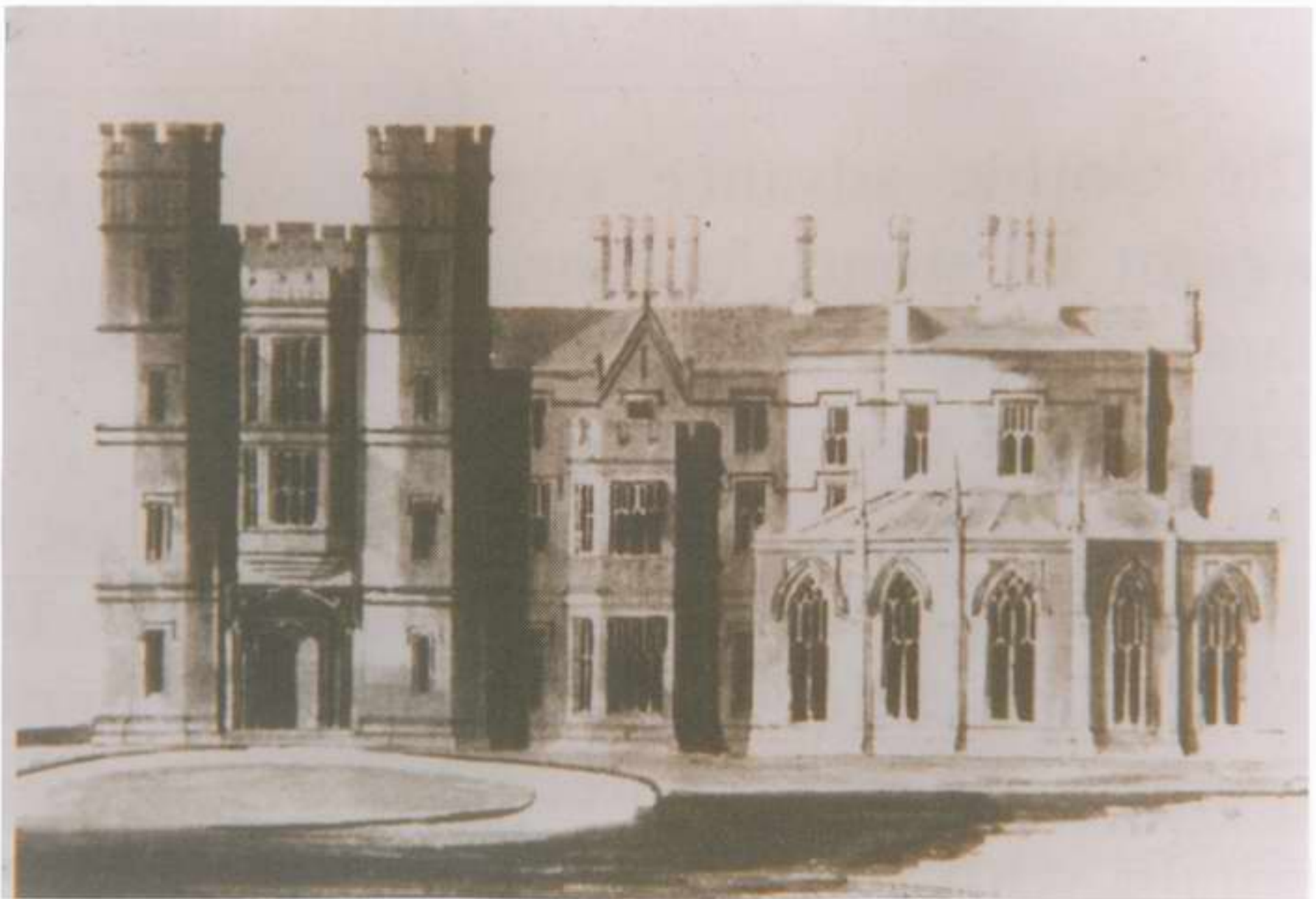


Fig. 54 (b) Tudor-Gothic proposal for Adare (James and G. R. Pain).

Fig. 55 The Long Gallery (1830s), Adare Manor.

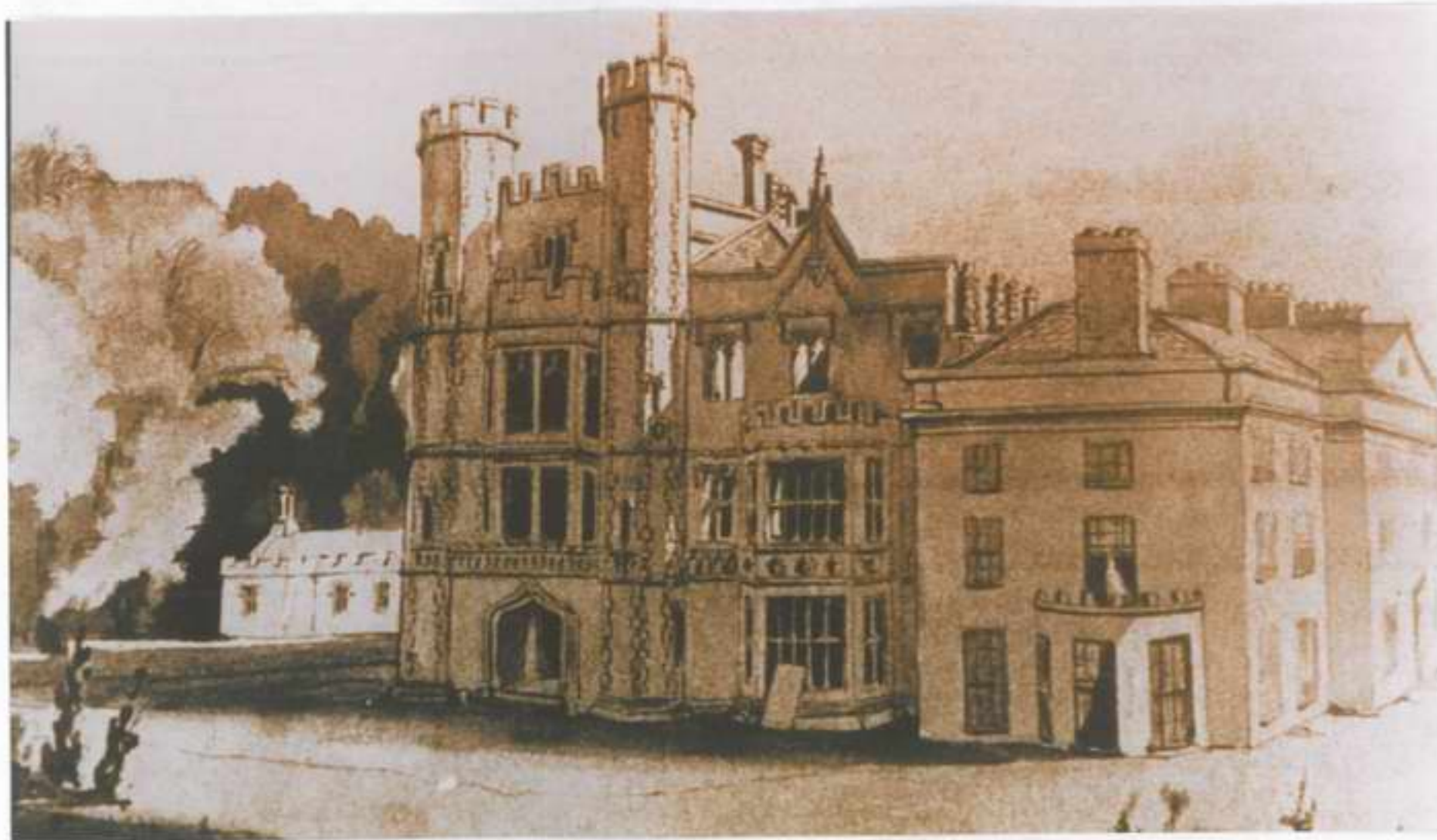


Fig. 56 Watercolour (1837) showing the Pain brothers' Tudor-Gothic section of Adare Manor adjacent to the Eighteenth century mansion that was demolished c1839.



Fig. 57 Front elevation of Adare Manor contrasting the Pain brothers' Tudor-Gothic entrance with Hardwick's Victorian-Gothic Wyndham Tower.



Fig. 58 Villiers Alms Houses (1827), King's Island, Limerick by James and G. R. Pain.



Fig. 59 Pery Square Tontine (1838).



Fig. 60 Door-case (1838)
No. 2 Pery Square,
Limerick.

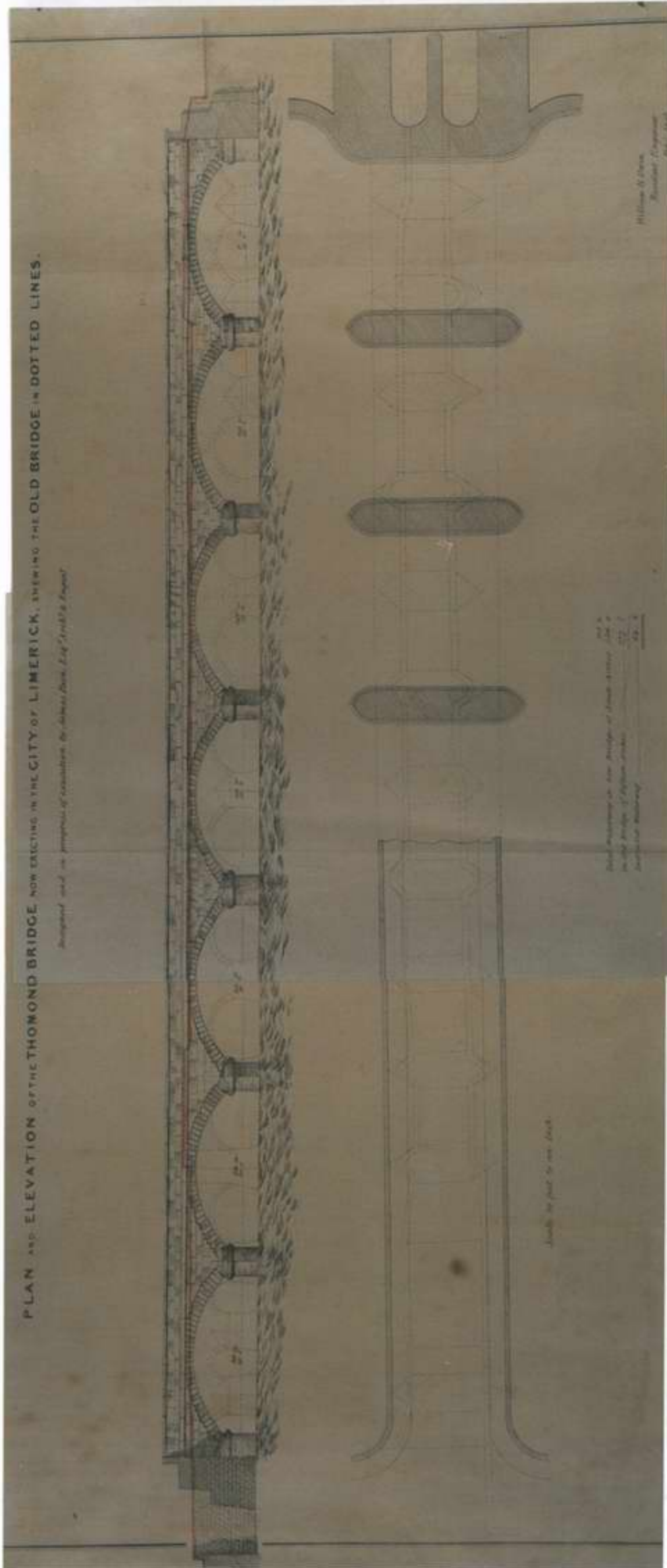


Fig. 61 Thomond Bridge, Limerick. Plan and elevation (1837) by James and G. R. Pain.



Fig. 62 *Caius Marcius at the Ruins of Carthage* (George Richard Pain (1831).
'Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art, . . . of the three the only trustworthy one is the last.' (John Ruskin). "

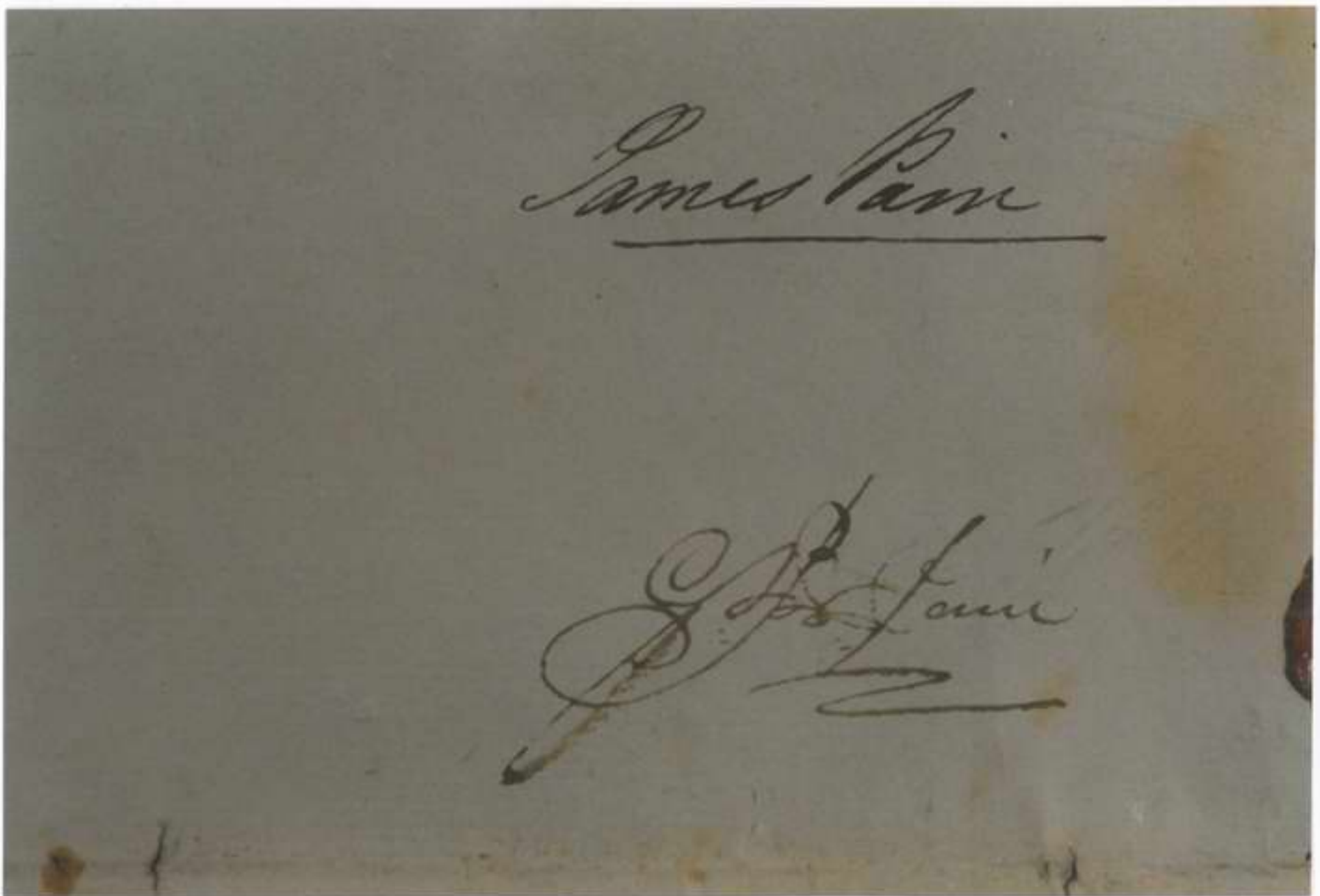


Fig. 63 The signatures of James (top) and George Richard Pain to Articles of Agreement (1833) relating to Athlunkard Bridge, Limerick.

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Liam Minihan: Figs. 24, 44(b), 52, 59; Limerick Civic Trust Collection: Figs. 38, 40, 49(b), 54(a), 54(b), 60, 62; Limerick Museum: Figs. 47, 61, 63; David Lee & Ferga Grant: Figs. 1, 27, 33, 34, 35, 58; Tom Keogh Collection: Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5(a), 5(b), 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25(a), 25(b), 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44(a), 45, 48, 49(a), 50, 51, 53, 55, 56, 57.