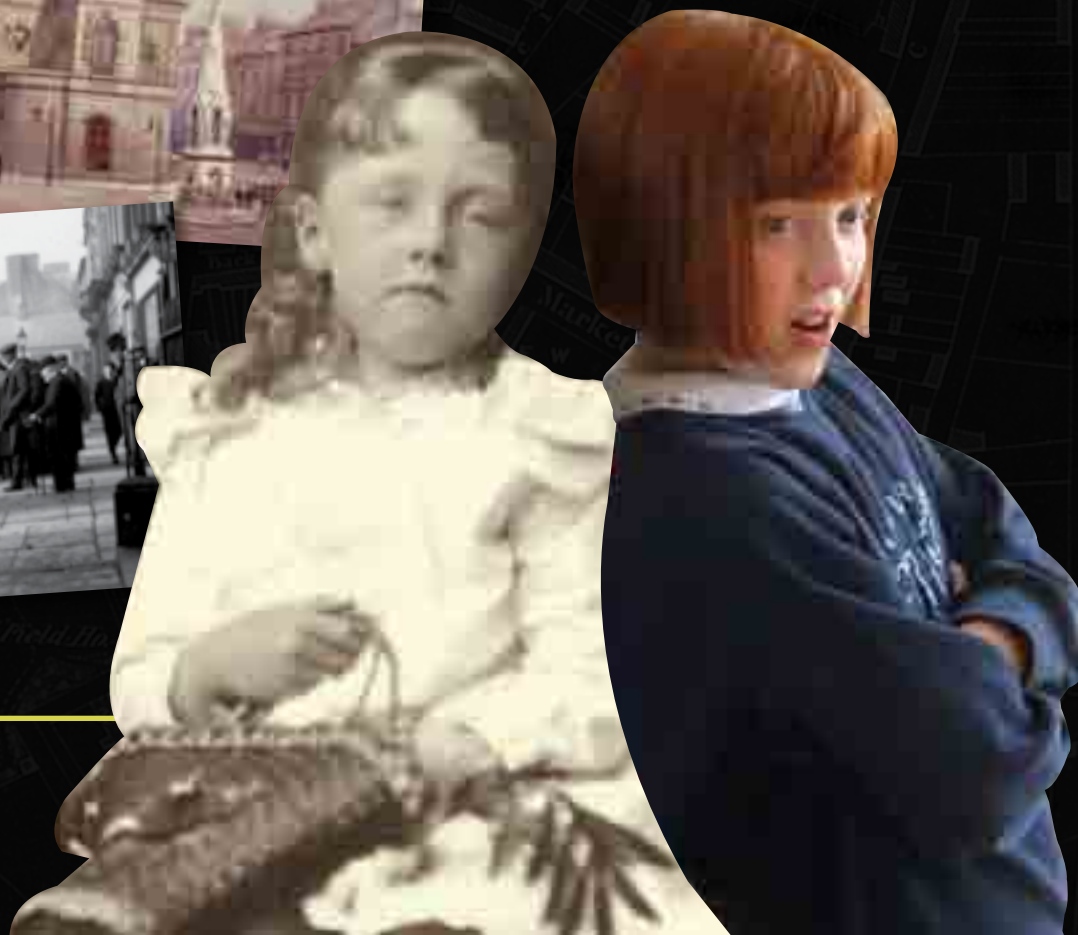




# VICTORIAN COLERAINE

Exploring your History



# Acknowledgements

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and the Coleraine Chronicle.

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The Beavington Collection, courtesy of the Beavington family; The Sam Henry Collection, courtesy of the Craig family; The Bovagh House Collection, courtesy of Lady Hezlett; The Bellas/Canning collection, courtesy of Mrs. Eskjaer; White Collection, courtesy of the White family; The Gribbon Collection, courtesy of Mary Sloan and the Gribbon family; The Sammy Walker collection, courtesy of the Walker family; The Girvan Collection, courtesy of the Girvan family. Memories in Focus: Robert Anderson and Tommy MacDonald; Barbara Hill and the Dixon family; Willis McCloskey.

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# About this book

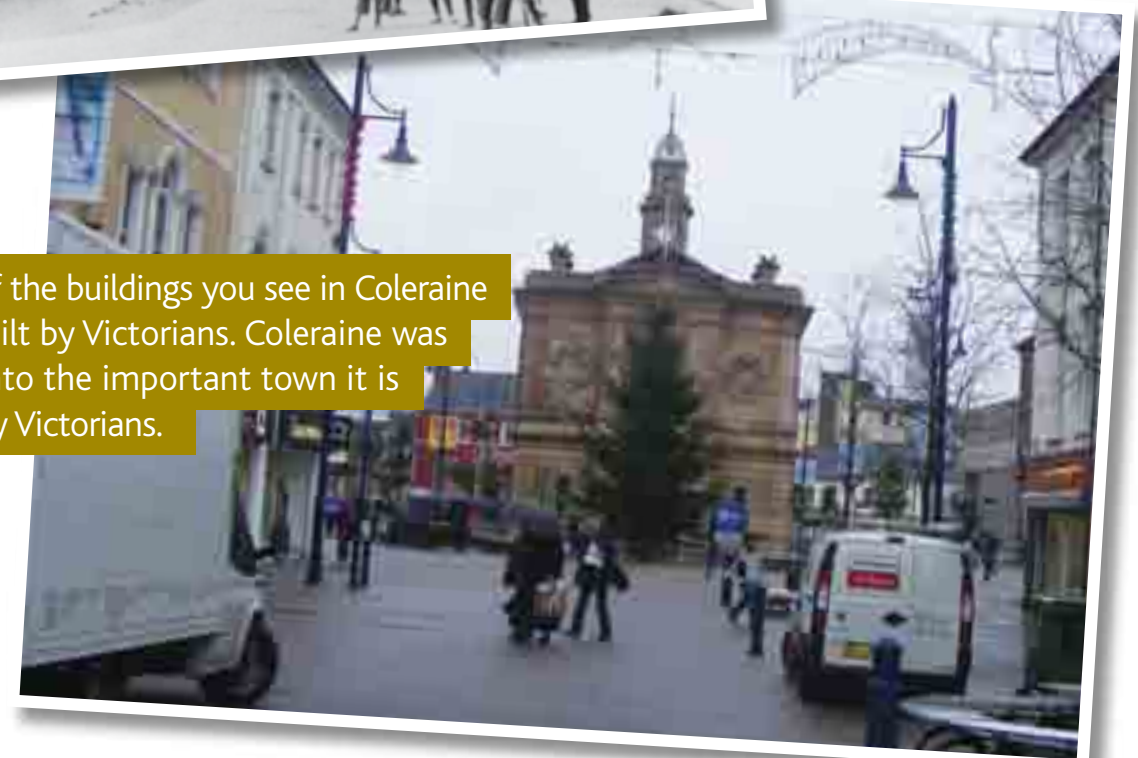
This book is an exploration of Coleraine during the reign of Queen Victoria. It looks at real places and real people in the town.



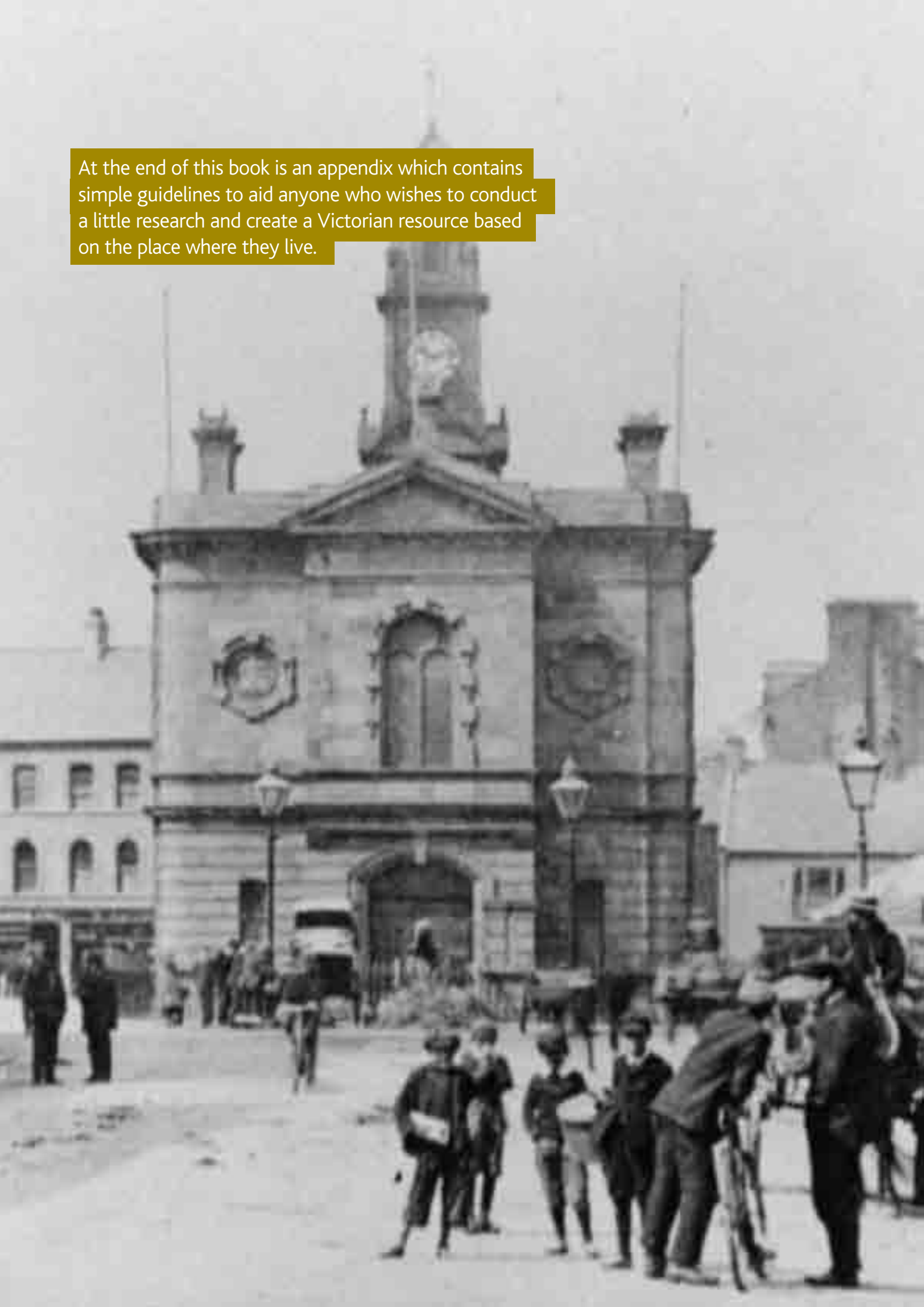
Most of the significant buildings in Coleraine were constructed in this period. The layout of the streets in the town centre has hardly changed.

This book encourages readers to look around them and see their Victorian past. The people of Victorian times are recorded in photographs, newspapers, letters, directories and the census. The book uses real individuals to illustrate Victorian life at all levels of society. It explores their lives, occupations and family circumstances and links them to specific addresses in the town.

Many of the buildings you see in Coleraine were built by Victorians. Coleraine was made into the important town it is today by Victorians.







At the end of this book is an appendix which contains simple guidelines to aid anyone who wishes to conduct a little research and create a Victorian resource based on the place where they live.

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Exploring Victorian Bally-your-place

# What does 'Victorian' mean?

'Victorian' simply means anything that happened whenever Victoria was Queen from 1837–1901. Anyone who was alive at that time could be called a Victorian. Buildings that were built were Victorian. Things that happened were Victorian. Things that were invented during that period were Victorian inventions.



## WHO WAS VICTORIA?

Victoria was part of the British Royal family. Her Grandfather was King George the Third.

When he died none of his four sons was still alive. Victoria, his granddaughter, was his closest relative. So she became queen.

People tend to think of Queen Victoria as an old woman.

But, she was young once. In fact, she was only eighteen when she became Queen.



Queen Victoria in her early twenties by Franz Xavier Winterhalter (public domain)



Queen Victoria in her Diamond Jubilee photograph (London, 1897) (public domain)



Queen Victoria's family in 1846 (public domain)

Victoria married a German Prince called Albert. They had nine children and forty-two grandchildren.



## Victoria was Queen for over 63 years.

That is a long time. Longer than any other King or Queen of England!

There were many, many things that changed while she was Queen. We shall be finding out about some of these. The years when she was Queen are called Victorian times or the Victorian Era.

As well as being Queen of Great Britain and Ireland she was Empress of the British Empire.

British Empire, 1907 (public domain)



# British Empire

Victoria was not just Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, she was also Empress of India and Sovereign of the British Empire. The British Empire was the collection of all the countries around the world which had been taken over by Britain. These countries are coloured pink on the world map.



The countries coloured pink on this map belonged to the British Empire c.1880

## WAR

Britain used its armies to take over these countries. This meant that British armies fought in wars all over the world.

Sometimes the wars were against other countries that also had empires and sometimes with people who lived in that country who didn't want to be in an empire at all. There were wars in Africa, India, Russia and Afghanistan. People at home in Britain were not directly affected by the fighting.

- 1 British Empire c.1880 (public domain)
- 2 Zulu War 1879 (public domain)
- 3 Naval Warfare c. 1890 (public domain)
- 4 Royal Artillery attack c.1900 (public domain)



# Victorian Changes

There were many changes during the Victorian period. Many of the things we take for granted now were brand new then.

## Industrialisation

Many businesses changed from small workshops to big mills and factories using bigger and bigger machines. This was called 'industrialisation'.

## Tourism

The idea of visiting places like the Giant's Causeway became popular in Victorian times.

## Women's Lives

Inventions, like the Singer sewing machine, made it possible for women to work at home and earn an income to help support their family.

## Education

For the first time poor children got a chance to go to school.

## Public Health

Early Victorian streets were very smelly and dirty. They were covered in animal waste and open drains carried human waste. Sometimes this waste would have got into the water. Clean water and covered drains were improvements made by the Victorians.

## The Post Office

The postal service was introduced and letters could be posted for one penny.

## Technology

There were many, many new inventions in Victorian times, including: bicycles, motor cars, photography, early flying machines and radio.



- 1 Gribbons Mill c. 1900
- 2 Ballycastle Station c.1895

- 3 Giants Causeway Postcard c.1900
- 4 A colour print from 1887 showing bicycles from the period (public domain)



# What have Victorians got to do with you?



## PLACES

Victorians lived and worked in the streets where you walk about and meet your friends.

Many of the buildings you see in Coleraine were built by Victorians. Coleraine was made into the important town it is today by Victorians.

## PEOPLE

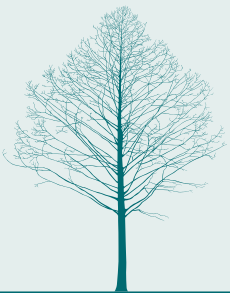
Life in Victorian times was very different for different people.

Some were very rich and some were very poor. Most people were somewhere in between. There were many different jobs and people lived in very different houses.

This book is about the life of real people who lived in Coleraine. Perhaps some of them were your relatives.

# Your Victorian Family

Your ancestors, members of your family who lived long before you, were definitely Victorians. Everything you learn about life in Victorian times applied to them. Your family might have been rich and had servants. They might have been workers in the mills. They might even have ended up in the Workhouse.



## Victorian times were not so long ago.

The time line here shows that your Granny's Mum might have been a Victorian. Your Granny's Granny almost certainly was!

Anyone who is over 80 years old will have had a Mum who was a Victorian. You might know someone this age!

1941

Your Granny is born



1939-1945

World War II

1911

Your Granny's Mum is born



1914-1918

World War I

1901

Victorian Era ends

1851

Your Granny's Granny's Mum is born



1881

Your Granny's Granny is born



1837

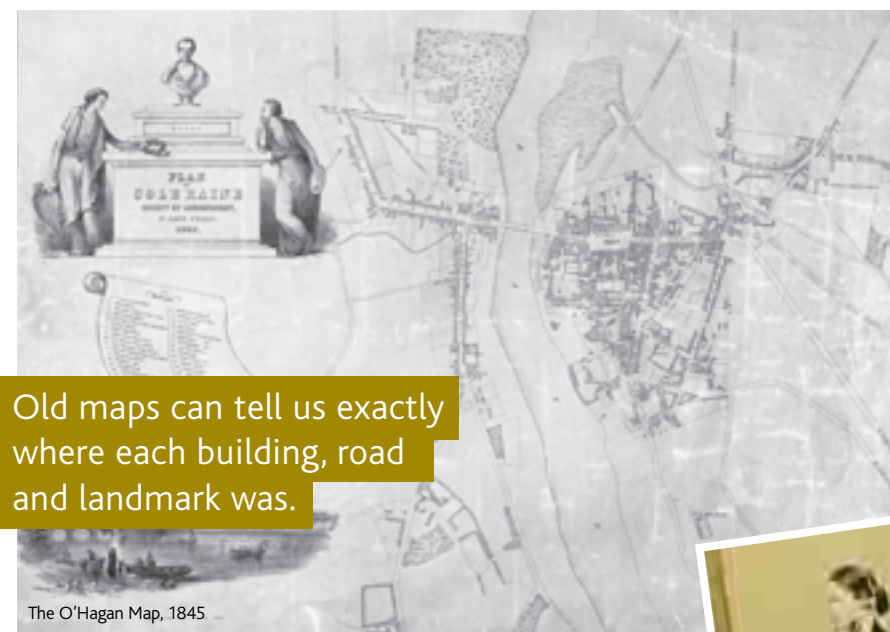
Victorian Era begins

We will be learning about the life of real people who lived in Coleraine. Perhaps some of them could be your relatives.



# Finding out about Victorians

How can we find out about Victorian people and places?  
There are lots of ways!



Old maps can tell us exactly where each building, road and landmark was.

## LOOKING AROUND

If we look around us at the streets and buildings we see every day, we can find lots of things designed and built by the Victorians.



## MAPS

By Victorian times maps were very, very accurate. Map-makers today use huge computers and satellite technology.

They have discovered that Victorians, using simple tools, were almost as good at making maps as we are today. Old maps tell us exactly where each building, road and landmark was.



Annie Bellas, Christmas 1866

James Alfred Canning and his sister

## PHOTOGRAPHS

The Victorians were the first people to take photographs. Many of their photos are still around. We can learn a lot from these.

## NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers became very popular in the Victorian Era.

Both the Coleraine Chronicle and the Northern Constitution were started in 1844. This means they were reporting the news throughout most of the Victorian era. Most of the editions have been kept. Reading the news written at the time is a great way of finding out what was going on.



Many directories are available on-line.

## ADVERTISEMENTS

In Victorian times businesses advertised, just like they do today.

There was no television, but Victorians could advertise in newspapers and magazines. They did have posters and leaflets. They did have painted signs and boards. All these can tell us what they did.



## DIRECTORIES

We can find out about organisations, churches, schools and businesses by looking in Victorian directories.

These are a bit like phone books, but with no phone numbers. They do give us the addresses of many people in the town and tell us what they did. Many directories are available on-line.

## THE CENSUS

The census is a list of all the people in the country compiled by the government.

It tells us the names and occupations of all the people who lived in each house on a certain day. The census is repeated every ten years, so we can look and see how things have changed.



# Victorian Places

## LETTERS

In Victorian times there were very few phones, no mobiles or e-mail.

Instead people wrote letters or postcards to each other. Many of these letters were kept, so we can find out what people wanted to say to each other. A phone call is soon forgotten!

## BOOKS

In Victorian times more and more people got the chance to learn to read. Books became more widely available.

There were many writers who wrote stories about the times they lived in. Although the stories might have been made up, the way the characters thought and acted would have been the same as real Victorians.

There were famous writers and book illustrators from this area.



Charles Lever books  
Purchase of these books was supported by NIMC



P7 pupils talk to members of Age Concern Coleraine



There are people alive today who actually were Victorians. They have to be over 110 years old. There are not many of them.

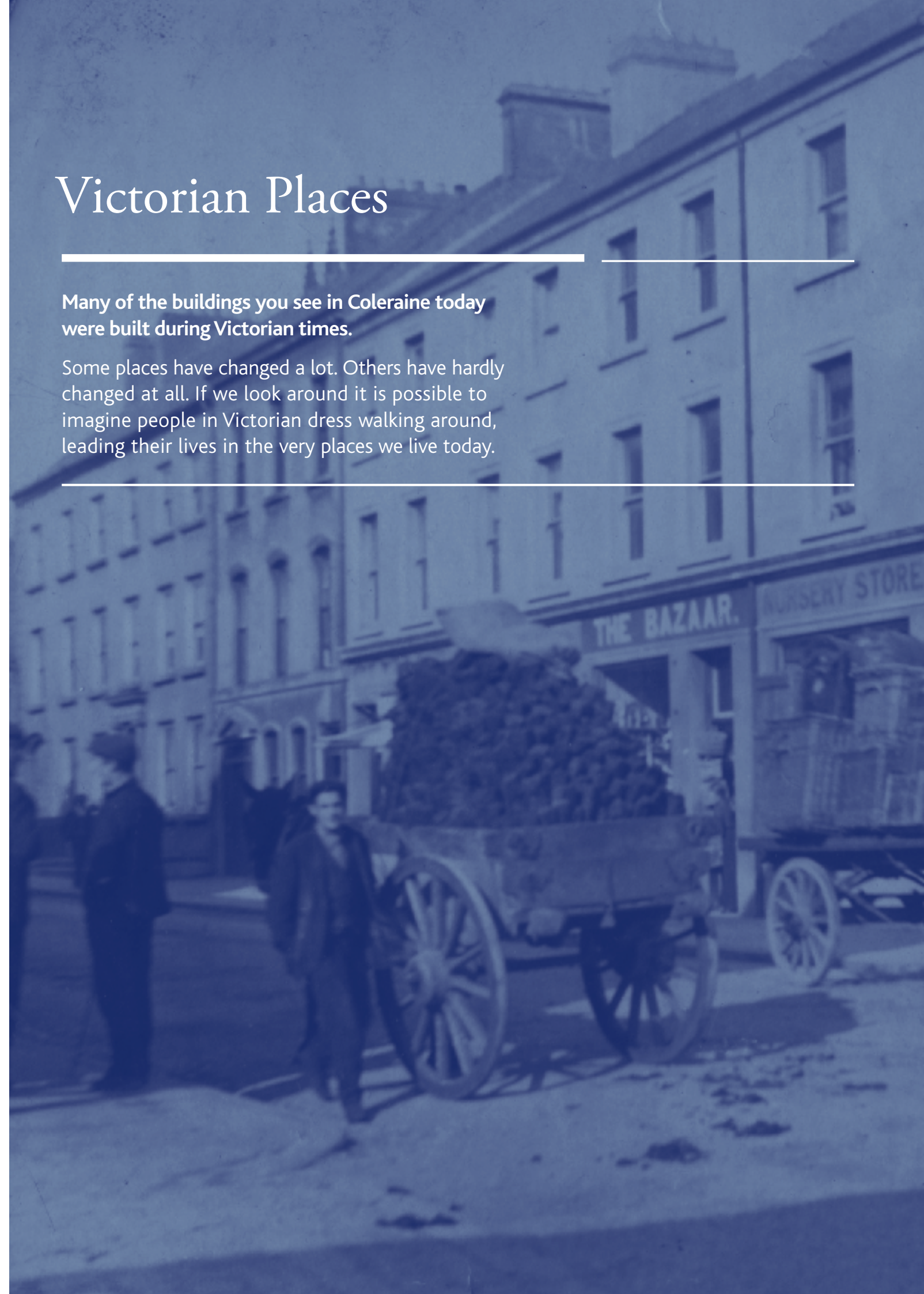
However there are many older people who would have known others who did grow up when Queen Victoria was still alive.

If you get a chance to talk to older people ask them about stories they remember being told by folk who were old when they were young.

What could be better than hearing stories that were told by a real Victorian?

Many of the buildings you see in Coleraine today were built during Victorian times.

Some places have changed a lot. Others have hardly changed at all. If we look around it is possible to imagine people in Victorian dress walking around, leading their lives in the very places we live today.





# Maps

## 1845

Maps are a fantastic way to look at how things change over time.

Here are two maps - one from the year 1845, in the middle of Victorian times and one from 1985, which is not very long ago. Each map is an accurate picture of where all the houses and streets were.

Take a look at each map and see what differences you can see.

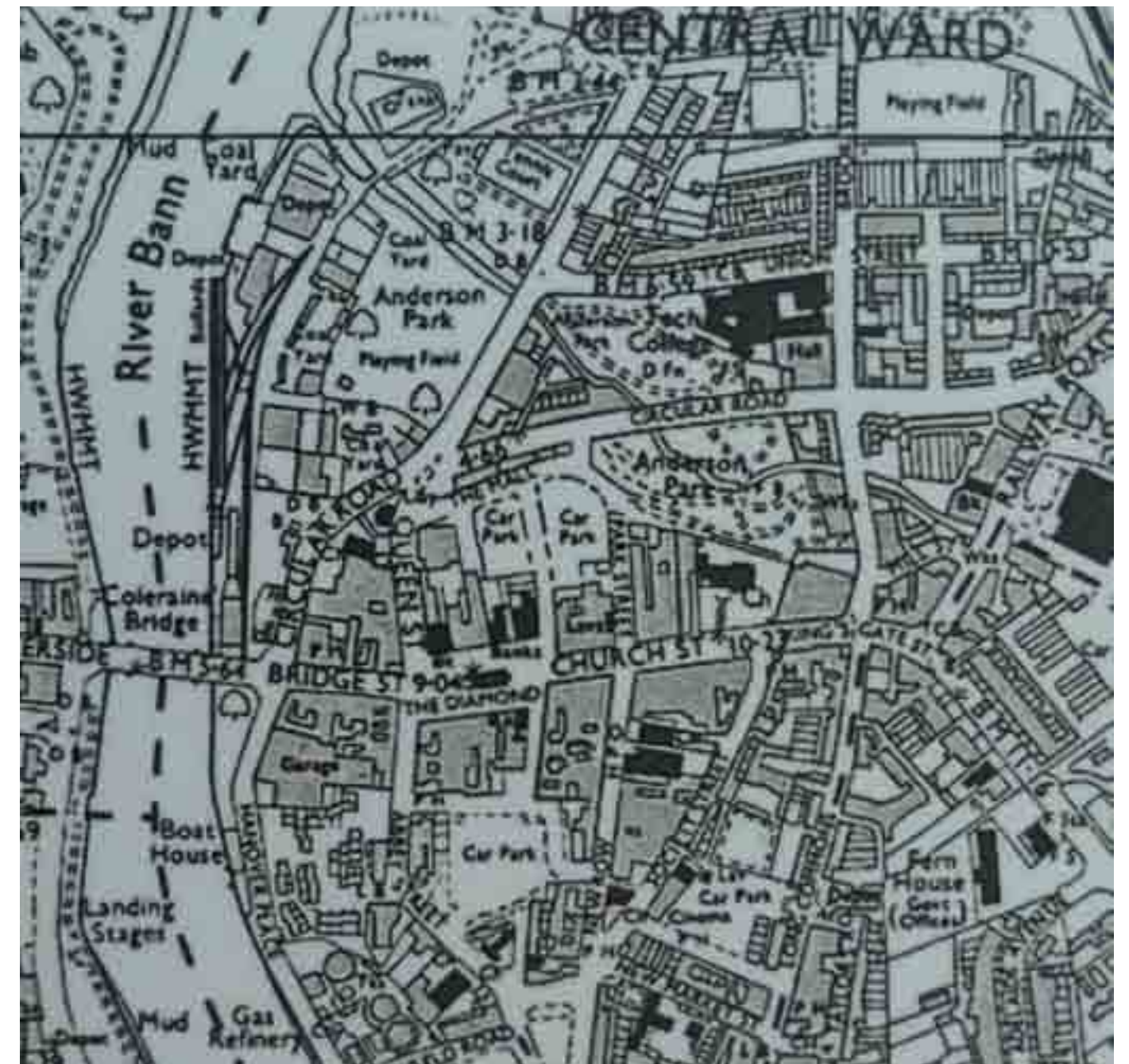


Plan of Coleraine by James O'Hagan 1845

## 1985

The centre of Coleraine hasn't changed very much.

Away from the centre today there are many more houses in places which were just fields in Victorian times.



Map courtesy of PRONI



# Before Victorian times

People were living in Coleraine for a long, long time before the Victorians. Nearly ten thousand years ago early people came up the River Bann and lived at Mountsandel.

In fact this is the oldest known settlement where people lived in the whole of Ireland.



## A BIG CHANGE

Coleraine changed and developed over thousands of years. Four hundred years ago it was a small, but busy, place. Then there was a big change.

This was called the Plantation. Many people from Scotland and England came to live in the north of Ireland. Coleraine was taken over by *The Honourable The Irish Society* and a new fortified town was built over the existing town.

At this time there were new attitudes, new laws and many new ways of doing things. Life in Coleraine changed forever.

Coleraine had a rampart (a sort of wall) around it. If we look at the streets which would be inside the ramparts, they are much the same in Victorian times as they were in the plan made in 1611.



Illustration from the book of Coleraine presented by John Claudius Beresford Esquire to Edward Fletcher, 24th August 1841



## CHANGING BUILDINGS

While streets haven't changed, the actual buildings have. The houses built at the time of the Plantation had wooden frames made from trees in the great forest farther up the River Bann.

In Victorian times, many old houses were knocked down and new houses were built on the same sites. Older buildings were sometimes replaced with new ones in the Victorian style.

The Old Market Hall, before it was replaced in 1859 by Coleraine Town Hall painted by John Henry Campbell (1757–1828)



St Patrick's Church before and after it was restored in 1885





# Victorian Buildings in Coleraine

In Victorian times many of the important buildings in Coleraine were constructed. Here are just a few of them. We can see what they looked like at the time in old photos and paintings. Many of them have not changed very much.



## 1829 THE MARKET YARD

When Coleraine was planned in the 17th century, the farmers' market was in the Diamond.

This meant that sometimes there were hundreds of cows and sheep and horses on the streets. Animals can leave a lot of mess!

Shortly before Victoria became Queen it was decided to clean up the Diamond. A new purpose built market yard was built. This was one of the first of many new buildings put up in Coleraine.

## 1846 CLOTHWORKERS' HOTEL

## 1856 COURTHOUSE

The new Courthouse was first used in 1856. Previously the court was at the corner of the Diamond and Church Street.



## 1891 COTTAGE HOSPITAL

One of the members of the hospital committee was Mr. Canning, the bank manager.

The Cottage Hospital later became a maternity home where many Coleraine people were born.

Watercolour by JW Carey from an illuminated address presented to John Canning Esq



## 1890 THE BOAT HOUSE

The Bann Rowing Club is the oldest sports club in the town. Their fine boat house was built in 1890.

Watercolour by JW Carey from an illuminated address presented to Frederick Wright Esq



## 1890 PROVINCIAL BANK

The manager of the Provincial Bank was Mr Canning who married Annie Bellas.

Watercolour by JW Carey from an illuminated address presented to John Canning Esq



# Victorian Churches in Coleraine

There have been churches in Coleraine for a very long time. There has probably been a church on the site of St Patrick's for over a thousand years. However, many of the buildings which we use today were built in Victorian times.

## 1881 ST JOHN'S CHURCH



## 1834 TERRACE ROW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Watercolour by JW Carey from  
Illuminated address presented  
to William Baxter Esq



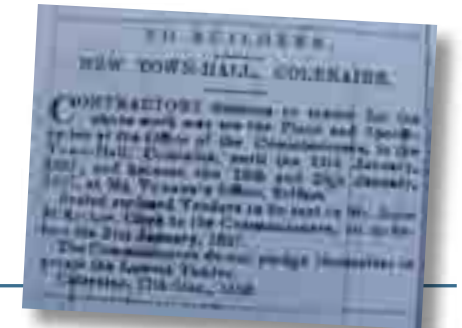
## 1885 ST PATRICK'S CHURCH

Watercolour by JW Carey



# Coleraine Town Hall 150 years

The Diamond has been the centre of Coleraine for four hundred years. The Diamond was where the markets were held. A Market house was built there by *The Honourable The Irish Society* in 1743. In the middle of Victorian times it was decided to replace it with a brand new up-to-date Town Hall.



## BUILDING THE TOWN HALL

An advertisement was placed in the Coleraine Chronicle inviting builders to state a price for building the new Town Hall in Coleraine.

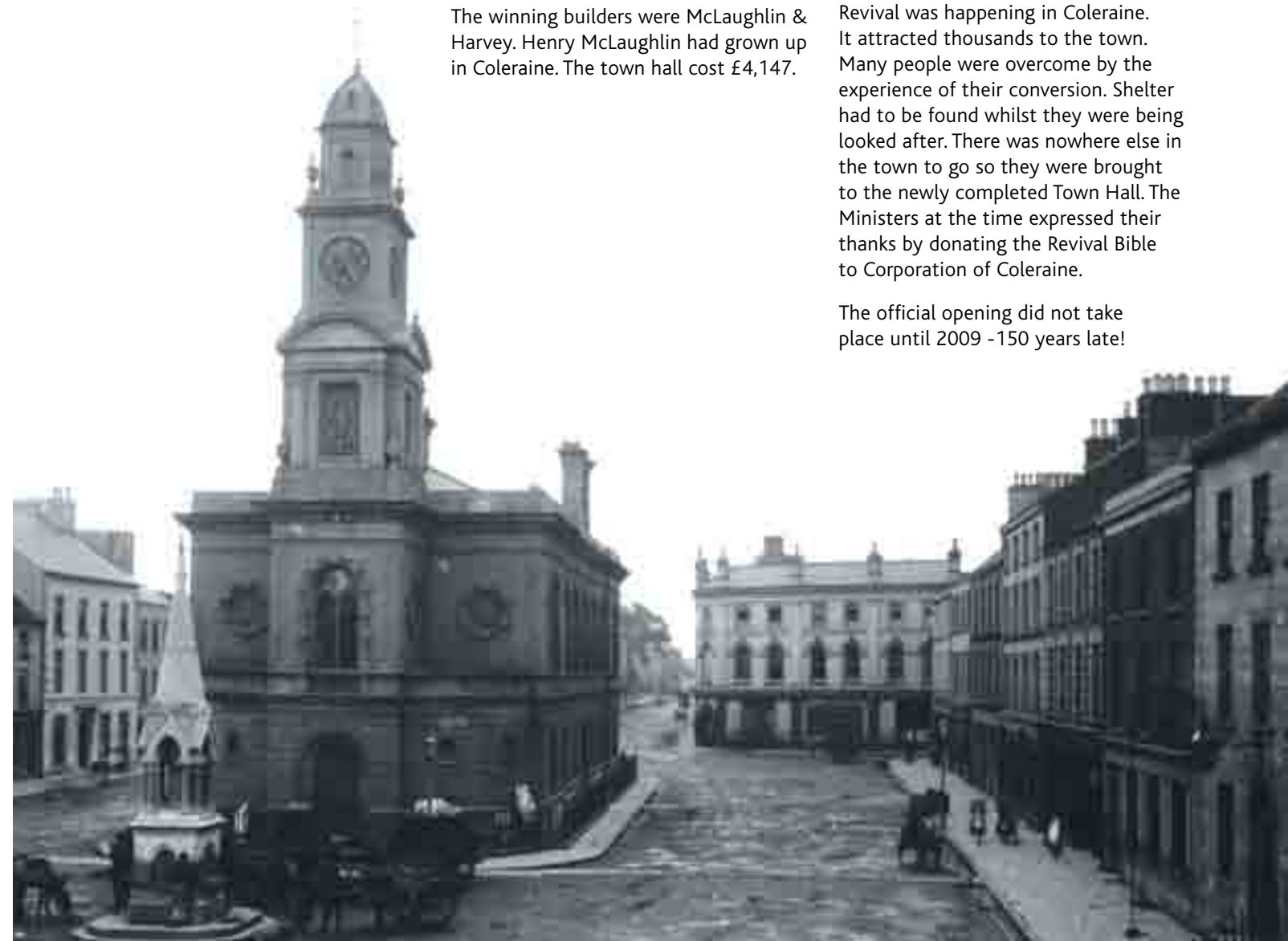
The winning builders were McLaughlin & Harvey. Henry McLaughlin had grown up in Coleraine. The town hall cost £4,147.

## OFFICAL OPENING

The Town Hall was finished and ready to open in 1859. Everyone was expecting a big celebration.

However, at the same time, the Ulster Revival was happening in Coleraine. It attracted thousands to the town. Many people were overcome by the experience of their conversion. Shelter had to be found whilst they were being looked after. There was nowhere else in the town to go so they were brought to the newly completed Town Hall. The Ministers at the time expressed their thanks by donating the Revival Bible to Corporation of Coleraine.

The official opening did not take place until 2009 - 150 years late!





# Victorian Streets

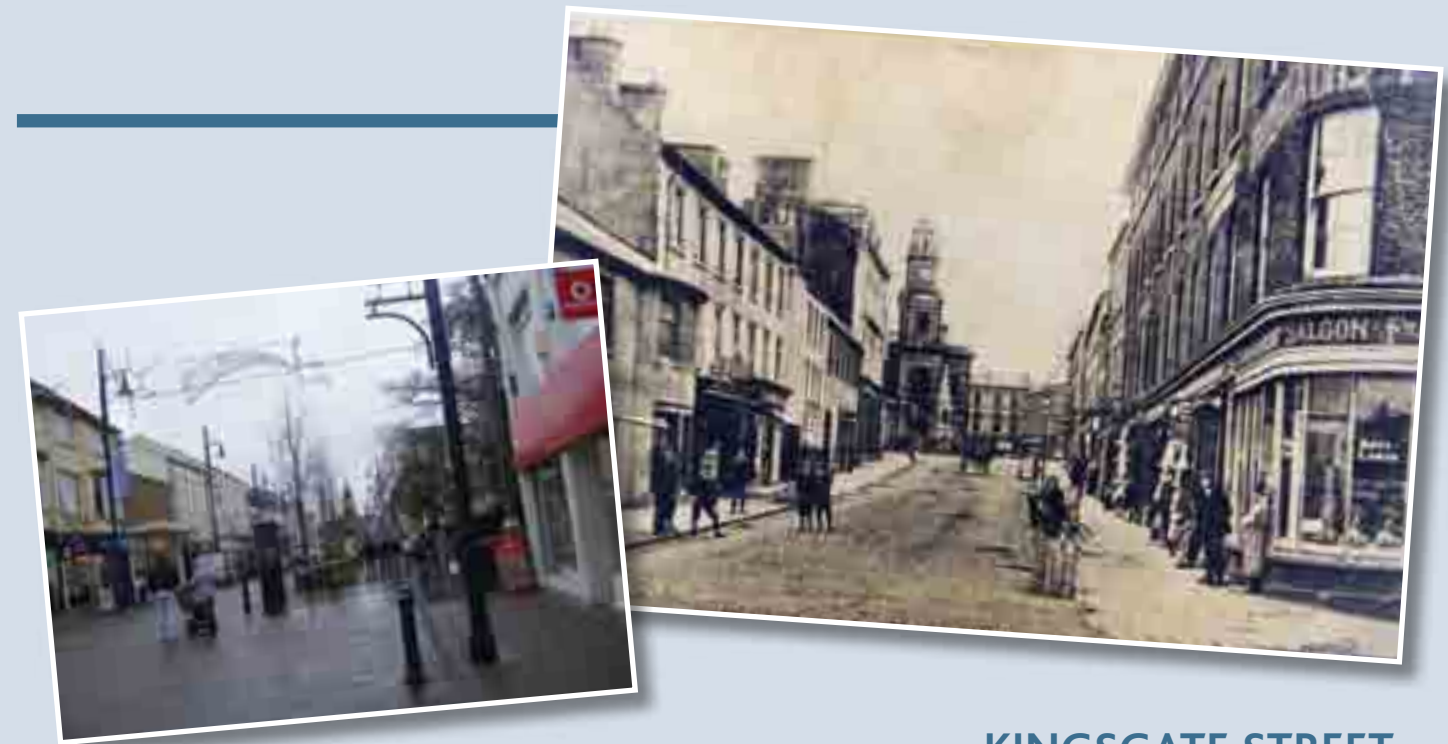
We can look at some Victorian photographs of streets in the centre of Coleraine and also look at them as they are today.



THE TOWN HALL



CHURCH STREET



KINGSGATE STREET



WATERSIDE



# Victorian Streets

The streets in the town centre do look much the same. The way people are dressed has changed. Vehicles have changed from horses and carts to cars, but the shape of the streets and buildings have stayed the same.



Coleraine Co-operative

Shops still have their name outside in big letters. They have items for sale in the windows and sometimes on the pavement outside. They have posters and advertisements in the window.

Victorian shops would have had posters and advertisements in the window, just like today!

## LOOK UP!

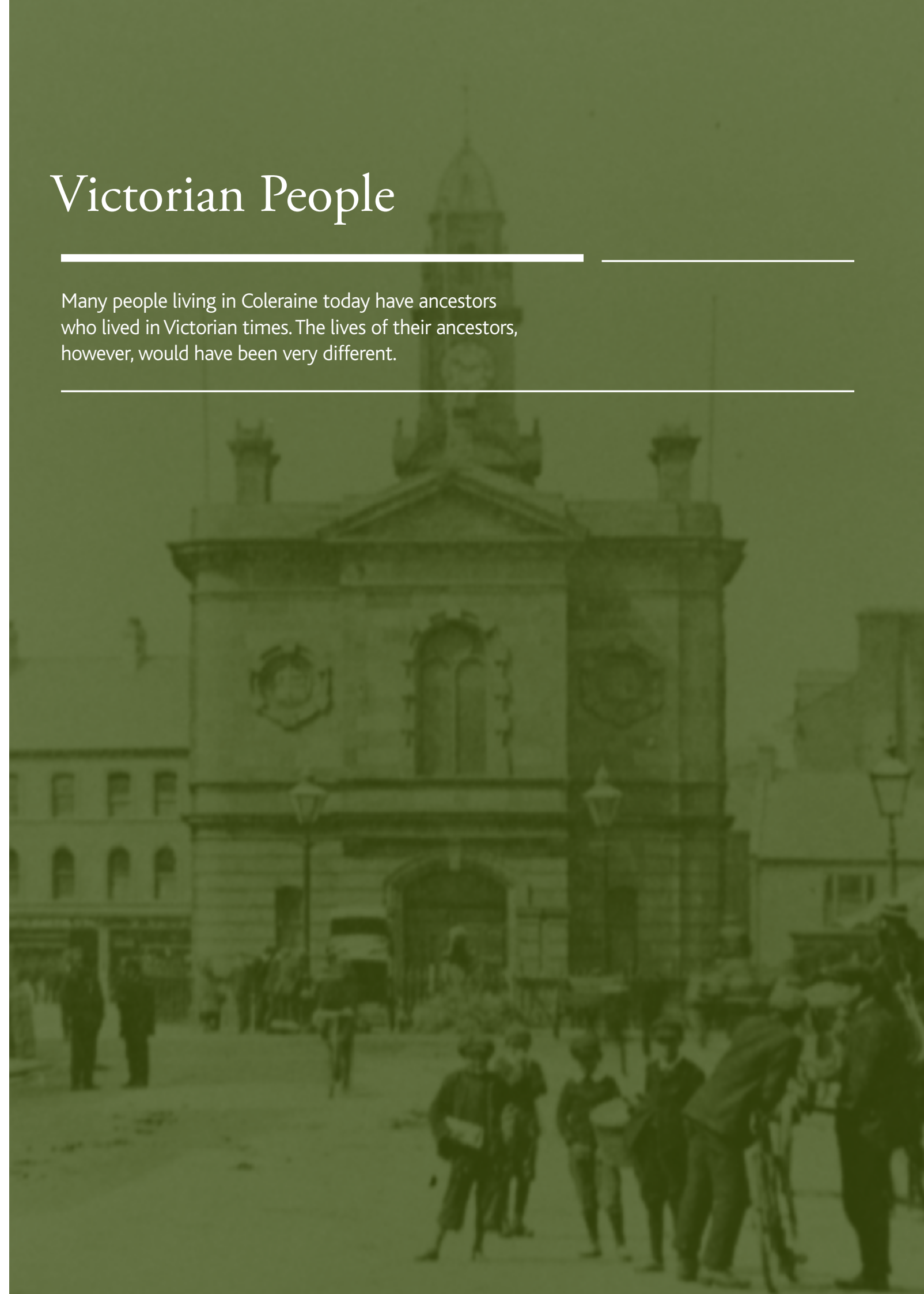
Although shop fronts are constantly changing, people do not usually change the upper floors.

If you look up at buildings in Coleraine you can often see the design work which suggests that the building is actually Victorian.



# Victorian People

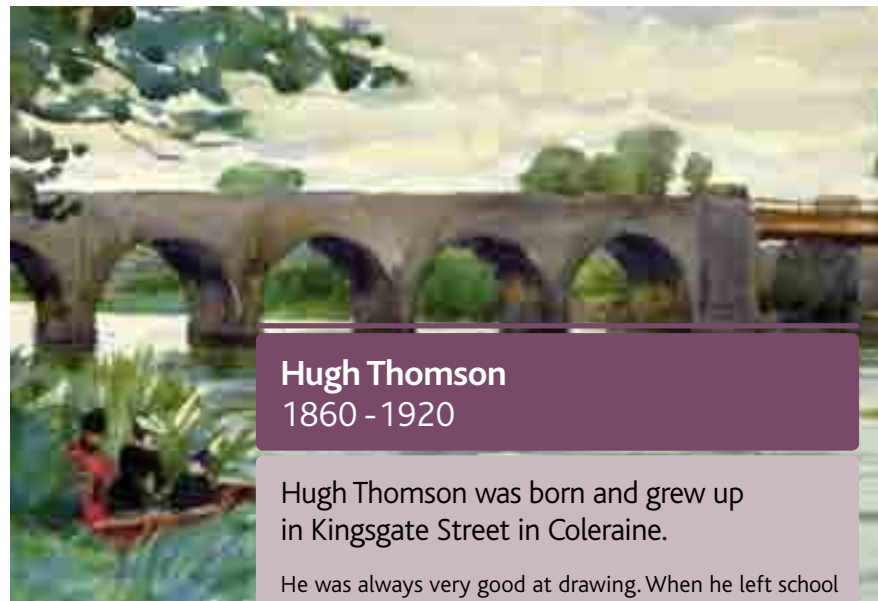
Many people living in Coleraine today have ancestors who lived in Victorian times. The lives of their ancestors, however, would have been very different.





# Famous Victorians

Several people who were born and grew up in this area went on to become Victorian celebrities in all parts of the Empire, here are a few of them.



Bridge over River Bann, Kilrea  
Purchase of this work  
was supported by HLF  
Art Fund, NIMC

## Hugh Thomson 1860 - 1920

Hugh Thomson was born and grew up in Kingsgate Street in Coleraine.

He was always very good at drawing. When he left school he started work at Gribbon's mill, but then he was sent to draw for a famous printing company called Marcus Ward & Sons in Belfast. When he was twenty three he set sail for London. In London he became known as one of the best artists at drawing pictures for books. He was commissioned to draw pictures for the most famous writers including Jane Austen, William Thackeray and Charles Dickens.



Public domain

## James Johnston Abraham 1876 - 1963

James Johnston Abraham became one of the most respected doctors in Britain.

He grew up at 20 New Row, where his father ran a hardware shop. James left Coleraine to study at Trinity College, Dublin. He became a surgeon in the army and saved many soldiers' lives by stopping a deadly disease called typhus.

He wrote several books, including an autobiography called 'A Surgeon's Journey', which described his young days in Coleraine.



British Ladies' Open Amateur  
Championship Trophy

## Mary (May) Linzee Hezlett 1882 - 1962

Mary Linzee Hezlett grew up at Bovagh House Aghadowey. She was usually called May.

Just like her brother, Charles, she loved playing golf and she was really good at it. She played at Royal Portrush Golf Club and won the Irish Championship five times.

At the age of seventeen she became the youngest ever winner of the British Ladies' Open Amateur Championship in the year 1899. No one has ever beaten this record. She won the same trophy another two times. She also wrote a book called 'Ladies' Golf'.



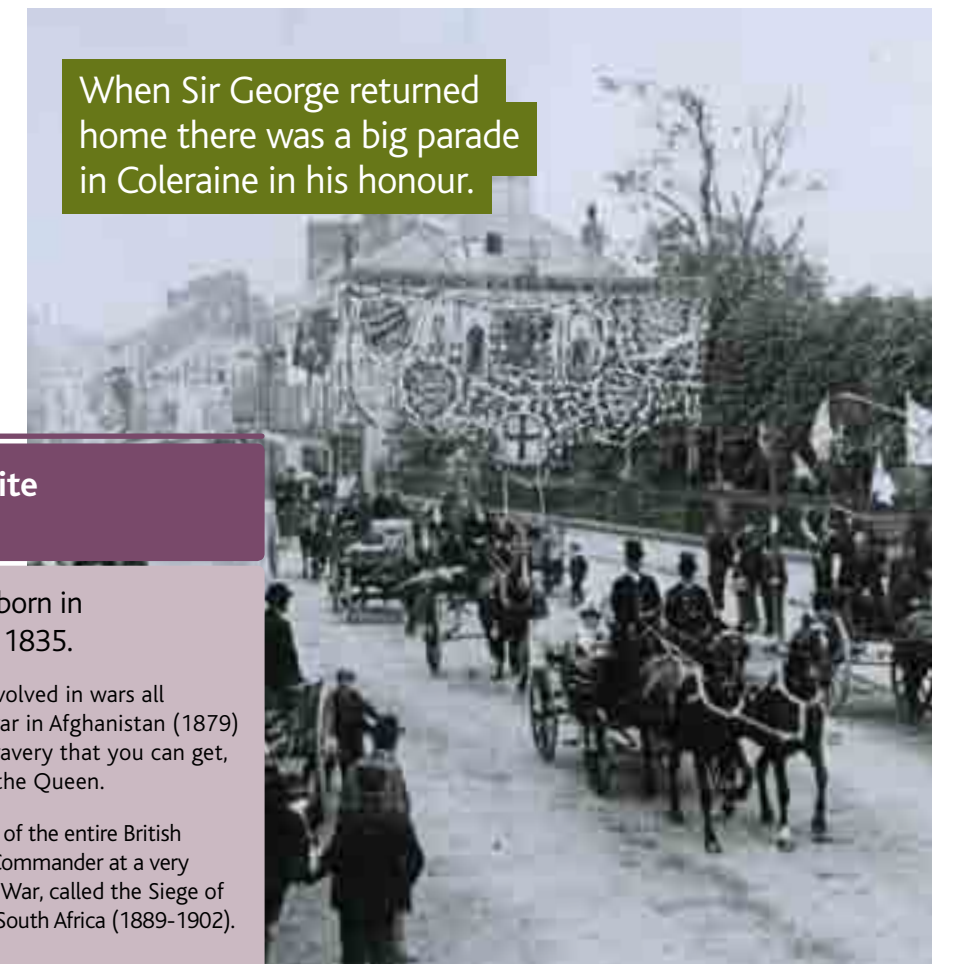
## Sir George Stuart White 1835 - 1912

George Stuart White was born in Rockcastle, Portstewart in 1835.

He became a soldier and was involved in wars all over the British Empire. In the war in Afghanistan (1879) he won the highest medal for bravery that you can get, the Victoria Cross, named after the Queen.

He became the Chief Commander of the entire British Army in India. He was the British Commander at a very famous battle in the second Boer War, called the Siege of Ladysmith. The War took place in South Africa (1889-1902).

When Sir George returned home there was a big parade in Coleraine in his honour.





## Arthur David McCormick 1860 - 1943

Arthur McCormick was another artist born in Coleraine. He travelled to London on the same ship as Hugh Thomson.

He was commissioned to travel all over the world to create illustrations for books. He painted the people and sights he found on his journey. He was famous for painting sailors and one of his pictures became very well known as it was used on the packet of a popular brand of cigarettes.

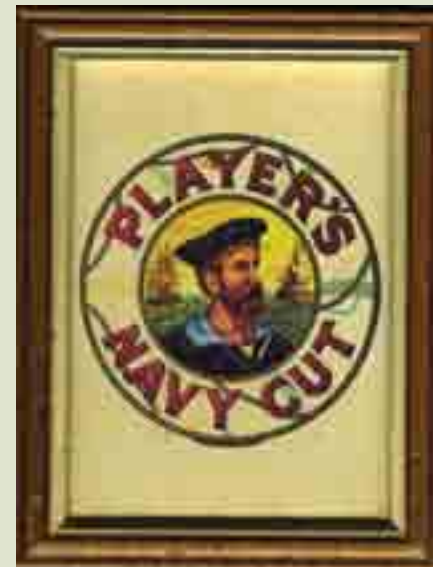


Image used on Players cigarette packets painted by A D McCormick



Drawing of A D McCormick by A Morrow

## Charles Frederick Williams 1838-1904

Charles Frederick Williams was born in Coleraine. He went on to have a very adventurous life.

He travelled the world as a 'War Correspondent'. This means he went wherever there was fierce fighting and wrote about what was happening for the newspapers back home.

He reported on the war in Afghanistan (1870-1880). He followed the famous generals of the time like Lord Kitchener and General Gordon on campaigns in Africa.

## John Edward McCullough 1837-1885

John McCullough was born in Coleraine. When he was only 16 he travelled to America where he became a famous actor.

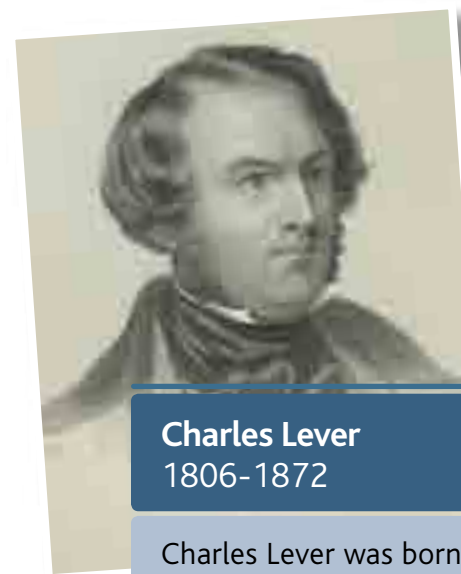
He appeared in many plays including those by William Shakespeare. He sailed across the Atlantic to appear in London, but returned to America. There is a statue of him in Philadelphia.



(Public domain)

# Famous Victorians Passing through

Some people came to this area and stayed for a while before moving on to become famous.



## Charles Lever 1806-1872

Charles Lever was born in Dublin. However, in 1833 he moved to Portstewart, where he lived on the Promenade.

He was a doctor at the time treating victims of the cholera epidemic in Coleraine. While he was living there his writing started to get popular. At one time he was said to be more popular than Charles Dickens.



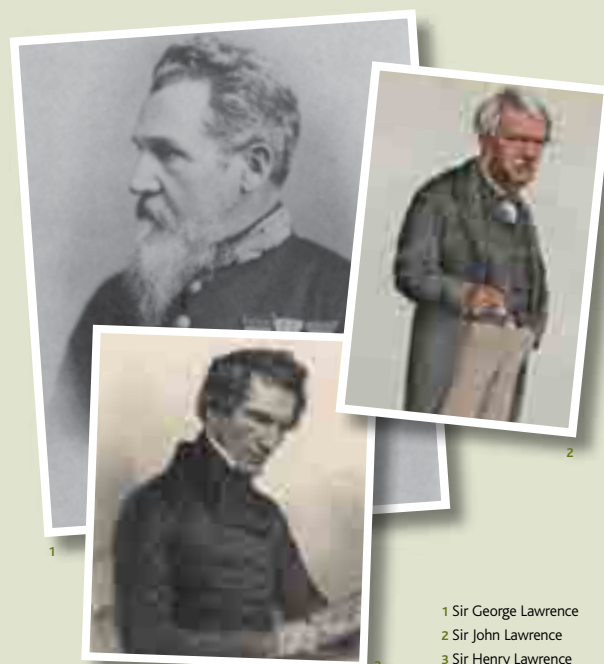
Charles Lever books  
Purchase of these books was supported by NIMC

## The Lawrence Family

Alexander Lawrence lost his parents when he was a boy and was brought up in Coleraine by his sisters.

At the age of seventeen he travelled all the way to India in search of adventure and served as a soldier. Three of his sons were to become famous in Victorian India. Sir George Lawrence (1804-1884) became a general in the British Army in India. His brother Sir Henry Montgomery Lawrence (1806-1857) was also a soldier who died after he was injured by an exploding shell.

Their younger brother John Laird Lawrence (1811-1879) became the Viceroy of India, which is the most important person in the British Rule in India.



1 Sir George Lawrence  
2 Sir John Lawrence  
3 Sir Henry Lawrence  
(Public domain)

## William Allingham 1824-1889

William Allingham moved to Coleraine in 1860. He worked as a customs officer in the Customs Office on Bridge Street.

He wrote many books of poems. After he moved to England he became friends with some of the most important writers and artists of the time.





# Big Business

Coleraine had many thriving businesses. Some were quite large firms who were well known far beyond Coleraine.

## Mr Robert Taylor 1830-1902

Mr Robert Taylor took over Coleraine Distillery in 1851. He lived in Ballysally with his nephew and three servants.

As well as making whiskey he was also a magistrate and vice-chairman of the board of custodians of Coleraine workhouse.

## COLERAINE WHISKEY

In 1843 Coleraine malt whiskey was ordered by the House of Commons in London for members of Parliament to drink. This meant it could have 'HC', (for House of Commons) on the label.



In 1886 Coleraine whiskey won the top prize in a big competition in Edinburgh, which didn't make the Scotch whisky makers very happy!

## Gribbon's Linen Mill

The Gribbon family owned mills making cloth in Killowen for many, many years.

Edward Gribbon, grandson of the founder, built a new larger factory on the Killowen Road in 1858. The factory made linen cloth from flax grown on local farms. Many people living in the area would have worked in the factory.

Edward Gribbon and his son James were the largest producers of linen cloth in the whole of County Londonderry.



Edward Gribbon  
1800 -1875





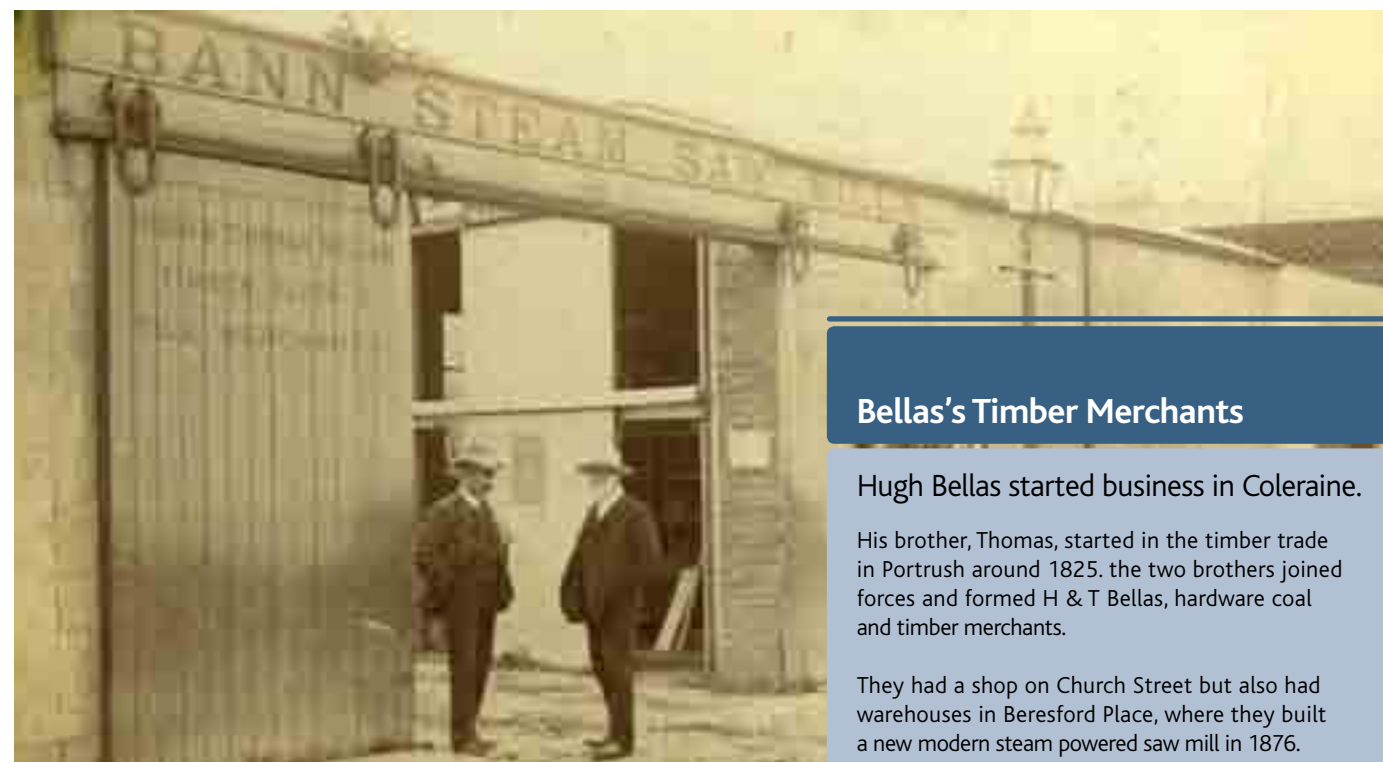
# Family Business

In Victorian times many new businesses were started. Some of them expanded rapidly. Some of them are still trading today.

## Baxters

William J Baxter owned a Chemist's shop in Church Street.

He was also a Justice of the Peace who was knighted to become Sir William. He became Deputy Lieutenant of County Londonderry.



## Bellas's Timber Merchants

Hugh Bellas started business in Coleraine.

His brother, Thomas, started in the timber trade in Portrush around 1825. the two brothers joined forces and formed H & T Bellas, hardware coal and timber merchants.

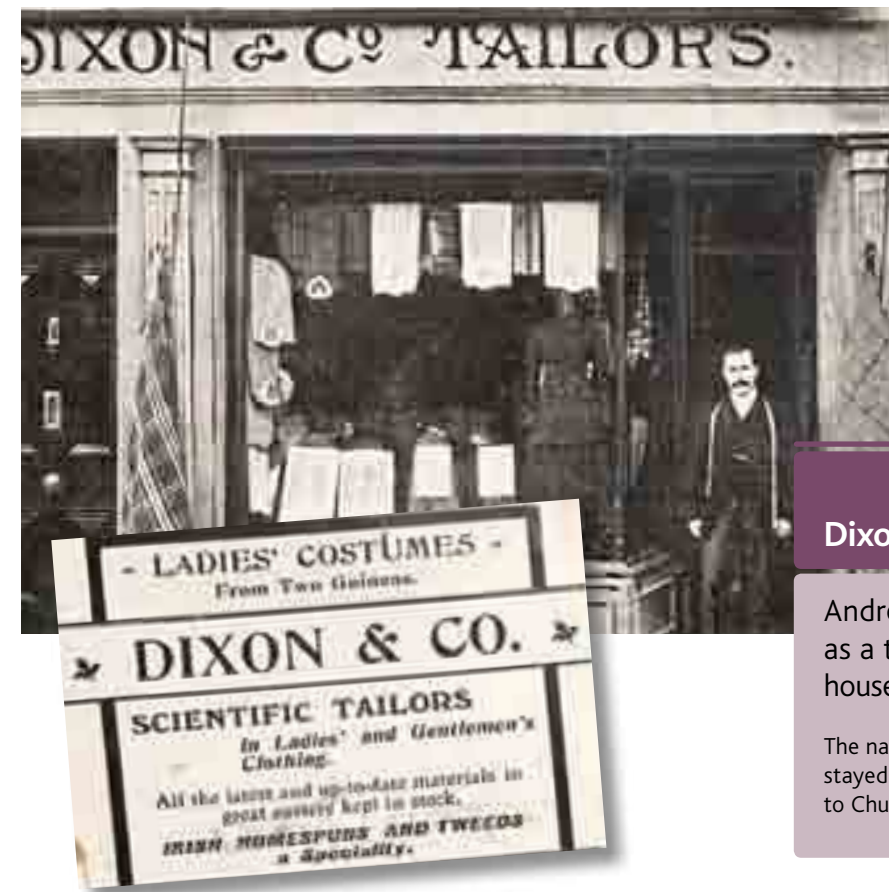
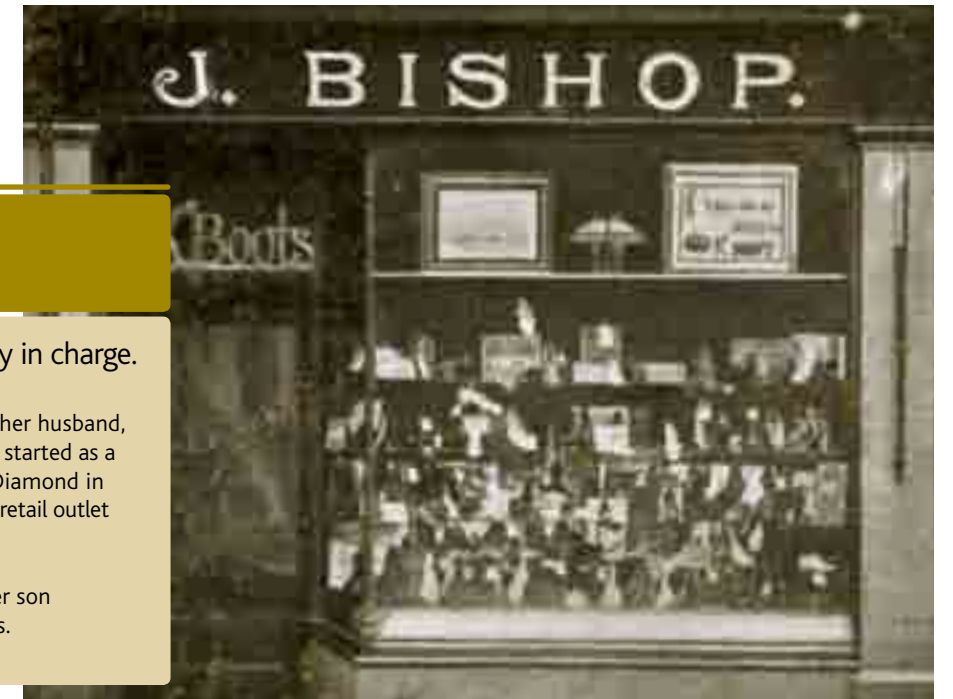
They had a shop on Church Street but also had warehouses in Beresford Place, where they built a new modern steam powered saw mill in 1876.

## Bishop's Shoe Shop

Bishop's was a business with a lady in charge.

Ellen Bishop took over the business when her husband, Stephen died at the age of 31. The business started as a shoemakers in Mill street, moving to the Diamond in the 1860s. Ellen expanded the business as a retail outlet for leading brands.

She lived on the Portstewart Road, with her son James, who also had a flair for the business.



## Dixon's Tailors

Andrew Dickson started his business as a tailor, working by himself in a house in Railway Road.

The name was changed to Dixon and the business stayed in the family. It later expanded and moved to Church Street.



# Small Business

In Victorian times many new small businesses opened. They were often operated by the family. Children often learned to work in the family business. Sometimes they took over the business when their Dad retired.

## McKeown's – Oyster Shop 17 Stone Row Upper

Mary McKeown left County Louth and followed her husband all the way to the Isle of Man, where she had a daughter.

She then came to Coleraine, where she ran the oyster shop with her husband. She had seven children to look after and she was glad when her brother came to help.

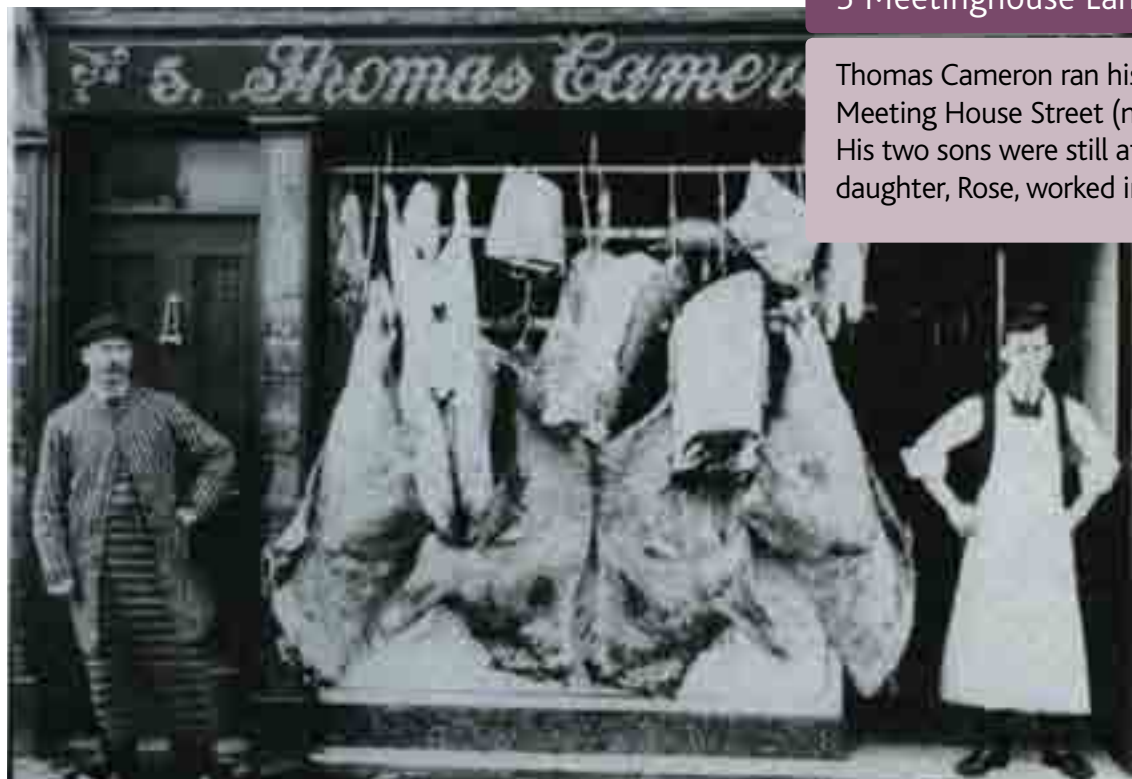
## Robert Orr – Confectioners 2 Ferryquay Street

Robert Orr's sweetie shop was booming – it seemed everyone had a sweet tooth in those days.

He employed five shop assistants – all girls. None of them were married. His wife Rebecca was kept busy with five children under ten.

## Thomas Cameron – Butchers 5 Meetinghouse Lane

Thomas Cameron ran his butchers shop in Meeting House Street (now Abbey Street). His two sons were still at school while his daughter, Rose, worked in the shop.



## Daniel Cunningham – Ironmongers 5 Lodge Road

Daniel Cunningham did well as the manager of the ironmongers. He lived with his wife, Eleanor, and their baby daughter, Olive Mary. He moved into a new house on the Lodge Road.

## Daniel Cameron – Cooper 68 Long Commons

Daniel was a cooper, which means he made barrels. Barrels were used to store many different things. His oldest son, Patrick, worked in the business, his other children found other jobs.



## James Daly – Blacksmiths 5 New Row West

James Daly had three daughters who couldn't follow him into the blacksmith business. His one son, Adam, was still at school. In the meantime he had three men working for him. They all lived in the house above the shop.



# Ladies in Charge

In Victorian times ladies who were better off were not expected to work at all. A lady's place was in the home. Businesses were usually run by men - but this was not always the case. Ellen Bishop ran the shoeshop and here are three other businesses in the centre of Coleraine with ladies in charge.



**Claudia McCurdy – Hotel**  
2 The Diamond

McCurdy's Hotel was run by Miss Claudia McCurdy. Miss McCurdy never married. She ran the hotel with the help of her niece, Marion McCurdy, and five female servants. Edward Smith, a porter, and John McCann were the only men.



**Fanny K. Finlay – Chemist**  
3 Church Street

When Fanny Finlay's husband died, everyone thought she would shut up shop. But no, she kept the business going with an assistant chemist and five apprentices and a servant who kept the house in order.



**Mrs Ellis – Grocers**  
10 The Diamond

Mrs Ellis sold all sorts of groceries and also wine and other drinks. She was helped by the two Margarets. One was her daughter, the other was Margaret Steenson, a cousin.



# Workers

All of the firms in Coleraine, both big and small, needed people to work in them. People came from other places to find a job in Coleraine. Many came to work in the mills or shops, some had already learned the job elsewhere. Often workers paid to live in the houses of local people; they were called boarders.

## Robert and May Douglas 1 Railway Road

The Douglas family had three young men staying with them as boarders. Percy, William and John had all come from the countryside to work in shops in the town.

## The Kirbys 1 Arthur Place

The Kirby family came from County Waterford. William and his two sons worked as labourers. His wife made hats and his two daughters were both housekeepers.

## Henry Grundle 5 Killowen Street

Henry moved to Coleraine from Armagh. He was already a skilled worker in the linen industry. He came here to work at Gribbon's linen mill. He lived in Killowen Street, which was very handy for the mill. His daughter and two of his sons worked there too.

Often workers paid to live in the houses of local people, they were called boarders.

Killowen Street c1890

As well as people to do the hard work, bigger businesses also employed managers to run them. There were also good jobs working for the government. Women often found jobs as servants in the big houses.



## Thomas Hay 5 Captain Street

The government employed people to do lots of different jobs. Some of these might not make you popular with everyone.

Thomas Hay worked for the government. He was in charge of collecting taxes. His wife was English. His oldest son, Edward, got a good job working for the Chronicle. His brother, Francis, was always more adventurous and became a soldier travelling all over the world to defend the British Empire.

## James Fentie 1 Captain Street

James Fentie had an important job as manager of the distillery, which is a sort of factory which makes whiskey.

He moved over from Scotland to take this job. Once he moved to Northern Ireland he got married and had two children.

## Catherine McAllister Ballysally House

Catherine lived in a grand house. However the house was owned by Mr. Robert Taylor, who owned the whiskey distillery. Catherine was his cook.

She worked with two other servants, Annie and Margaret. Often servants lived in the same houses as their employers, but in smaller rooms well away from the family.

As well as people to do the hard work, bigger businesses also employed managers to run them.



# The Harbour

Coleraine Harbour was a very busy place. People and goods were constantly coming in and going out.

**Hugh McKeag**  
10 Bridge Street

Hugh McKeag was an Able Seaman, which means he was a qualified sailor. While he was away at sea his wife, Annie, ran a successful business selling clothes.

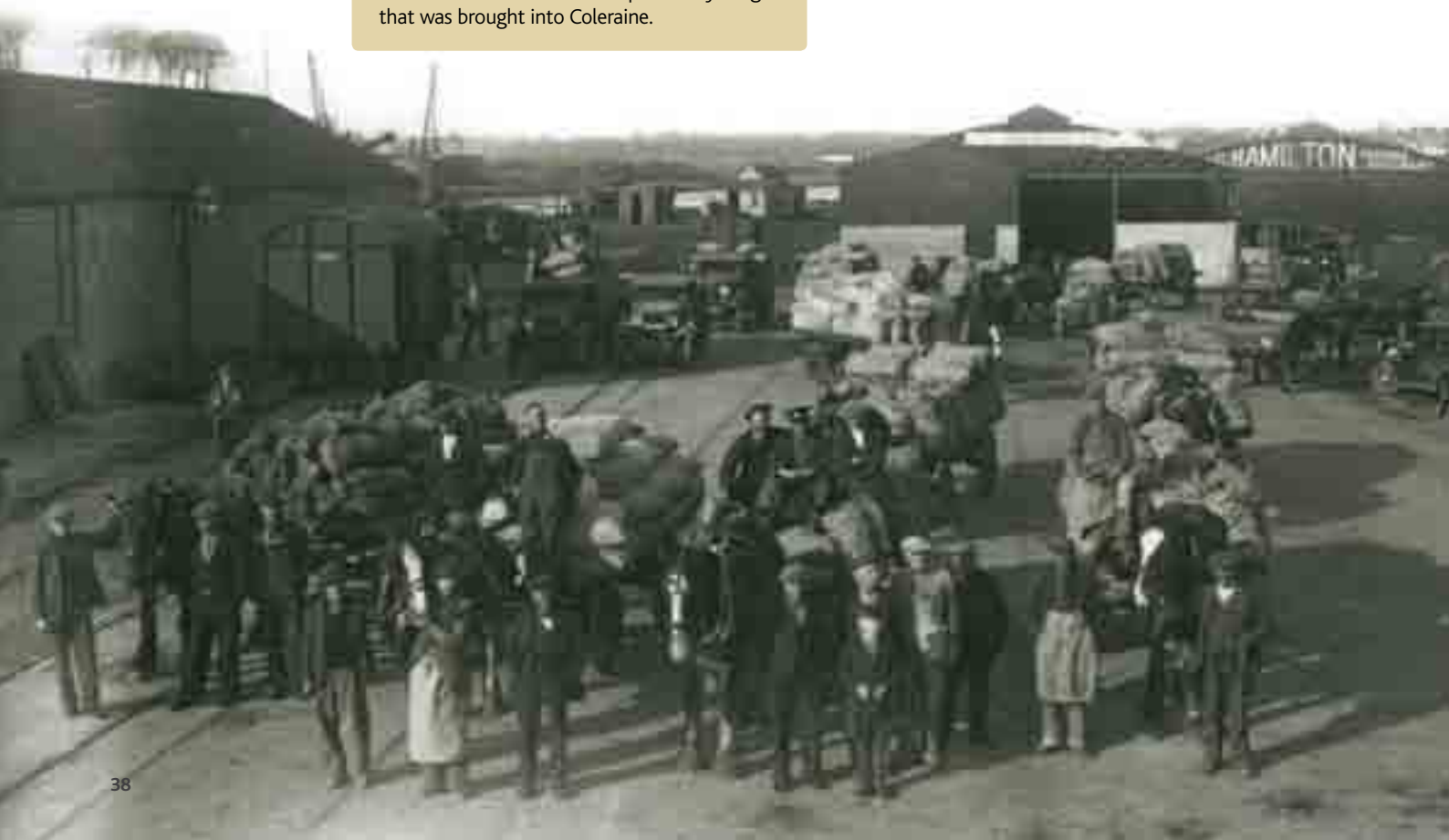
**Robert Bell**  
12 Waverly Terrace

Robert Bell had an important job working for the government. He was in charge of customs at the harbour and had to inspect everything that was brought into Coleraine.

**Daniel & Thomas McKeefry**  
7 Pates Lane

The two McKeefry brothers were both Dock Labourers. They took things on and off ships. There was work for them only when the ships came in. Neither was married. They both lived with their mother in Pates Lane.

Many locally made things, such as butter and grain from the farms and cloth and clothes made in the mills, were sent away on ships. Coal, wood and other items were brought into Coleraine harbour. You could also take a ship to Glasgow and beyond. Many people worked at the harbour.



# Hard Times

If people had difficulties bringing up a family, perhaps because their wife or husband had died, or they were on a very low wage, times would have been hard!



**Eliza Lee**  
12 Arthur Place

Eliza Lee was a rag gatherer, while her daughter Jennie was a general domestic servant, the lowest rank in the house. Her son had learning difficulties. He was described in the census as an 'idiot'.

**Nancy Doey**  
8 Boilingwell Lane

Nancy Doey was a washerwoman. She lived in Boilingwell Lane doing other peoples laundry. She was a widow with six children to bring up.

**Jane Platt**  
9 Taylors Row

Jane Platt had a hard life. She had seven children to bring up. She could no longer work after her husband died. Luckily, her two eldest daughters had jobs in the shirt factory but all the others were too young.



# Workhouse

The Workhouse or Poor House was on the Mountsandel Road. It provided for people who were poor and had nowhere to go. It was paid for by businessmen in the town.

They were generally very hard places where families were split up and everyone was expected to work. The food was very basic. People in the workhouse were not listed in the census by their names – only their initials. No one would want others to know that they had been in the workhouse.

## Old people

Mr. W. McA. had worked all his life as a shoemaker, but at 78 years of age he went into the workhouse.

Mr. R. G. was 65 years old. He had been a blacksmith.

Mr. J. B. was 78 years old. He had been a soldier. Perhaps he had been all over the world fighting Victoria's wars.

## Children

W. G. & S.G. were 11 years old and 8 years old. Perhaps they were brother and sister.

L.G. was a one year old girl. There are no other names with hers. Perhaps she was an orphan.

S.A., M.A., & T.A. were all under 10 years old, but there were two older people with the same initial. Perhaps the whole family was in the workhouse.

## People with difficulties

Mr. J. McC. used to be a labourer, but he became blind.

Mr. R.C. was a shoemaker, he could read and write but he was deaf and could not speak.

Mrs. M. M. was 66 years old, her husband had died and she was lame and could not walk.

# Very Hard Times

Victorian times included some very hard times. The poor were always the most seriously affected.

## CHOLERA

Cholera is a dreadful disease which often kills people. Cholera broke out in in 1832 in Coleraine. Whole families were wiped out in 24 hours.

In January 1855, cholera reached Coleraine again. It started in Killowen. Those who were ill were carried through the town to the Workhouse and their bodies were carried back when they died.

People feared that this would spread the disease to the rest of the town, although it was discovered at this time that the disease is passed on through contaminated water.

## FAMINE

The famine was caused by a disease which made potatoes rot. Many poor people had nothing to eat except potatoes and so were starving. This happened several times, but the worst years were 1845 to 1847. Many people died and many sailed to other countries.

Coleraine was not as badly affected as other parts of Ireland. However many starving people did come to the town. The Workhouse was full.





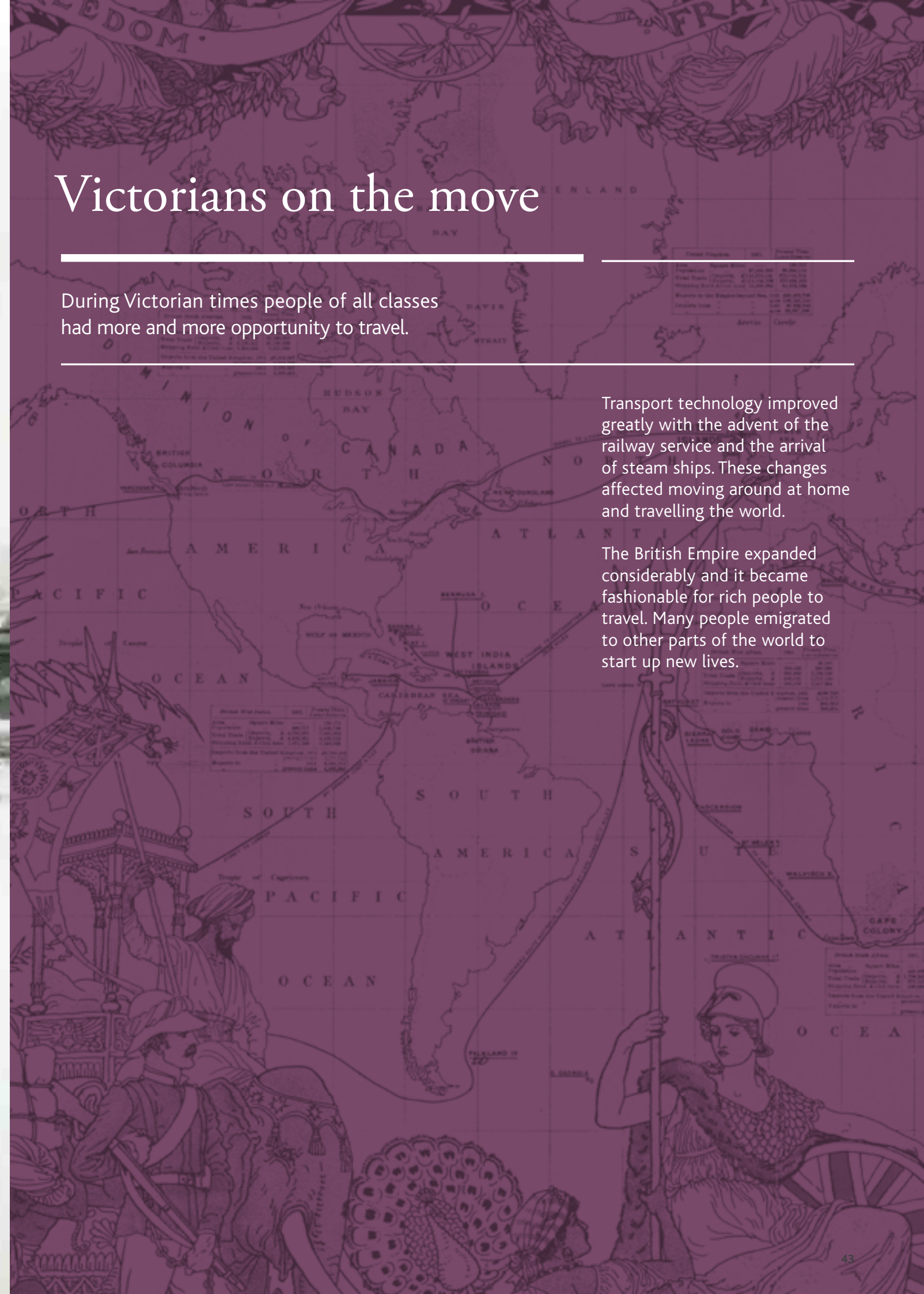


# Victorians on the move

During Victorian times people of all classes had more and more opportunity to travel.

Transport technology improved greatly with the advent of the railway service and the arrival of steam ships. These changes affected moving around at home and travelling the world.

The British Empire expanded considerably and it became fashionable for rich people to travel. Many people emigrated to other parts of the world to start up new lives.





# Victorians on the move

## – coming

Improvements in ships and trains made it easier for people in Victorian times to travel across the world. The traffic was not all one way. People travelled to Coleraine for different reasons. Some came from far off parts of the Empire.

### The Wilsons

18 The Diamond

1

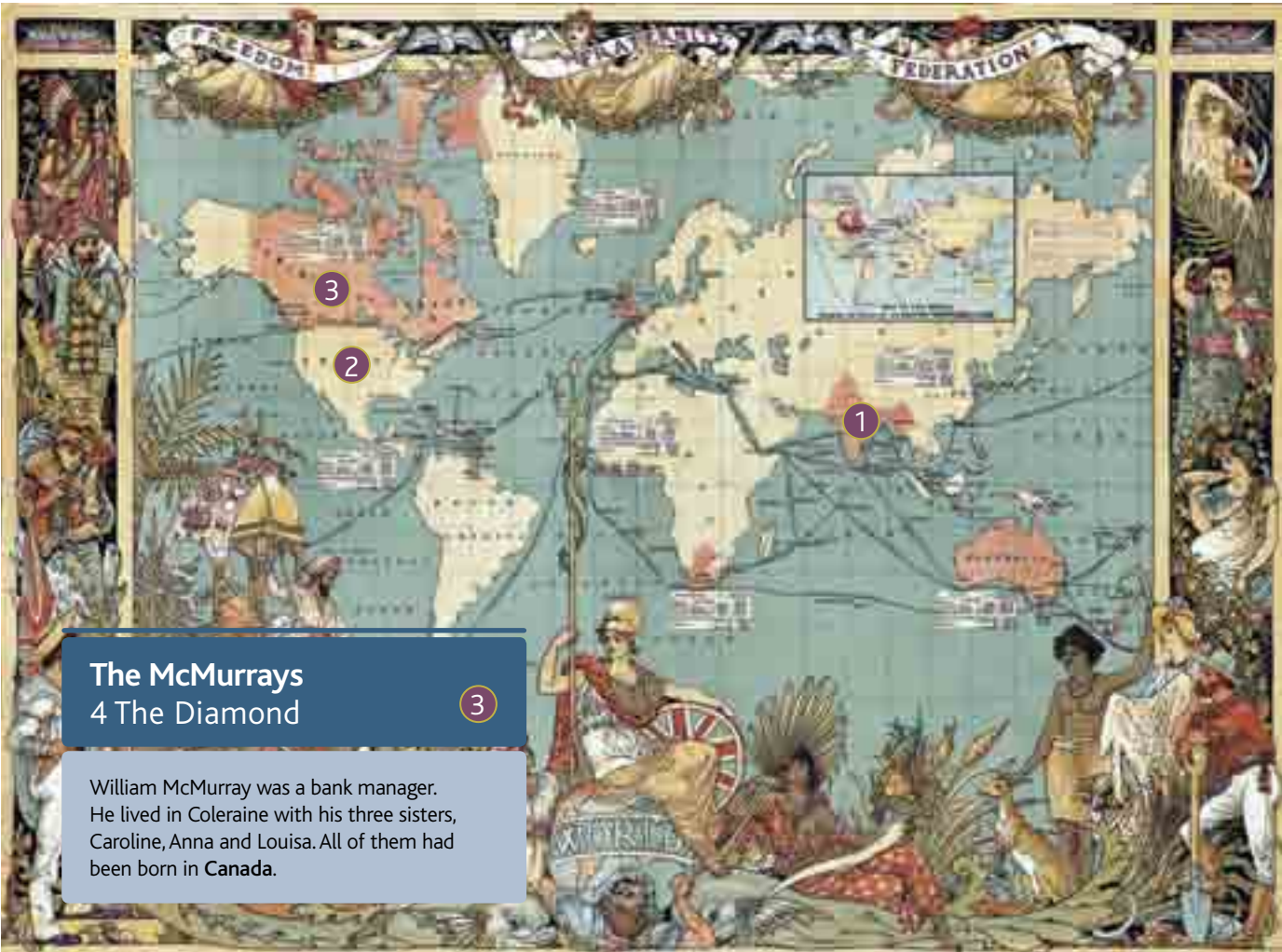
Mr George Wilson ran another bank in the Diamond. Although George came from County Down, his wife, Mary Sophia, was born in **India**.

### John McCann

2 The Diamond

2

John McCann worked in Mrs McCurdy's hotel. He kept the score for gentlemen playing billiards in the hotel. John McCann was born in **America**.



### The McMurrays

4 The Diamond

3

William McMurray was a bank manager. He lived in Coleraine with his three sisters, Caroline, Anna and Louisa. All of them had been born in **Canada**.

# Victorians on the move

## – going

During Victorian times many, many thousands of people left Ireland. Many went to America and Canada.

In the years after the famine many people felt that life would be better in a new country. In just ten years over 300,000 men women and children left Northern Ireland. Over 25,000 of them sailed from Portrush.

### The Steen Family

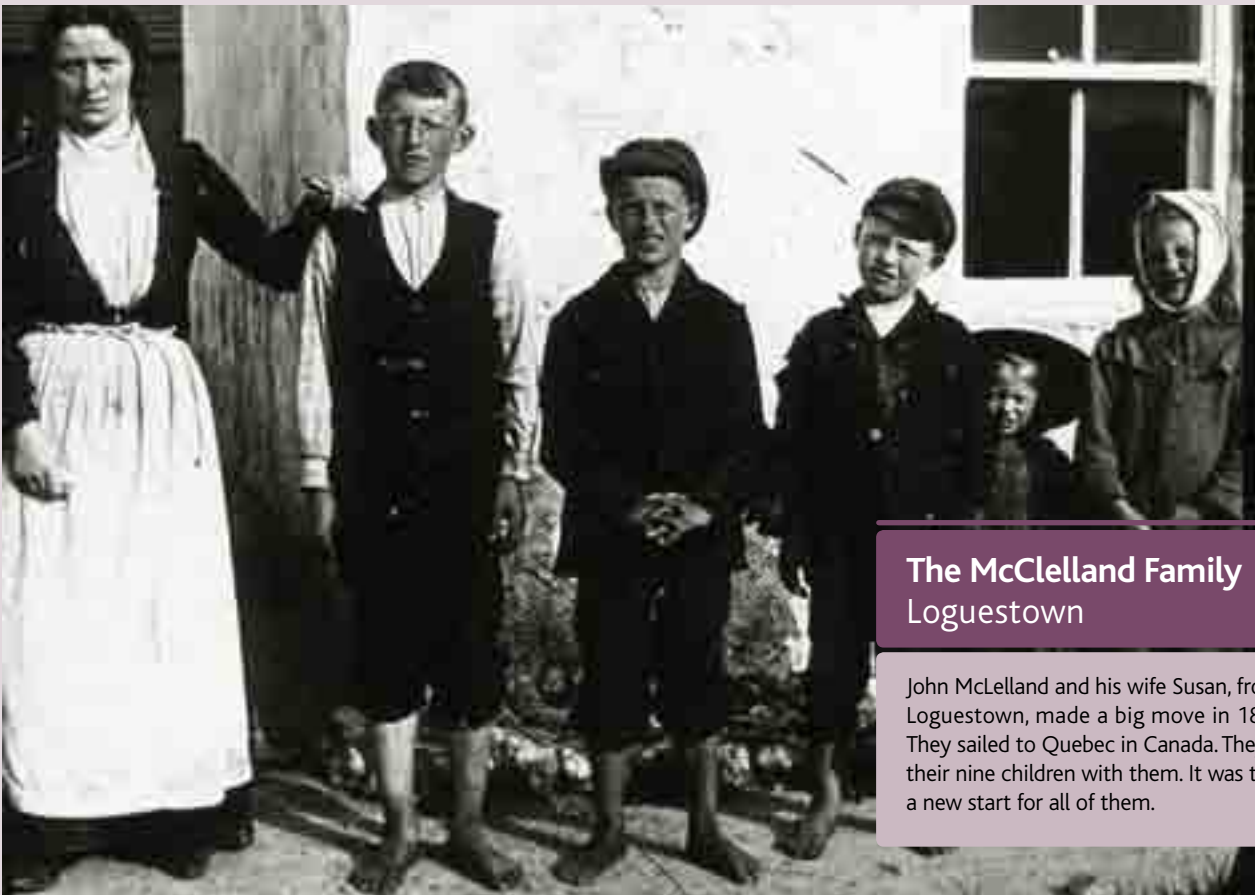
North Brook Street

The Steen's from North Brook Street had it all organised. Isabella and the four children sailed to New York in 1833. They had friends there. John followed as soon as he settled all their business in Coleraine.

### Thomas Shields & John Hughes

Ferryquay Street

Two friends from Ferry Quay Street set out on a great adventure in 1834. Thomas and John set sail for New York. We don't know where they ended up. Perhaps they travelled to the Wild West and met famous outlaws like Billy the Kid or Jesse James.



### The McClelland Family

Loguestown

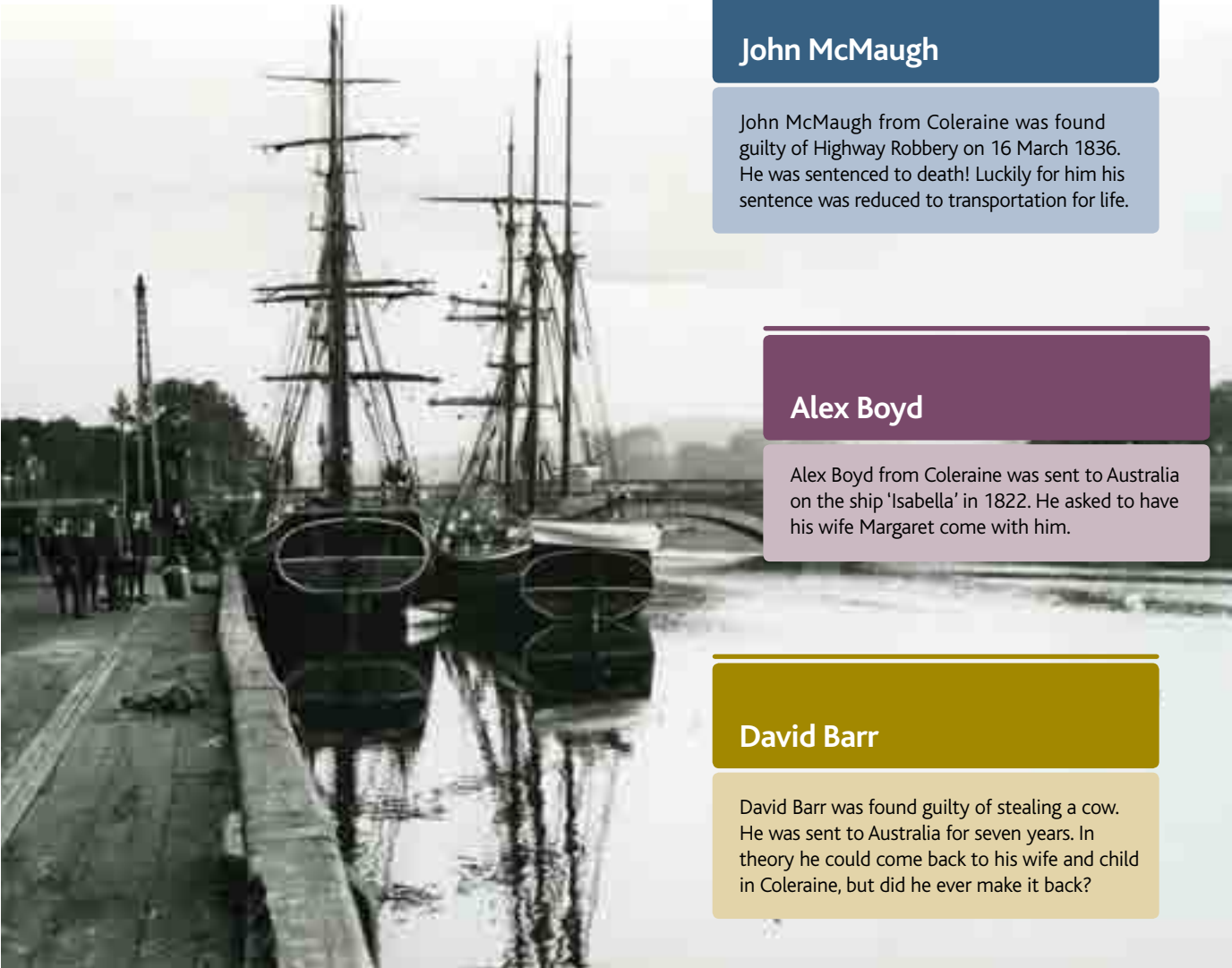
John McLelland and his wife Susan, from Loguestown, made a big move in 1833. They sailed to Quebec in Canada. They took their nine children with them. It was to be a new start for all of them.



# Victorians on the move – being sent

If you were found guilty of a serious offence the chances were that you would be sentenced to death by hanging. If you were lucky you might get 'transported', which meant being sent across the world to Australia.

You were kept in camps there, called 'Penal Colonies', until your sentence was finished. Life in the camps was very hard! Transportation was stopped in 1866.



## John McMaugh

John McMaugh from Coleraine was found guilty of Highway Robbery on 16 March 1836. He was sentenced to death! Luckily for him his sentence was reduced to transportation for life.

## Alex Boyd

Alex Boyd from Coleraine was sent to Australia on the ship 'Isabella' in 1822. He asked to have his wife Margaret come with him.

## David Barr

David Barr was found guilty of stealing a cow. He was sent to Australia for seven years. In theory he could come back to his wife and child in Coleraine, but did he ever make it back?

# Trains

The train was a brand new thing in Victorian times. It made a huge difference to getting around.

The railway to Londonderry opened first, in 1852. A few years later the line to Belfast opened. For a while each line had its own railway station because the trains couldn't cross the bridge over the Bann.

## James Porkhill 18 Olphert Place

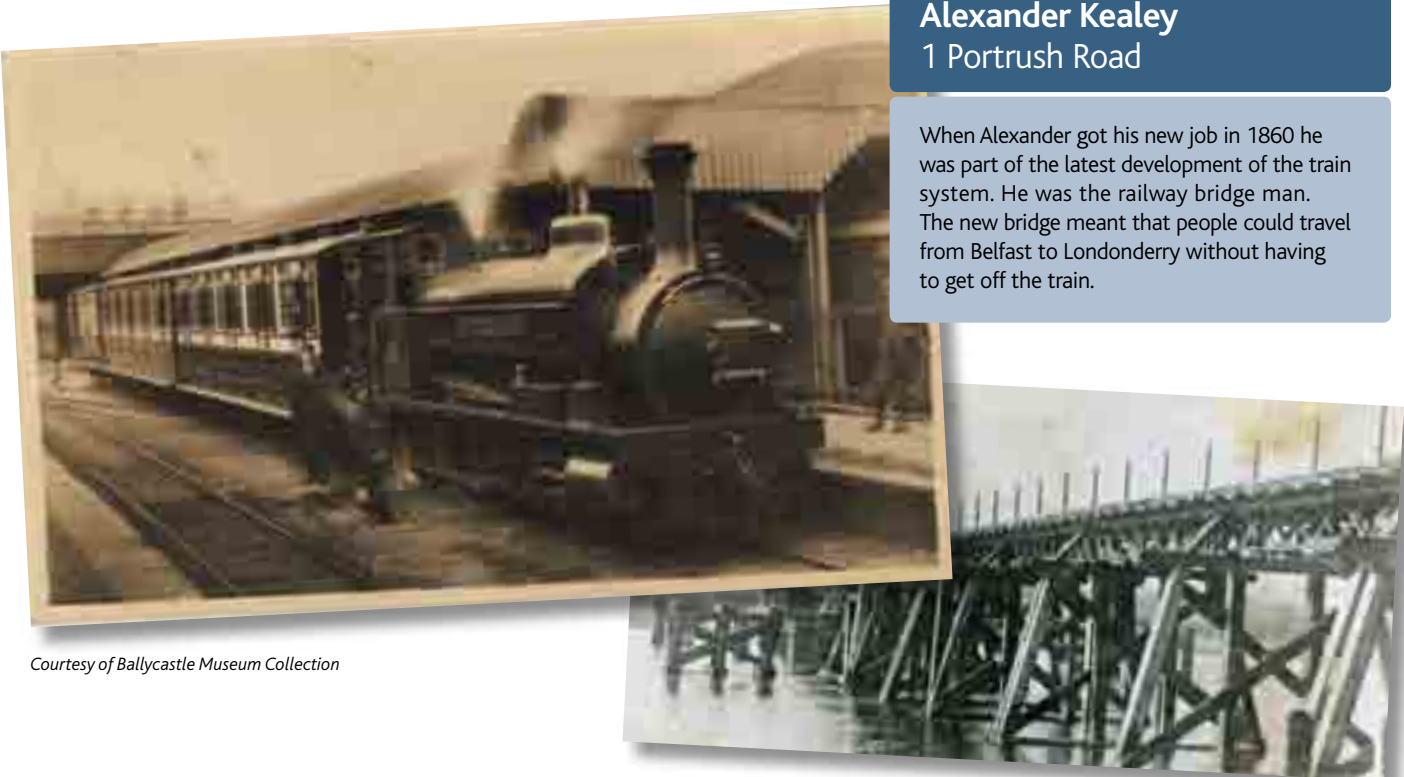
James was still a young man at the end of Victorian times. He worked as a railway porter. The days when people had to travel to Belfast in a horse-drawn stage coach were gone before he was born.

## William Kennedy 11 Railway Place

William was a railway guard. His house was handy for the station on the Belfast line. This station became the main station for Coleraine and was rebuilt in 1882. Much of it can still be seen today.

## Alexander Kealey 1 Portrush Road

When Alexander got his new job in 1860 he was part of the latest development of the train system. He was the railway bridge man. The new bridge meant that people could travel from Belfast to Londonderry without having to get off the train.



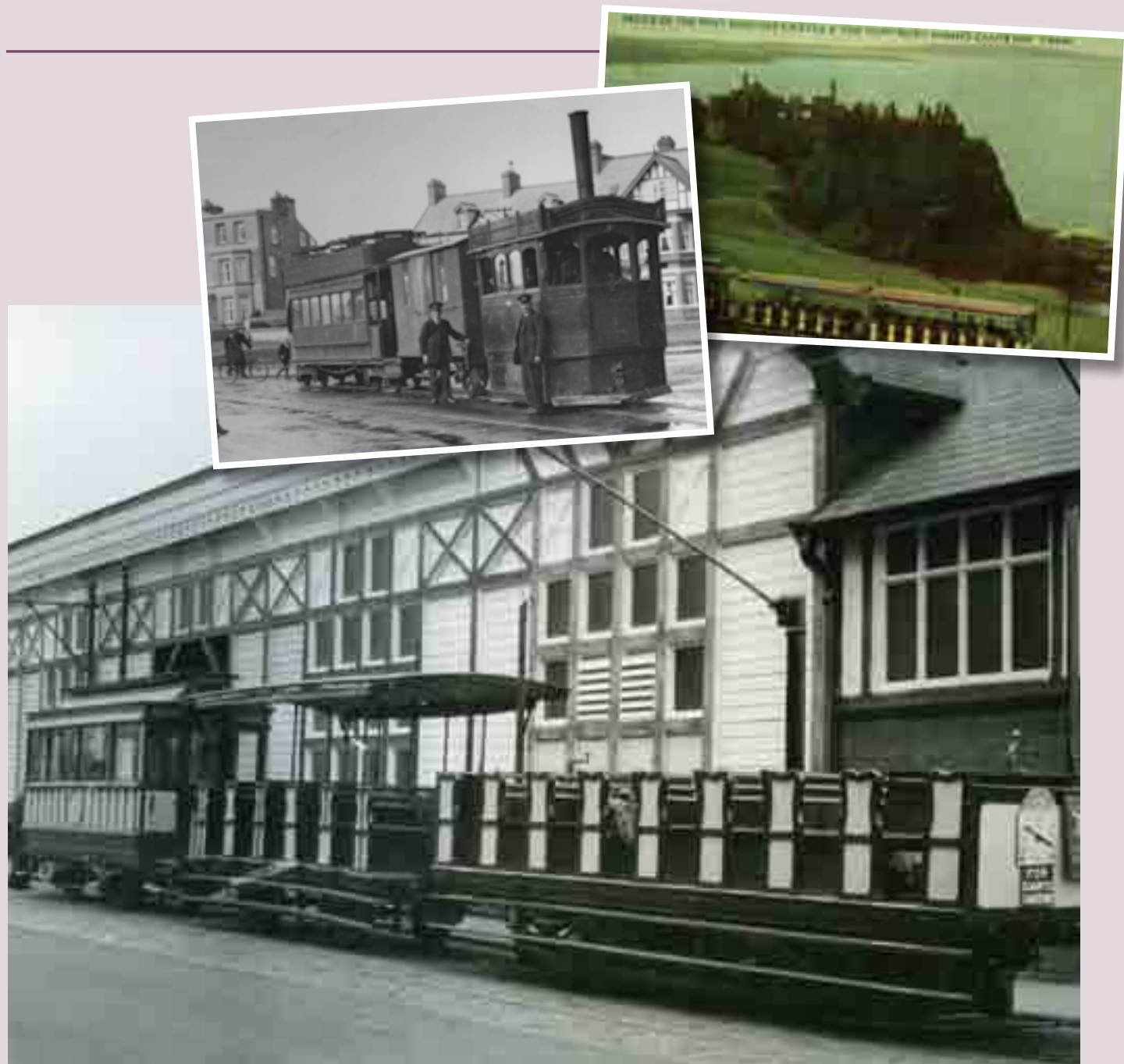
Courtesy of Ballycastle Museum Collection



# Trams

In addition to the railway there were also trams. Trams were small trains which also ran on rails.

There was a tram in Portstewart and there was also a tramline from the railway station in Portrush to the Giant’s Causeway. Visitors could see the Causeway and Dunluce Castle.



# Horses

By the end of Victorian times there were more railway lines than there are today, but the horse was still needed.

The train could only take people and things from station to station. To get to and from the station you could take a ‘car’ which was a type of horse drawn carriage. To move stuff you needed a man with a horse and cart.



## Thomas and Robert Davis 8 Stable Lane

Thomas and his son Robert were both car drivers. Cars were small carriages pulled by horses. They were like Victorian taxis. There were quite a few companies in Coleraine.

## Samuel Gamble 92 Killowen Street

Samuel was a cart driver all his life. He wasn’t sure what the railway would bring. But the carts were still needed to bring things from farms to the market and from the harbour to the shops. The carters were still busy.

## Hugh Crawford 13 Stone Row

Horses were used by the carters and the cars. Better-off people would ride their own horses or might have their own carriages. There were lots of horses to look after. Hugh was one of the blacksmiths who made their shoes. He lived above the shop with his eight children.



‘Cars’ were a type of carriage pulled by a horse. One known as the Irish ‘jaunting car’ can still be seen in Ireland today.

The Old Railway Bus, Eglinton. C700



# Exploring Victorian Bally-your-place

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Here are a few simple steps to getting the information to create your own Victorian history about people in the place where you live.

This are only a small sample of the resources that are available. These are outlined to give you a starting point for your project.

## ON-LINE SOURCES

A good place to start is to look at Samuel Lewis's topographical dictionary, which gives a guide to every town in the year 1837, the year Victoria became queen.

Go to [www.libraryireland.com](http://www.libraryireland.com). In the search box in the top right hand corner type *topographical dictionary*. This will give you set of links to the book.

Note the alphabet near the top of the page, click on the initial letter of the name of your place, then scroll down until you find your town. Small towns don't always get much coverage.

## STREET DIRECTORIES

PRONI is the public record office for Northern Ireland. This organisation looks after all the records belonging to the government in Northern Ireland. There are many things which are of interest to people exploring history.

Go to [www.proni.gov.uk](http://www.proni.gov.uk). Note the list of options on the left hand side of the page. Click *Search the archives*.

This will give you three options for online archives click on *Street Directories*.

On the right hand side of the screen is a box with *Search the directories*, click on it.

You will get a table asking for information. Click on *Choose a directory*.

This will give you a box with an arrow on the side. There are a list of the directories available and the dates they were produced. Many like the *Belfast and Ulster* contain information on all the towns in Northern Ireland.

Pick a directory and then press continue. This will take you back to the table. You can search in different ways.

To find a town go to *locale* and press the arrow and scroll down to the town you want.

Click on 'Search' and this will give you page numbers in the directories that mention the town. Click on details beside the page numbers. This will give you a picture of the double page spread.

Using the controls on the right hand side of the screen you can go to the next page in the book or the next result found by your search.

Alternatively you could put in a key word, for example *chemist* and leave *locale* as *Any* - the search will find all references to chemists in the book.

You can save and print the pages as pictures.

## THE 1901 CENSUS

**This census is now available online. This gives us a fascinating glimpse of life at the end of the Victorian Period.**

Go to [www.census.nationalarchives.ie](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie). This site contains the census records for the whole of Ireland from 1901 and 1911.

On the home page click on *Search* the census records for Ireland 1901 and 1911. This will give you an enquiry table, you can search for several things.

Choose which year you want 1911 or 1901.

Select your county.

In the box marked DED write the name of the town you are searching for.



If you press search now you will get every person in the town, for example that is 7,792 for Coleraine.

You can write the name of a street and you will get all the people in that street.

Or you can write in a surname and check all the people of that name in the town.

You can also choose whether you are looking for only men or only women and what age the person is.

Click on one of the names in the table and you will get the table of information about that person and all the others who lived in the same house. Remember you often get several people of the same name in the same house.

Under the address is a tick box *Show all information* click this to get the full story.

You can copy and paste the information into a word processing document. Remember to change the page set-up to landscape.

It can often be interesting to check the same name or address in 1911, ten years later to see what the changes are.

## NEWSPAPERS

**Many local newspapers were established in the Victorian period. These can provide invaluable information about your area.**

Most newspapers will have an archive of all their editions. In some cases these are accessible to the public. They may have been converted to microfiche files or if you are very lucky, may have been transferred to digital media.

Ask the newspaper or your local library for information.

## MAPS

Your local library may be able to help with old maps or area of information as to where to find them.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Old photographs of your area are very valuable in re-creating your Victorian past. Your local library or museum service may be able to help you in locating some good images.

Local History and Family History Societies may be a good place to try.

## ASKING PEOPLE

Older members of your community may have photographs, objects or documents which could be useful to your project. They also have memories and stories which could be invaluable.

Why not speak to local sheltered housing establishments or community groups?

## NIARCHIVE

[www.niarchive.org](http://www.niarchive.org) is a unique website set up by Causeway Museum Service and Belfast City Council to share the materials gathered by community groups who are exploring their local history. You may find items of interest on the site. Perhaps you could become a contributor to the site and share your research with others.



This project has been part financed by the European Regional Development Fund under the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for Northern Ireland and administered by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board Department Finance and Personnel Digital Inclusion Unit has also provided funding.



## Notes

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# VICTORIAN COLERAINE

Exploring your History

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