

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Sligo Gaol

Sligo Gaol described as “a handsome and substantial building”, was built on a 6 acre site at Riverside between 1815 and 1818, at a cost in the region of £22,000.

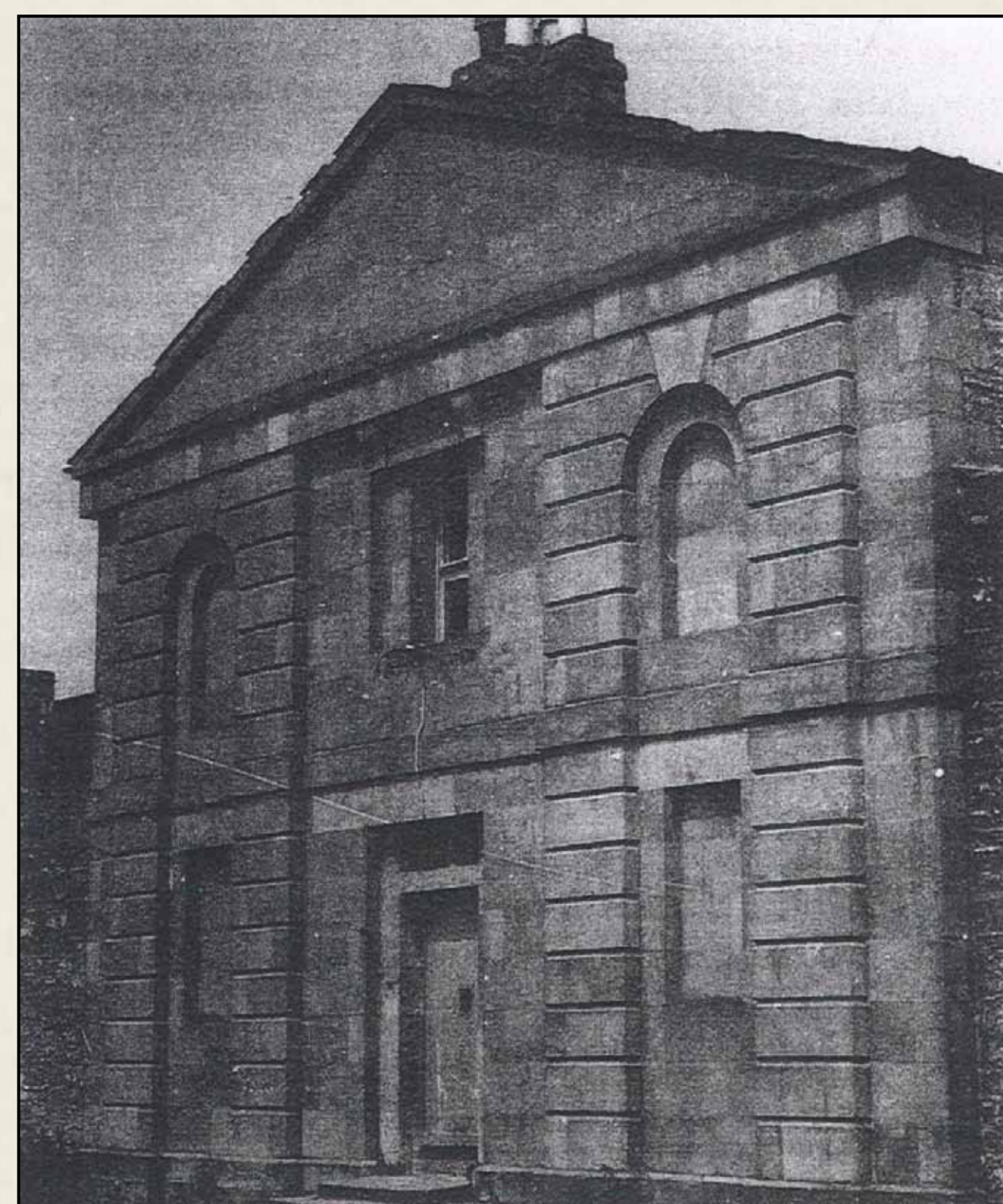
The contract was awarded to local builder, John Lynn. The layout consisted of ninety single cell blocks arranged in a semi-circle or polygonal plan. A treadmill was added in 1823 and the prison was later enlarged in 1828.

The boundary walls were completed in 1844 and the Governor’s House a decade later.

In the early to mid 19th century public hangings were fairly common but by the 1860’s executions were conducted in private in the Treadmill Yard.

In the late 19th century a number of Irish leaders , including Parnell, Davitt and Dillion, were incarcerated there for short periods.

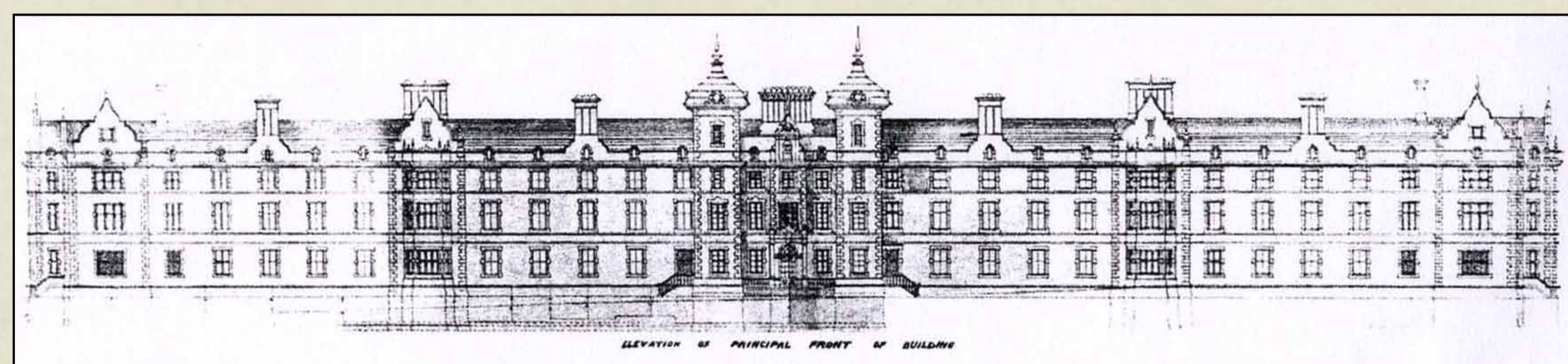
In May 1920, Sligo Gaol made world headlines with the sensational escape of Brigadier Frank Carty. By the mid 20th Century the number of inmates had greatly reduced and led to its closure in 1956.



Main entrance, Sligo Gaol.

St Columba’s Hospital

This beautiful building of cut-stone was built in the Elizabethan style between 1847 and 1852. It was designed by Wm. Deane Butler and built by James Caldwell of Old Market Street. Two wings were added in the 1870’s.



Sligo District Lunatic Asylum from original architectural drawings C.1837 (Irish Architectural Archives).

Originally known as the Sligo & Leitrim District Lunatic Asylum, and later as St. Columba’s Hospital, it could accommodate 250 inmates which was later increased to 470. It stood on 30 acres and was enclosed by a high wall to prevent escape.

In the second half of the 19th century two places of worship, one Catholic and the other, Protestant, were built on either side of the main entrance.

The hospital closed in the 1980’s and in 2005 re-opened as the Clarion Hotel. In its new role it forms an imposing landmark to be admired.

Model School

An attractive mid 19th century stone-faced building with a frontage of 150 feet, it stands on rising ground in a south facing location on The Mall.

It was designed in the Roman classic style by James H Owen and built in 1862 by local contractors, Messrs. Patrick Keighron & Son at a cost of £8,000. It was constructed of limestone masonry with ornamental dressings of chiselled Mountcharles stone and its richly decorated stonework exhibits a high quality of workmanship.

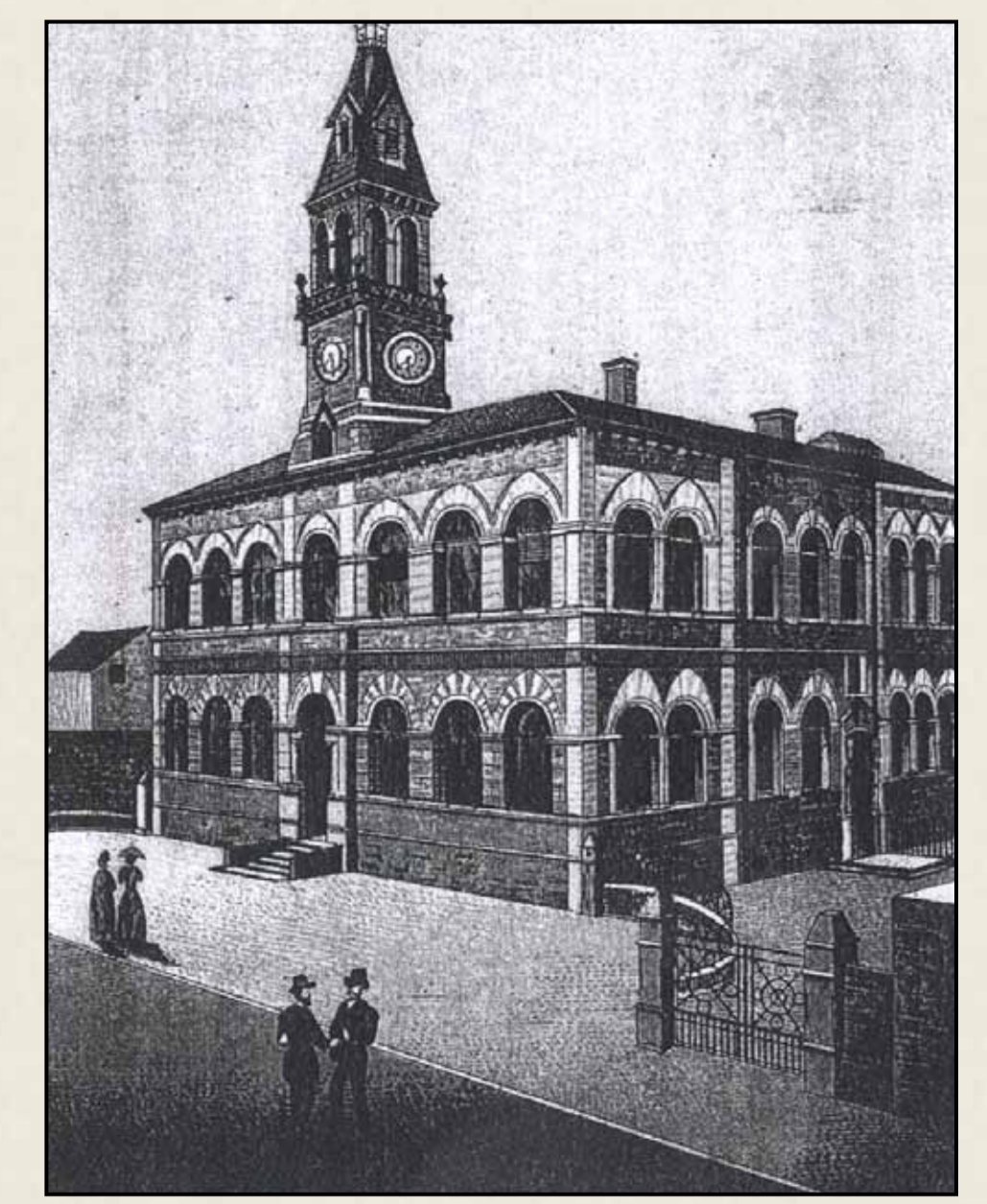
Town Hall

Built in the 1860’s as the administrative centre for the Borough Council it stands in Quay Street on what was originally the site of the O’Conor-Sligo medieval castle, later converted to an Elizabethan fort.

The Town Hall was designed by Wm. Hague and built in the French Renaissance style with a double-faced façade and comprising a basement, ground floor and upper floor.

The foundation stone was laid in October 1865 by Mayor, Wm. Abbot Woods, and seven years had elapsed before the edifice was ready for occupation. The Harbour Commissioners subsequently partly funded the provision of a clock-tower. When completed in 1878 it was fitted with a clock and bell donated by Charles Anderson and from which vantage point the Harbour Master could view shipping entering and leaving the Harbour. A caretaker’s lodge was added in 1896.

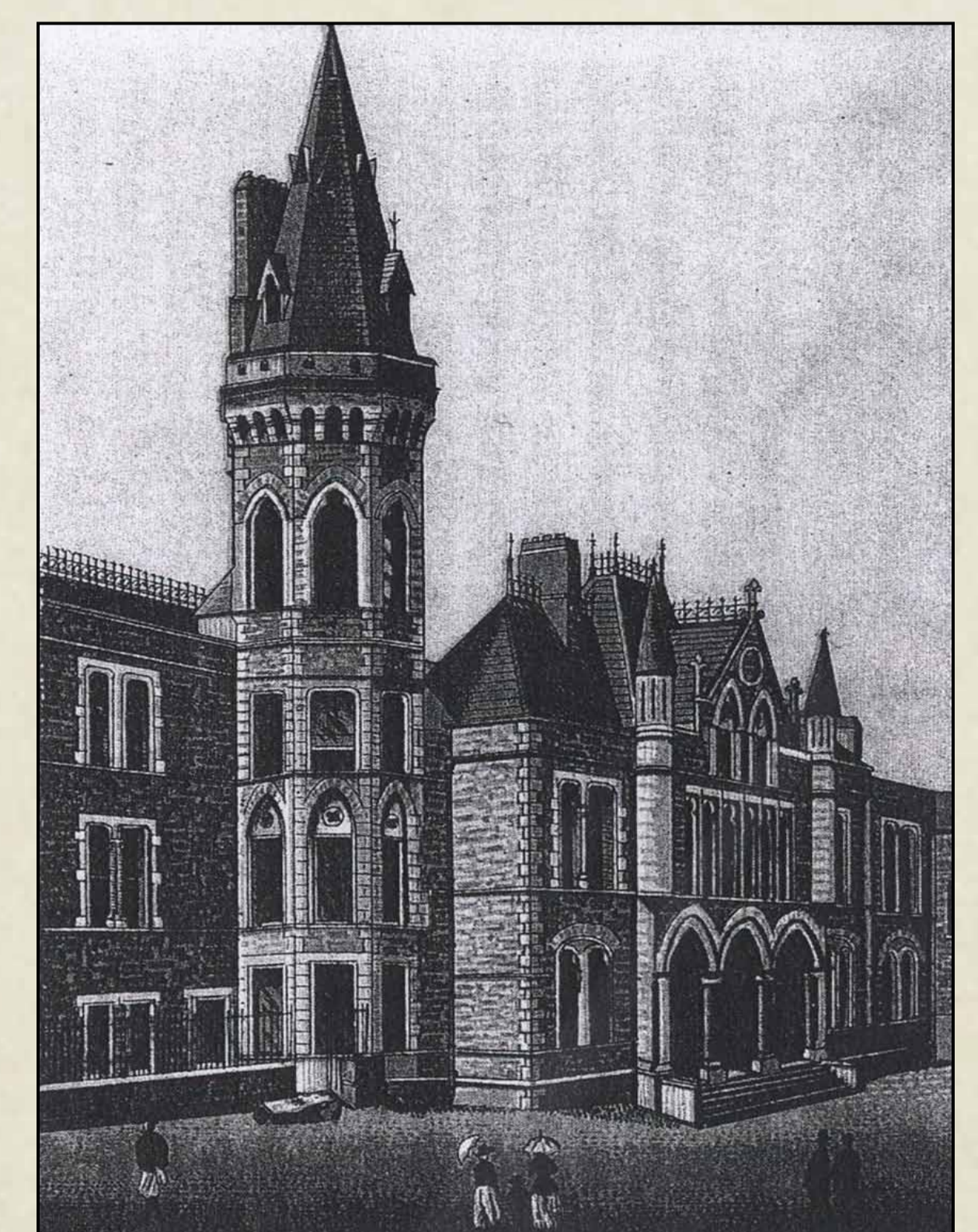
With the dawn of a new millennium the Town Hall was extensively refurbished and a three storey extension added to the north elevation.



The Town Hall. Built in 1865 in the French Renaissance style. It stands on the site of the 17th century ‘Stone Fort’.

The Courthouse

Architecturally the Courthouse is the most striking structure in Sligo and widely regarded as one of the finest municipal buildings of its period countrywide. A fine example of the French Gothic style it was designed by the Scottish architect, J. Rowan Carroll. It was built in 1878 on the site of an earlier courthouse and its finish is largely of Mountcharles sandstone.



The Courthouse. Erected in 1878 in the Gothic Revival style, stands on the site of an earlier Courthouse and Gaol.

An important feature of the frontage is the four storey octagon ventilating tower with a domered spire, the pinnacle of which is 110 feet above street level. The entrance hall is lavishly detailed with stone arcades and wrought iron balconies.

Over the past century and a half the Courthouse has been the setting for many notable events, - State trials, Borough and County Parliamentary elections. Statutory meetings of the Grand Jury were held there and the building was occupied during the Civil War. Prior to the renovation, it was used to house the County Council.

In 1979, the Courthouse ceased to be the administrative headquarters for Sligo County Council. After extensive renovations and re-vamping it is now entirely under the control of the Courts Service.

