

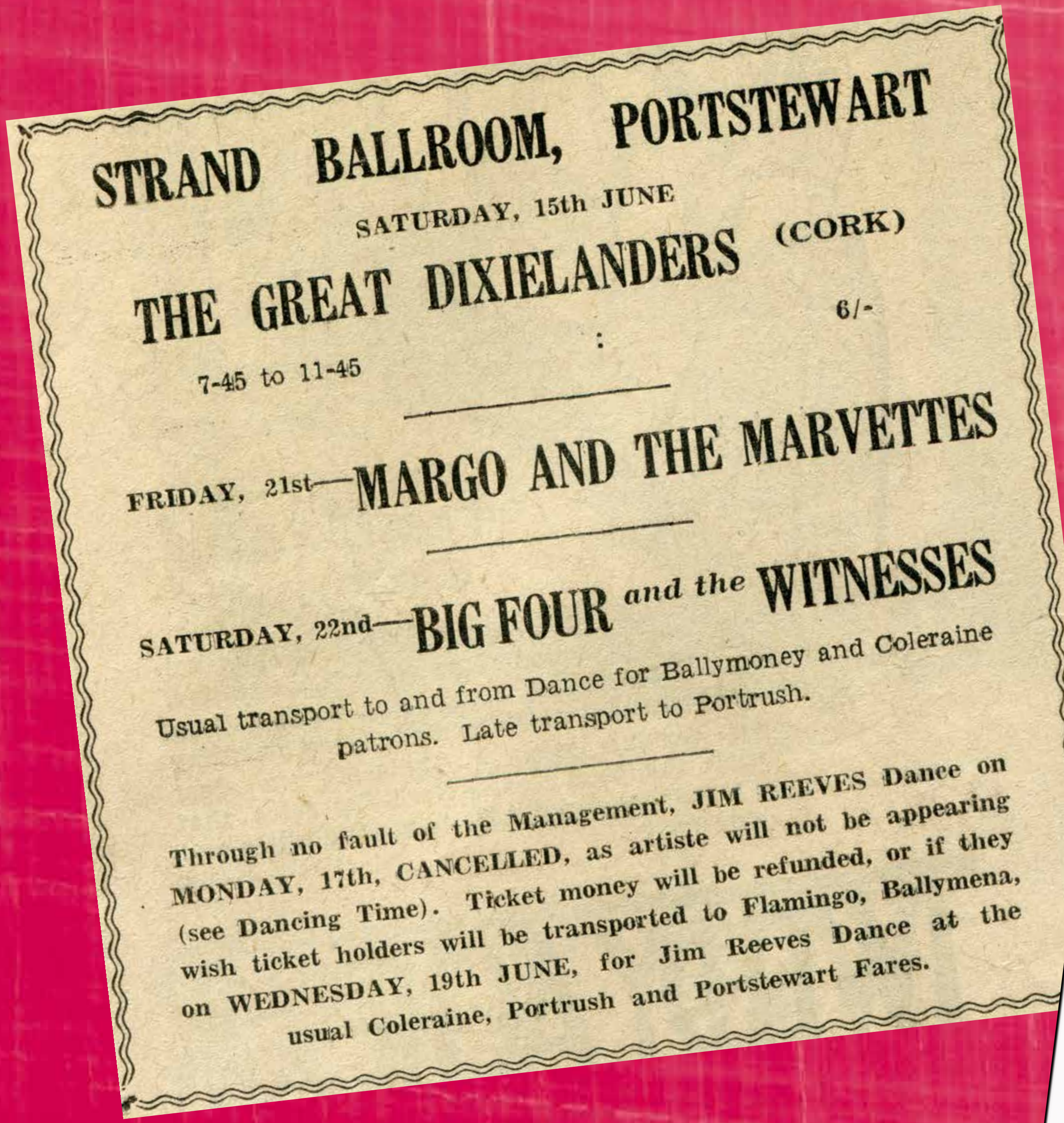


Jim Reeves on stage at the Flamingo Ballroom.
Courtesy Northern Constitution, 22 June 1963.

On a typical Saturday night at the Strand Ballroom three bands played. First on stage was an up and coming local band such as the Beltona Showband, or the Delta All-Stars, who were paid around £5. The support act followed, paid between £5 and £85, depending on popularity and crowd size. The headline act would go on stage around 11pm, some even later if they were playing another venue beforehand. Usually headline acts only performed for 30 to 50 minutes, in contrast with a typical 90 minute set today.

Bobby dealt with last minute cancellations regularly. In June 1963 Jim Reeves cancelled his Strand Ballroom performance. The **‘startling news took the Strand management completely by surprise on Wednesday evening when a telegram arrived from London. The reason given was sickness and strain due to overwork.’** Jim still managed an appearance at the Flamingo Ballroom in Ballymena, with Bobby organising buses to the venue. Bobby said he was **‘not worried about the non-appearance of Jim Reeves, but the fact that through it we stand to lose a lot of the faith our patrons have in us.’** (Coleraine Chronicle, 15 June 1963).

Advertisement with arrangements for transport to Ballymena for Jim Reeves ticket holders. Courtesy Coleraine Chronicle, 15 June 1963.



In June 1967 Procol Harum cancelled their entire Irish tour, including their date at the Strand Ballroom. Courtesy Belfast Telegraph, 23 June 1967.



Backstage at Limavady Agricultural Hall, 8 September 1966. Left to right: Cliff Black of Ballykelly; Elizabeth McKeague of Portstewart; Peter; Lynda Ester, manager of the Gypsies showband, supporting Peter & Gordon; Gordon. Courtesy Coleraine Chronicle, 17 September 1966.

When Peter & Gordon played in Limavady, Gordon **‘was guilty of a sudden and extremely foolish outburst of temper when he kicked an amplifier which he considered to be faulty – and not his own property.’** (Coleraine Chronicle, 17 September 1966). Someone was upset by this, as after the show the air had been let out of their car tyres!

Little Richard was due to appear at the Strand Ballroom in May 1964, but his tour promoter Don Arden cancelled the entire UK tour as Little Richard was ill. The Coleraine Chronicle reported that management **‘promise us an equally big, if not better line up of sensational recording artistes in the near future.’** (Coleraine Chronicle, 9 May 1964). In October 1964, when Little Richard cancelled the second booking, Bobby **‘interrupted the dance to say that Little Richard hoped to fulfil his engagements in Ireland towards the end of this month’.** (Coleraine Chronicle, 17 October 1964). However, he never did play the Strand!

Courtesy Coleraine Chronicle, 1964.

