

Irish Constabulary Pensioners in
the Coleraine district:
Incorporating the Irish
Constabulary and the Royal Irish
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Preface

Wanted – An RIC Pensioner requires a situation of trust in Coleraine or the neighbourhood; Presbyterian; 35 years of age. Apply “RIC” *Constitution Office*.¹

The members of the Constabulary of Ireland and later the Royal Irish Constabulary were men drawn from all strata of society whether as ordinary constables or officers. Their backgrounds and their experiences shaped their outlook on their work and later how they occupied their time after their service, should they be so fortunate to live that long. As an all Ireland force the Constabulary was staffed by men from all counties and covered all the main religious denominations. They were, after a fashion, governed by a rule that a man could not serve in the county he was from, or connected, or where his wife was born. This was done in an effort to reduce the possibility of favour in the decisions being made on a daily basis in regards to enforcement and prosecution.

A consequence of this policy was that in areas such as the Coleraine district there were police and families of policemen who came from across Ireland, who brought their own ideas and cultural ephemera to their new communities and the new relationships which they formed. Due to the roots established in these areas they would also, in many cases, choose to remain in the area after retirement, or return to the area having finished their service elsewhere.

Others who originally came from the Coleraine area either returned bringing their experience with them to find employment and to raise their families, or they settled elsewhere essentially exporting their knowledge and traditions further afield.

This work seeks to illustrate the variety of RIC personnel who covered these two groups and to show the extent to which the former

¹ *The Coleraine Constitution*, 5 September 1891 – this may relate to Samuel Kennedy (see Coleraine chapter)

policemen became a part of their new communities. It will also illustrate that not every former constable could become a local hero or dignitary and that sometimes circumstances could result in unexpected outcomes. Indeed it may be the case that the reader may recognise names and places that connect to their own ancestral story or local area and may discover a previously unknown connection to the force.

This work will examine the available information from contemporary newspapers and local records that outline the activities and associations of the RIC men and their families. Where possible this will include some of their actual service and in particular highlights, or even low points, which may have contributed to their decisions to stay or go. It will also examine in general the role of the retired RIC man and how this career path could open doors to well paid local employment.

The people involved were selected through an interrogation of the online Royal Irish Constabulary pension records on www.findmypast.co.uk taken from the National Archives at Kew. Where the policeman had collected his pension at Coleraine following the end of his career and he remained in the area for a reasonable period, or permanently, I have developed the available information along with the service records for the man from the same source. There were five areas covered Coleraine and immediate area, Garvagh and immediate area, Kilrea and immediate area, Portstewart and Castlerock. Other included examples were stories of note that deserved mention due to their local connections.

The Royal Irish Constabulary went through a change in its rank structure in 1883. The following is a layout of the two different rank systems that were used and mentioned in this work.

Pre 1883

Sub Inspector (1st, 2nd and 3rd class)

1st Class Head Constable

2nd Class Head Constable

Constable

Acting Constable (introduced in 1859)

1st Class Sub Constable (after one year's service)

2nd Class Sub Constable

Post 1883

District Inspector (1st, 2nd and 3rd class)

1st Class Head Constable

2nd Class Head Constable

Sergeant

Acting Sergeant (discontinued 1918)

Constable

The Constabulary of Ireland and the Royal Irish Constabulary had a Reserve which will be referred to in this work. This was a body of men, initially set up in Dublin to be sent to any troubled part of Ireland as the authorities seen fit. It had an establishment of 2 sub inspectors, 4 head constables and not more than 200 sub constables.

The following is a timeline that uses key events in Irish history and the history of policing in Ireland that will allow the reader to interpret what was occurring when the men discussed in this work were serving. I have endeavoured to use what I believe are relevant dates. These are of course open to discussion and challenge.

Year	Event	Relevance
1836	Constabulary of Ireland Act	Formalised the justice system in Ireland and founded the Constabulary in a coherent body.
1845-1848	Famine years	The lack of food and productivity in farms and rural communities pushed many sons of farmers into taking posts with the Constabulary.
October 1857	Disbandment of the Irish Revenue Police	Members of the Revenue Police joined the Constabulary of Ireland and the Constabulary took over duties relating to the detection of illicit distillation.
1867	Fenian Rising	One of the biggest challenges for the Constabulary in relation to agrarian violence. Their efforts in dealing with abortive rising resulted in Queen Victoria bestowing the title "Royal" creating the RIC.
1870's-1880's	The rise of the land movement	Another challenge to the rule of law which

		<p>saw many evictions aided by police as well as attacks on landowners resulting in temporary RIC huts on their land and a move towards a more paramilitary force. This period also produced some draconian legislation that gave greater prosecutorial powers for seditious (or perceived as seditious) behaviour.</p>
1886	First Home Rule Bill	<p>Produced division in the community, most in the north east of Ireland and saw the rise of the Unionist movement. It also produced street violence which put RIC men on the receiving end of violent protests and riots.</p>
1914-1918	First World War	<p>Reduced the capacity of the RIC with many men going off to fight.</p>
1916	Easter Rising	<p>Represented the beginning of a new phase of anti-British armed aggression that would bring the RIC into the front line.</p>
1919-1921	War of Independence	<p>Campaign of violence by republican movement that</p>

		brought in the temporary constables (Black and Tans) and the Auxilairy Divisions to support the RIC. In reality it caused greater division and many RIC deaths.
1922	Creation of Northern Ireland and disbandment of RIC	Self-explanatory.

Coleraine

~Sub Constable Alexander Perry~

Alexander Perry's service record is elusive and as such his date of joining, registered number and home county are unestablished. From his death record it is known that he was born around 1802. The only reference to Alexander's service, other than his pension records was an incident in Coleraine in 1846. At that time Robert Jenkins was the Head Constable, Robert will be discussed later in this chapter. A son of Alexander, also named Robert, was born in Garvagh around 1832, however there is no indication if Alexander was serving there at this time.

In the aforementioned incident Alexander was a witness to an assault on his colleague Richard Rusk on Wednesday 18th March 1846 in Coleraine. Alexander was examined in court however "no part of his evidence went to sustain the charge brought against the prisoners." In Rusk's evidence it was stated that the accused, Darby Gillen, had struck Rusk on the side of the head and called him a "bloody peeler." Rusk retaliated by giving Gillen "a blow which knocked him down", however Gillen did not go quietly to the barrack and so he and Alexander "took him by force." There was a scuffle during which Rusk threw Gillen to the ground where Gillen proceeded to "upset" Alexander (presumably knocking him down rather than emotionally) and so Alexander and Rusk dragged Gillen on his back to the barrack.¹

Alexander was pensioned on Wednesday 1st November 1848 and initially claimed his pension at Limavady. By 1859 Alexander was linked to Cross Glebe Coleraine and was farming land owned by the Rev James O'Hara. Alexander was married to Hannah (born approximately 1808) and they had at least four children.

Alexander died at Cross Glebe on Saturday 8th May 1880 of a tumour on his neck which he had for around nine months. His son Alexander was present at his death. The land at Cross Glebe was given up

¹ Coleraine Quarter Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 4 April 1846

immediately after Alexander senior's death. Hannah subsequently moved to Hartford Place, Brook Street, Coleraine where she died, aged 85, on Wednesday 8th March 1893. Hannah had been at this address since approximately 1887. Again her son Alexander was present at her death, his address at this time was given as Stone Row.

Alexander junior was born around 1841 and was to become a produce dealer. It was known that while Alexander was young that he had an accident that left him with a limp. The nature of this accident is unknown. Alexander met his untimely death at the age of 55 on Sunday 19th April 1896 at his work premises on Stone Row Lower Coleraine. From contemporary press reports it was determined that Alexander had recently left his usual lodgings and had begun to sleep in his store, from which he sold hay, straw, potatoes etc. He was believed to have been "indulging in drink rather freely of late" and was last seen entering the store between 1115 pm and 1130 pm with a neighbour Joseph Francis Duffin seeing him entering and securing the door in the usual way and Alexander "appeared quite capable." A woman who lived nearby had not seen him appear at his usual time the following day and sent a boy named Doherty to the barracks where Constable James McLarnon (who will make his own appearance later in this chapter) was fetched. At Alexander's inquest, which was held at William Ellis' licensed premises, on the same street, Constable McLarnon deposed that he had opened the door and "found the body at the bottom of the ladder, his head being wedged against the door and his feet on the second step. The door had been secured as usual on the inside and outside." Duffin gave evidence that about an hour after he had seen Alexander go into his premises he had heard a crash but did not think anything of it. Information was mentioned in a report that an unopened half-pint bottle of rum was found in his pocket. It was also stated that he had visited several public houses before he had gone home. A witness John McWilliams gave evidence that he had seen Alexander drink two half-glasses of whisky in one bar. The cause of death was given as the dislocation of his neck as determined by Dr J Tate Creery at the time of examination, and the death was recorded as an accidental fall. Head Constable George

Wheatly (son of another Coleraine pensioner of the same name) said that “the trapdoor and stepladder were unprotected and most dangerous even in daylight.”²

Alexander’s brother Robert Perry had identified his remains and had appeared at the inquest. Robert at this time lived at 18 Bond’s Hill Londonderry. Robert as stated previously had been born in Garvagh around 1832. He married Jane Eliza Lynch in 1855 and both lived in Londonderry. In 1879 they lived on Duke Street and by 1884 Robert was a merchant on Spencer Road. Jane died at the Bond’s Hill address in April 1906 and Robert died in September 1914. He had been employed as an agent for artificial manures. At the time of Jane’s death their sons WL Perry and Alexander Wilson Perry were clerk of the union and assistant clerk respectively. Another son was also noted to be in business in Londonderry. The Perry family remained at 18 Bond’s Hill into the 1940’s.

A daughter of Alexander senior called Catherine, born around 1854, married a baker and confectioner called John Youl at New Row Presbyterian Church on Thursday 11th May 1882. John was the son of a candle maker named Peter Youl from Alloa Scotland and had run a confectioners at 5 Mill Street Alloa until 1873.³ In 1883 Catherine and John were living on Bridge Street Coleraine and had a daughter Hanna on Thursday 15th February. They had a son Peter who was also born at Bridge Street on Wednesday 13th May 1885. The family left Bridge Street in 1887 and by 1891 were living at Gorbals, Glasgow.

² Sad Fatality in Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 20 April 1896 & Inquest at Coleraine, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Advertiser*, 21 April 1896

³ Confections, *The Alloa Advertiser*, 12 April 1873

~Head Constable Robert Jenkins 110~

Robert Jenkins was one of the more influential of the Coleraine pensioners both in his police service and afterwards. Robert was born in County Meath around 1801. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on the first day of 1823 having been recommended by Sir Henry Meredith the 3rd Baronet of Carlanstown. Robert was given the registered number 110 and was sent to his home county to serve. He later served in what was Queen's County, back to Meath and by 1841 had been transferred to County Londonderry on his promotion to 2nd class Head Constable on Thursday 1st July and was sent to Coleraine.

Robert's record shows that he was injured on Friday 2nd June 1843. The nature of this injury is not recorded on his service record. It could not have been so bad as he continued his service and the following year on 3rd October he married an American woman, Sarah Steen, the youngest daughter of Thomas Steen Esq., of Westpoint New York and formerly of Dunboe near Castlerock.⁴

Being the Head Constable at Coleraine meant that Robert was regularly in court giving evidence in serious cases. In March 1849 Robert was a witness in a murder trial where the defendant John Knox was accused of killing his wife Jane Knox at Kinneyglass, Macosquin. It was alleged that John had poisoned her using white arsenic and Epsom salts. The motive, as laid out by the prosecution, was that John had been having a relationship with a hired servant and that Jane, naturally being "indignant" wanted the girl dismissed, which John refused to do. The poison was administered in tea that John had prepared for Jane. Robert's first involvement was that on hearing of Jane's death he went to visit John at his home having first reported the death to the magistrates and coroner. He spoke to John who had given the account that on the day before his wife's death he had gone to Coleraine and purchased tea at Mrs Caldwell's shop and had later purchased poison which he had lost in a field. Robert then searched

⁴ Married, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 5 October 1844

John's home and found "a paper of salts and soda." He later conveyed Jane's organs from the post mortem to Belfast for examination by a Professor Hodges for examination along with the paper of salts and soda. Robert subsequently arrested John Knox in November 1848. Knox was later acquitted of murder as it had been successfully argued by the defence that any poisoning was accidental.⁵

In June 1850 Robert was at a witness of a case of an illegal assembly on Church Street Coleraine where three men Arthur Mooney, Samuel Scott and Thomas McCandless were being prosecuted. Robert's evidence was that he had been in Coleraine on Monday 17th June 1850 and had seen around 250 people assembled in Church Street at around 10 pm. He watched them proceed along Church Street, onto Kingsgate Street and then left onto Brook Street and that they had played music along the route. He had seen two drums and gave evidence that Mooney had been playing one of them. Robert states that he had heard the band playing the "Boyne Water" and possibly the "Protestant Boys." He saw the other two men on Kings-Gate but was unable to say for sure if they went down Brook Street. Robert was of the opinion that if they had not played the "party" tunes he would not have prosecuted any of them. This type of "party" procession had been banned under an Act of Parliament passed in March 1850. The jury returned a verdict of guilty with a recommendation of mercy.⁶

The following year Robert was promoted to 1st class Head Constable on Thursday 1st May 1851. By September of the same year it was announced that he was authorised to inspect weights and measures for the county.⁷ The year after a presentation was made by the magistracy, gentlemen and merchants of the town and neighbourhood of Coleraine "in approbation of his conduct as an efficient and praiseworthy public officer." Mr Daly, the secretary to the testimonial fund said that "much was said about the vigilance of the Parisian

⁵ Case by Poisoning, *The Newry Telegraph*, 27 March 1849

⁶ Coleraine Quarter Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 26 June 1850

⁷ Weights and Measures, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 27 September 1851

police but he defied them to be more active than the officer whom they had now met to honour." The chairman Andrew Orr Esq., of Milburn JP said that "he had much pleasure in presiding over a meeting which was now to present some valuable mark of their approval of the conduct of a very efficient and trustworthy officer." Orr then presented Robert was a gold watch chain and a silver snuff box and purse. The snuffbox had the following inscription on the rear;

Presented to

First Class

Head Constable Robert Jenkins

By the Magistrates, Gentry & Merchants

of the town and neighbourhood of

Coleraine

*In token of their esteem for him and for his exertions in suppressing
crime and bringing offenders to justice.*

1852

A Mr McCrea of Portstewart spoke highly of Robert hoping that "the day would soon come when he would be raised to a much higher post of honour in the services of his country than he now occupied and of which he was so well deserving." Another man John McCurdy also gave a glowing review of Robert's "efficiency as a public officer." Robert replied saying that it had been "one of the proudest moments of his life and he would cherish the remembrance of it to his dying day." The snuff box also bore the same inscription but on the other side it had a "well executed vignette of the river Bann from Hanover

Place.” The watch and snuff box came from Mr Gilbert of High Street Belfast, the purse was “well filled with Irish notes.”⁸

This was by no means the end of Robert’s career as he did not receive his pension until Monday 16th April 1860. Two days prior an article appeared in the *Coleraine Chronicle* outlining how well respected Robert remained after 37 years and 4 months of service. The paper described Robert in the following terms,

To every good and charitable object he gave assistance of a description which no other man could. His intimate acquaintance with every nook and corner of our town and the people who inhabited them led him to know those who deserved help and on whom benevolence would not be thrown away. For such labours he has earned the gratitude of the poor and on more than one occasion received the thanks of the rich and charitable. It is of his exertions in this direction that we would rather speak leaving it to those with whom his official duties brought him into closer contact to acknowledge the zeal and ability he manifested in his profession.

The *Chronicle* remarked that they were glad to learn that Robert intended to remain in Coleraine. A recent meeting of the Court of Quarter Sessions in Coleraine had produced a signed resolution regarding Robert,

We the undersigned Magistrates of the County of Londonderry having learned that Mr Robert Jenkins first class Head Constable is shortly about to retire from the Constabulary Force in which we understand he has served for a period of upwards of thirty six years cannot permit him to withdraw from the service without testifying our high appreciation of his conduct in the general discharge of the

⁸ Presentation to 1st Class Head Constable Robert Jenkins, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 27 November 1852

various duties connected with his office of Head Constable. During the lengthened term of nineteen years in which he has been stationed at Coleraine he has been most active in the suppression of crime and bringing offenders to justice and in regard of his long, faithful and efficient public services we beg leave to recommend him to the consideration of the Inspector General of the Constabulary Force for ample gratuitous compensations.⁹

Robert's retirement lasted around six weeks as by Friday 1st June 1860 he had been appointed under the provisions of the Towns Improvement Act 1854 as Town Officer and Inspector of Nuisances. This role brought him an office in the town hall as well as social standing and connections to the powerful within the Town Commission and surrounding area.¹⁰ In a report made to the Commission in 1865 published in the *Coleraine Chronicle* Robert's work can be demonstrated,

Mr Jenkins showed from the reading of his report that he had made a minute and particular examination of all nuisances on the premises of the inhabitants; and was directed to notice these parties to abate the nuisances or in the event of refusal to summon the parties liable....

Mr Jenkins applied for and obtained liberty to purchase half-a-dozen white wash brushes to be lent to people desirous of white-washing their houses.

A New Scavenger

Wm McMurdy was selected to fill the situation of scavenger, formerly held by John Troy – the salary to be £45 per annum and the official to be under the superintendence of the Nuisance Inspector to see that the streets were swept at least

⁹ Retirement of Head Constable Jenkins, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 14 April 1860

¹⁰ Borough of Coleraine, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 2 June 1860

twice a week or oftener when required and the scavenger to provide his own manure cart and depot.¹¹ (see Head Constable John Douglas)

In the role of Town Officer Robert brought people before the local court for various offences. In June 1866 Robert “charged a man named Thomas Valley, with obstructing the public pass at Mr John McLaughlin’s corner, by standing on the flagging, and refusing to “move on” when directed to do so.”¹²

On Saturday 9th July 1870 he had detected a man name John Bradley of Ballymena inducing children “to engage in a game of hazard at Coleraine.” It was alleged in court that Bradley took halfpence from the children “allowing them such prizes as a boot lace value for about 4d gross.” Robert warned Bradley about his behaviour however Bradley persisted. As a result the magistrates sentenced Bradley to a week’s imprisonment, most likely at Coleraine bridewell. They felt that such a penalty would deter “others of the gambling craft plying their trade in Coleraine.”¹³

The following year on 22nd February 1871 Robert’s only daughter Marianne married shop assistant Robert Gardener Bird at St Patrick’s Coleraine. Bird’s address was given as 228 Regent Street London, and he was the son of a carrier (carter) Alexander Bird. 228 Regent Street was the address of Halstaff and Hannaford, a high spec case and box maker. Marianne’s brother Robert Edward Jenkins was a witness. Robert E Jenkins was the manager of the screw steamer *Shamrock* that sailed between Coleraine and Toome and called at Portglenone, Kilrea and Agivey. By 1881 Marianne was living at 25 St Mary’s Terrace, Paddington, London. At this stage her husband was a commercial traveller. Shortly after the wedding, on Monday 20th March 1871 Robert resigned from his position with the Town Commissioners.

¹¹ *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 12 August 1865

¹² Obstructing the Thoroughfare, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 16 June 1866

¹³ A Game of Hazard, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 23 July 1870

Robert died on Tuesday 11th March 1873 aged 72 at Stone Row Coleraine, his son Robert was present at his death. The cause of death was disease of the brain, two years uncertified, also consumption for nine months. Robert had moved to this address around 1871.

~Constable George Little/Lytle 750~

George Little was born in County Mayo around 1811, although it may have been 1815 based on his death certificate. He joined the police on 1st May 1831 and received the registered number 750. George only served in two counties, Limerick and then Antrim and was promoted to full Constable on Wednesday 1st November 1848.

George married Ann, a native of County Leitrim, and was pensioned from the constabulary on Wednesday 1st September 1858. Only two children are known, Acton Little and Anne Jane Little (later Mackay). Four years later George applied for the position of Relieving Officer in Coleraine. He was unsuccessful in his application, as was another former RIC man Robert Johnson who went on to secure an even better position in the town which will be covered in due course. The post of Relieving Officer seemed an attractive position as the outgoing man, Mr Simpson, was said to have had a salary of £45 and a free house. The successful candidate was Mr Thomas Kennedy who came from Crossgar County Down.¹⁴

George died on Christmas Day 1895 at Clifton Terrace, Coleraine. A woman named Ann Martin of Portstewart was present at death. It is possible that this was his daughter Anne remarried, although there is nothing to support this. George is listed as living at Fountain Villas on the Milburn Road, Coleraine from 1872 which was and is still beside Clifton Terrace. On his will entry it states that his surname could have been Little or Lytle and that he had worked as a rent agent. His possessions were left to David Baxter master painter and John Gribbon of Coleraine. Gribbon owned some of the houses on Clifton Terrace and may have been George's landlord. Witnesses to the will were Richard Hunter auctioneer (see Garvagh chapter), and William Hill Warke, solicitor both of Coleraine

¹⁴ Coleraine Board of Guardians, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 4 October 1862

~Constable George Wheatly 2656~

George Wheatly was born around 1826 in County Wicklow and joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Monday 1st May 1837 receiving the numeral 2656. George served in Kilkenny for 5 months, Tipperary for 5 years and 9 months and then in County Longford from Friday 1st September 1843. It was in Longford that he ended his career but also saw the majority of significant events in his life.

Between July 1844 and September 1848 George was promoted from 2nd class Sub Constable to full Constable. On Friday 1st January 1848 George was married to Elizabeth a girl from County Cavan. In 1850 George was reduced in rank back to 1st class Sub Constable but was made up again two years later. At one point George was injured by a gunshot wound to his leg, however no other details are recorded as to the circumstances. Also in 1852 his son George Henry Wheatly was born in County Longford.

George retired on Wednesday 10th May 1865 and claimed his pension subsequently at Abbeylaxey, Roscommon, Templemore, Ballymena, and then Ballymoney from Monday 26th October 1891. George finally claimed his pension at Coleraine from Monday 22nd August 1892. His stay in Coleraine was not to be prolonged as on Friday 4th November 1892 George passed away at his home at Adam's Row, Coleraine of a heart condition. Lizzie Gray, also of Adam's Row, was present at his death.

This was not to be the last Wheatly connection to Coleraine as on Sunday 1st March 1896 his son, now Head Constable George H Wheatly, 37,197, was transferred to the town. George had previously been the Sergeant in Portrush and was recorded in the *Devia Hibernia: The Road and Route Guide for Ireland of the Royal Irish Constabulary* in 1893 as being there. Much like many of the other men in this book following his retirement in February 1897 "young" George (he was 45) sought employment with the local authorities. In his case he applied for the combined position of town inspector and sub-sanitary officer.

George was unsuccessful and was defeated by Thomas Gibson Lynd. What is of interest in regards to this competition was that the outgoing post holder was former Coleraine Head Constable John Douglas. It may be the case that George felt that he was the “natural successor” to Douglas. Another, at this stage unsurprising point, is that the third candidate was RIC Sergeant John T Neely who will be dealt with in the Kilrea chapter.¹⁵

It is interesting also to note that from June 1890 George senior moves according to where his son has been posted which accounts for his sudden move to the north of Ireland. Also George junior only spent a short time in Galway having been promoted to Head Constable before he came to Coleraine. After retirement and his unsuccessful job hunt in Coleraine George moved to Scotland and the north of England. He returned to Ireland in 1910 living in various places over the years including Enniskillen, Kesh, Roscommon, and back to Ballymoney area in 1921. The final record has his address at the impressive looking Queensberry House, 64 Cannongate, Edinburgh.

¹⁵ Town Commissioners, *The Weekly Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, 3 February 1897

~Constable Robert Johnston 3166~

Robert Johnston was born around 1816 in County Cavan. He was the son of farmer Daniel Johnston. Robert was recommended to the force by the Earl of Enniskillen and was given the number 3166 having joined on Tuesday 10th April 1838.

Robert initially served in County Londonderry until he married Ann Elliott of Coleraine on Saturday 10th September 1859 at St Patrick's Church Coleraine. Ann was the daughter of William Elliott a teacher. At the time of his marriage Robert was stationed at Maghera. Having married Ann, Robert was moved to County Donegal on 1st April 1860 where he served exactly six months retiring on Monday 1st October 1860 aged 44. Examining Robert's varied promotions and demotions it seems that he may have been a full constable at the time he met Ann, somewhere between 1847 and 1858 and then he was demoted back to 1st class Sub Constable and may have been moved to Maghera. He had been admonished at this stage however this demotion was only supposed to be limited for one year which did not see re-instatement.

Although Robert ended his career in County Donegal he never claimed pension in any other town than Coleraine. This would indicate that the intention was to return to the town. Given his relatively young age at retirement the intention must have been to find work. Robert on his return to the town did not seem to find any work that caused note in the local press until after 1867 when he became the Harbour Master at Coleraine. In an edition of the *Coleraine Chronicle* published in August 1868 it was advertised that a supply of local Carthall bricks were to be sold at a reduced price and any enquiries were to be addressed to Robert "at the Quay."¹⁶

The following July Robert was a key witness in a case brought to Coleraine petty sessions by Mr John McKillop, Clerk to the Town Commissioners, against a man called John McDonnell for stealing "a

¹⁶ Carthall Brick, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 15 August 1868

quantity of coal.” Robert stated that on the 28th June 1869 he had caught McDonnell taking coal belonging to the Commissioners and putting it into a bag. On being challenged it was alleged that McDonnell had refused to put the coal back and had lifted a lamp to swing at Robert at which point Robert went for the constabulary. McDonnell argued that the coals were lying in the river, and like others had done before him, he had “took them up” thinking that it was acceptable. McDonnell offered to give them up if he had been paid for the trouble of collecting them. Robert argued that the coal belonged to the Commissioners and that he had arranged for men to come and collect them when the tide had fallen however McDonnell had beaten them to it. The newspaper stated that McDonnell had “cleverly cross-examined Mr Johnston” and then called a porter called Robert Maguire “to prove that it was a custom connived at by the complainant to permit parties to lift coals which had fallen into the river, and that he even lent barrows for the purpose, and sometimes sold the fuel thus recovered.” Robert argued that this was only the case when the owner had given permission. Largely based on this practice McDonnell was “let off with a caution” and warned that if it happened again “he would be severely punished.”¹⁷

At a meeting of the Town Commissioners in October 1871 Robert was quizzed on his employing an assistant at the weigh bridge on the quay. He duly submitted a written answer outlining that employing a “lad” at 1s per day on a permanent basis as an assistant was better than paying casual men at 2 to 2s 6d per day, and 1s was “too small for his services.” He added that as he was required to frequently leave the weigh bridge on Commissioners business principally with work connected to the ongoing construction at the barmouth Castlerock if he had no assistant he would have had to close the weigh bridge. He explained that this would be “bad policy, so close to a dangerous rival,” referring to Ellis’s quay. He stated that his pay as Harbour Master was 4s per day and that he should be getting £60 per annum for both roles. He also complained that he should be allowed to collect

¹⁷ Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 10 July 1869

the dues on the river, as what happened as Portrush, and paid also. The Commissioners decided that no assistant was to be employed in any capacity at the weigh bridge in future.¹⁸

Robert died on Sunday 16th May 1880 at Hanover Place Coleraine of stomach cancer and an obstruction of his bowel. His wife Annie was present. Oddly his age was recorded as 46 rather than 64 on his death certificate. Probate paid to Thomas Andrews, woollen draper and Edward Totten a draper's assistant of Coleraine. An annuity was recorded in his will for his sister Frances Kerr.

¹⁸ Meeting of the Coleraine Town Commissioners, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 14 October 1871

~Head Constable John Douglas 3968~

John Douglas was born in County Antrim around 1820 and may have come from the Lisburn area. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Wednesday 22nd July 1840 having been recommended by Henry Theophilus Higginson of Carnalea House Crawfordsburn JP for Antrim and Down. Henry was the father of Sub Inspector JM Higginson. John was given the registered number 3968 and sent to work in County Down.

On Thursday 1st June 1848 John was promoted to Constable. Two years later he married Sarah Jane Dunlop, native of County Down in the Banbridge area. John was promoted to Head Constable on Thursday 6th April 1865. An article in the *Belfast Morning News* reflected how well thought of John was in Rostrevor,

The numerous friends of Constable John Douglas will be gratified to learn that he has been promoted to the rank of Head Constable. While his Rostrevor friends regret his removal, they are glad to know that his long and faithful service in the force has received due appreciation at the hands of the Inspector General.¹⁹

John was then transferred to County Londonderry on the first day of June 1865 and was posted to Garvagh where he served along with another future Coleraine pensioner Constable Richard Nolan,²⁰ as well as John Bratton.²¹

John was discharged on Saturday 1st April 1871 and collected his pension at Coleraine. However prior to retirement John had put himself forward for the position of Town Officer and Sanitary Inspector following the resignation of former Head Constable Robert Jenkins. A number of men applied for the position however only John,

¹⁹ The Constabulary, *Belfast Morning News*, 18 May 1865

²⁰ *Cork Examiner*, 11 August 1865

²¹ Garvagh Petty Sessions, *Coleraine Chronicle*, 2 September 1865

Thomas Boyd the porter at the workhouse, and James McFetridge of Coleraine attended the selection on 20th March. John received 8 votes, Boyd 3 and McFetridge only one. The men that voted for John were Daniel Taylor, Thomas Andrews, Joseph Cuthbert, William Warke, Robert Nevin, John Lusk and William Nevin. A second vote still left John ahead and he secured the post.²² A week after his retirement from the RIC John was “called before the board and instructed as to his duties.”²³

All was not well with John’s appointment and a letter of complaint was printed in the *Coleraine Chronicle* in May 1871 as follows;

(To the Editor of the Coleraine Chronicle)

Sir, - I observe, by your report of the last meeting of the Coleraine Town Commissioners, that our new Nuisance Inspector is determined that the dignity of the office shall not be questioned with impunity; but that any one who attempts to act independently, must come under the category which this ex-constable used to be so fond of describing, as those who “interfere with the police in the execution of their duty.” In the case to which I refer, and in mentioning which Nuisance Inspector John Douglas said I used insulting language, I say the impertinent interference was all on the other side; and if he would take my advice – that of a man, who is known by, and knows more of the people of Coleraine than he is ever likely to do – he would carry little less of the “old policeman” into his intercourse with the inhabitants that he seems inclined to exhibit. The facts, Sir, are these. On Saturday night three weeks, when the people engaged in selling delph had quitted the market, a small quantity of straw which could not be easily collected was left on the street. One of my men, who had frequently

²² Appointment of Sanitary Inspectors, *Coleraine Chronicle*, 25 March 1871

²³ Meeting of the Coleraine Town Commissioners, *Coleraine Chronicle*, 8 April 1871

done the same duty before, swept it into a small heap, placing it beneath the lamp at the West end of the Town-hall, that it might prove no obstruction of the public pass, or appear in the least degree unsightly. With that sharpness of vision for which no one would give Nuisance Inspector Douglas Credit and which, I suppose, was assisted by the brilliant gas-light above it, he discovered the *pickle of straw*. He took one of the Fire Brigade off duty and sent him up hot-haste to my house at four o'clock on Sunday morning to have it removed. Such a demand had never before been made, even by an officer whose vigilance and impartiality could not be questioned – Mr Douglas's predecessor – and I declined to comply with it, seeming that to do so would have exposed me, perhaps to a prosecution for Sabbath desecration, for performing a work which the least pious person would have pronounced to be totally unnecessary. These are the facts, by the perversion of which the Board of Commissioners were persuaded to postpone the payment of my month's salary. If Mr Douglas consider the refusal to start on such an errand an insult, I am afraid, instead of receiving apologies for every offer of such, he will have to put up with more of them, else he must bottle up some of his indignation, and let his moderation appear a little more conspicuous when what he has yet manifested in his brief hour if not very limited authority. – I am Sir, your obedient servant,

W McMurdy, Coleraine 12th May 1871²⁴

In addition to maintaining the cleanliness of the streets and dealing with petty offences John was superintendent of the Coleraine Fire Brigade. The Coleraine Fire Brigade was established in 1866 through subscriptions lifted by RK Knox and Mr Bellas, and an engine was purchased from Merryweather. The first fire was attended at the

²⁴ Our New Nuisance Inspector, *Coleraine Chronicle*, 13 May 1871

Somerset estate in June 1866. In a notice in the local newspaper in October 1871 John was seeking, on behalf of the Street Committee of Town Commissioners, tenders for supplying the members of the fire brigade with “oil cloth capes and hats.”²⁵ Three years later his role changed under the Public Health Act and he was designated a sub-sanitary officer and was awarded a salary of £5. Presumably this was in addition to his other roles, and of course his pension.²⁶

At the time of the birth of his son Robert Stewart Douglas on 17th October 1871, John and family were living at Preachinghouse Street, Coleraine. This was the former dispensary and they lived at this address until 1879. In 1887 John was recorded as living at 36 Meetinghouse Street in Coleraine¹⁸⁸⁷, although by 1895 he had left. In January 1897 John resigned “the combined offices of town inspector and sub-sanitary officer” but offered to continue in his role until a successor was appointed.²⁷ He then took up employment as a rate collector. At this stage John had been working for 57 years.

In 1900 John and family were living at 14 Springmount, Captain Street, Coleraine. John was listed as owning the next door property at 16. John died at this address on Tuesday 8th September 1903 aged 80. John was, according to the announcement in the press, interred at Killowen Parish Churchyard in the family burying ground.²⁸ John died from heart disease. His son Alfred Gray Douglas was present at his death.

Alfred and his brother Frederick Stewart Douglas continued to live on at Springmount after John’s death. In 1901 Frederick was a gas rate collector and Alfred was employed as a grocer’s assistant. Robert was living at High Street, Ballynahinch and was a bank official. By 1911 Alfred was an accountant at one of the shirt factories in Coleraine. In this year Robert was a bank manager and living at Great Strand Street, Dublin along with his sister Lizzie Jane Douglas. Robert’s will showed

²⁵ Coleraine Fire Brigade, *Coleraine Chronicle*, 14 October 1871

²⁶ The Public Health Act, *The Freeman’s Journal*, 17 December 1874

²⁷ Coleraine, *The Belfast News Letter*, 5 January 1897

²⁸ Births, Marriages and Deaths, *The Belfast News Letter*, 10 September 1903

that he had worked for the Northern Bank and died in 1940 living at *Wayside* Glenarm Road, Larne. His wife was Margaret Caldwell Douglas.

John was succeeded in his post by Thomas Gibson Lynd, as previously mentioned, who carried out the roles of Town Officer, Clerk of the Markets and Superintendent of the Fire Brigade until 1930. Lynd also lived for a time at Springmount. Lynd died in July 1934 at his residence *Rathanna* at Captain Street upper. As well as his numerous professional roles Thomas was also congregational treasurer of Terrace Row Presbyterian Church and was an original member of Coleraine Bowling Club.²⁹

²⁹ Obituary, *The Northern Whig*, 6 July 1934

~Constable Robert Tucker 5332~

Robert Tucker was born in what was King's County in approximately 1825 the son of William Tucker a farmer. Robert joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Friday 14th July 1843 the day after Richard Rusk, as previously mentioned. In fact both of them were to serve in the same counties, Dublin and Londonderry with Richard Rusk starting first on 1st October 1843 and Robert Tucker a month later. Rusk had the registered number 5331 and Tucker was 5332. They were both promoted to 1st class Sub Constable a month apart in 1844, however Rusk made Acting Constable in 1847 and Tucker had to wait until November 1864. Rusk made Constable by 1853 but was reduced again in December 1868, possibly following a fine in April of the same year. Robert Tucker managed to attain promotion to Constable in June 1867 and retained it until the end of his service.

Robert Tucker was recorded as being at Innisrush station in 1855. Robert married Elizabeth Nelson on Tuesday 25th September 1855 at Tamlaght O'Crilly lower Parish church. Elizabeth was a bonnet maker from Portglenone and was the daughter of Samuel Nelson a baker. This marriage may have meant a move and by April 1859 he was stationed at Garvagh as outlined in the following article,

On the 22nd ultimo, Head Constable Scully and Sub Constables Tucker and Langan of the Garvagh station, proceeded to the townland of Knockaneil, a distance of about six miles from their station and seized a quantity of illicit whiskey and a large vat containing a quantity of potale, and a barrel concealed on the premises of Henry Friel. They then took another direction and found in the house of Hugh Kane, of Cookoskeran, a quantity of illicit whiskey, about three bushels of grains and about ten gallons of potale. Friel and Kane were summoned to the Petty Sessions, Garvagh and were fined in £6 each. On the night of 25th ult., the same party seized a still head and worm in the townland of Aughnacullagh. Much credit is due to Head Constable Scully

and the two Sub Constables for their zeal and exertions in putting a stop to illicit distillation, as well as for their strict attention to their duties generally.³⁰

The Friel mentioned may be the Friels of Swatragh who had run a public house in the village from the mid 1840's. Evidently the action of the constabulary did not do much to dent their ambitions as the bar is still in operation today.

In April 1867 Robert and family were living at Catherine Street, Limavady. Their son Samuel was living with them having been born in 1857. At this time a daughter Matilda was born, however she only lived until 13th November 1868. Two days after Matilda's death Robert and Elizabeth had a daughter named Martha.

Promotion to full Constable saw Robert posted to Articlave barracks. Articlave was in operation until the 1870's when the barracks moved to Castlerock. Tucker and Rusk's paths crossed again later when both were in Garvagh around the same time and both were in charge of Articlave barracks, although about ten years apart.

Robert's career in the Articlave and Castlerock area was punctuated with dealing with low level violence and disorder. In January 1869 Robert prosecuted a "quack doctor named John Fox with breaking a pane of glass in the Articlave Police Barrack." Fox had come to the barracks on 19th December 1868 and demanded accommodation for the night, when he was refused he threw a stone and broke a window. Fox "admitted the offence but said he committed it in a moment of frenzy when he was afraid to continue his journey to Coleraine lest he would die by the road." He was found guilty and received a reduced fine.³¹ In August 1869 Robert brought two men to court for fighting at Carneety. Robert gave the account, "that on Monday morning, 26th July, Hugh Gray and John McAteer were in the quarry at Carneaty and after some talk about something which had occurred on Saturday

³⁰ Illicit Distillation, *The Belfast Morning News*, 6 April 1859

³¹ Malicious Injury to a Police Barrack, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 16 January 1869

they both fought to decide which was the better man. They fell at least twice.” A witness William Ross said that he saw the beginning of the fight “which was caused by Hugh Gray taking McAteer by the collar after they had had some angry discussion about stones.” Both men were fined.³² In June 1871 Robert came across two young men, Robert Craig from Articlave and David Rankin from Limavady, fighting on the platform of the railway station at Castlerock. “Neither of them gave any trouble and as there was only two other persons on the platform at the time the annoyance was not great. The Chairman, who cautioned the defendants against the impropriety of quarrelling upon the platform of a railway or any other place upon a Sunday imposed a fine of 5s and costs upon each.”³³

By November 1871 Robert was working in Coleraine and dealt with an assault that occurred at Mullan’s public house at Railway Place. One of the accused who was subsequently brought to court was a young man named Alexander Perry, who, on the balance of probabilities, was the son of former Sub Constable Alexander Perry of Cross Glebe.³⁴

Robert retired on Thursday 1st January 1874. By this time he and his family were living at 17 Captain Street Lower. Robert died a year later of stomach cancer on Friday 29th January 1875. His son Samuel was present. Samuel was not to last much longer as he died of consumption on 14th December 1882. Samuel’s brother William was present at his death at Captain Street.

Elizabeth died on Monday 8th January 1900 at Killycoogan, Portglenone. Her occupation was listed as housekeeper. She died at the home of her niece Jeanie (Jane) Taylor who was present at her death.

³² Fighting in a Quarry, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 7 August 1869

³³ Fighting Upon a Railway Platform on Sunday, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 24 June 1871

³⁴ Squabble in a Public House, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 23 December 1871

~Constable John Farrell 6942~

John Farrell was born around 1826 in County Limerick 1826. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Tuesday 5th August 1845 and was given the registered number 6942. John served in Cavan, in the Reserve until he was posted to County Roscommon on Thursday 1st January 1846 and then he returned to the Reserve on Thursday 15th January 1852. A year later on 1st January John was transferred to County Londonderry. John had been promoted to 1st Class Sub Constable in December 1850 while in Roscommon serving at Slattaghmore.

Following his transfer to County Londonderry John was promoted to Acting Constable on Wednesday 1st July 1857. It was at this rank he was noted in December 1862 serving in Garvagh along with Robert Tucker “on still hunting duty.” Their hunt was successful, much to the probable dismay of the locals, and particularly of famer James Arthurs of Gortnamoyagh who owned the still. It was remarked that “the still was found in an excavation, most ingeniously constructed under the floor of one of the rooms, with a funnel leading to the kitchen chimney.” Arthurs obstructed John and his colleagues and was arrested.³⁵

In May 1863 John was promoted to full Constable which merited an announcement in the *Coleraine Chronicle*.³⁶ By June John was bringing prosecutions under the weights and measures legislation.³⁷ His actions must have impressed suitably as by October he had been appointed as Inspector of Weights and Measures for the Petty Sessions District of Coleraine. This appointment saw him leaving Garvagh for Coleraine and the arrival of Richard Nolan in his place.³⁸

In Coleraine, like other members of the constabulary, John attended the local court. In a case in May 1868 he gave character evidence in

³⁵ Illicit Distillation, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 27 December 1862

³⁶ The Constabulary, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 30 May 1863

³⁷ Garvagh Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 6 June 1863

³⁸ Inspector of Weights and Measures, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 31 October 1863

regards to a man John Thompson of Coleraine who had been fighting with D Curry of Benvarden on the public street. Farrell described John Thompson as “one of the worst characters in town.” The bench found in Curry’s favour and fined Thompson £2 and costs or a month’s imprisonment. Captain Giveen stated that Thompson was “to find bail to keep the peace for one year” and commented that “it is a monstrous thing that decent people cannot come into Coleraine without being set upon by a gang of ruffians.”³⁹

In July 1871 John’s son, noted as Mr M *O’Farrell*, was recorded in the paper as having sat the Civil Service Competitive Examination,

Of the many hundreds who were examined, only the sixty who scored the highest number of marks were selected. Of the sixty successful candidates 42 were Irish, 16 English and 2 Scotch. There were 45 examined in Belfast, of whom 5 were successful; and of these Mr M O’Farrell (son of Constable John O’Farrell, Coleraine), was one. Mr O’Farrell was a pupil of Mr E Quinn of the Coleraine Male National School. Mr RP Ferris lately appointed in the same service was also prepared by Mr Quinn.⁴⁰

John was pensioned from Sunday 16th May 1875. Between 1885 and 1903 the family lived at 32 New Row Coleraine. This was close to where the RIC barracks had been between 1868 and 1885 which may have been part of the reason for his choice. Their daughter Catherine was born 28th April 1864 at the police barracks at Kingsgate Street, Coleraine. Catherine was named for her mother Catherine O’Beirne who was a native of Roscommon.

John subsequently died at New Row on Tuesday 4th February 1902 from “disease of brain.” Again his surname was recorded as *O’Farrell*, even though it was recorded on the census the previous year as

³⁹ Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 30 May 1868

⁴⁰ Civil Service Competitive Examination, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 29 July 1871

Farrell. John's daughter Catherine/Katherine was present at his death and was noted as being from Castlerock.

Catherine was the wife of banker Patrick McGilligan JP. They had eight children and lived at Freehall Dunlop. Patrick McGilligan was an anti-Parnellite catholic nationalist politician. He was initially a woollen draper and auctioneer in Coleraine with his premises located on Bridge Street in the town. He was also a magistrate. His son, also Patrick, was born in Coleraine in 1889 and educated at St Columb's College Londonderry, later he joined Sinn Fein but failed to be elected in the 1918 election. However he went on to join the bar and later was elected as a Cumann na nGaedheal TD for the National University of Ireland at a by-election held in 1923 and then served as a government minister in the Irish Republic. By 1907 Patrick Sr had a produce merchants (McGilligan & Co) on New Row Coleraine and in 1911 Patrick is listed as seed merchant. In both 1901 and 1911 Patrick resided in the Castlerock area firstly in the Freehall Dunlop area and secondly in Castlerock village. At the time of Patrick's death in 1930 he had businesses in Coleraine, Kilrea, Limavady and Dungiven. Patrick made a few speeches at Westminster mostly on local issues and seemingly a number for County Londonderry particularly and the Coleraine area, where he lived rather than where he represented.

~Sub Constable Joseph Dunlop 7798~

Joseph Dunlop was born in County Antrim around 1825. Although he was born in County Antrim he was connected in County Londonderry possibly through his mother. Joseph was recommended to the RIC by James Dyas JP. Dyas may have been the same man who was from Belfast and who was the owner of an Apothecary and Soda Water Manufacturers, 7 Donegall Place and Fountain Street, Belfast respectively. Dyas was declared bankrupt in 1862 and had also been a shareholder in the Belfast and Ballymena rail company.

Joseph joined the police on Tuesday 3rd November 1846 and was given the registered number 7798. After training he was sent to County Cavan, returned to the Depot in Dublin and by 1st March 1847 he was serving in County Kilkenny. In November 1847 Joseph was promoted to 1st Class Sub Constable. On Thursday 1st September 1853 Joseph was transferred to County Donegal. From court records he was in Newtowncunningham in 1854, Ramelton in 1859 and Carrigans in 1862. Joseph was finally moved to County Antrim on Saturday 15th November 1862. In January 1870 Joseph appeared as a witness in a case at Coleraine court involving an allegation of theft of £27 by one man from another at Mosside County Antrim.⁴¹ It is possible that Joseph was stationed at Mosside. There was a police station there until May 1905.

Joseph was discharged from the police on Monday 16th June 1873. He had received permission to emigrate, however without advance of his pension. He ended up living in Coleraine and was recorded as living at Brook Street in the town from 1896.

Joseph died Friday 3rd November 1899 at Brook Street. An inquest was held on 6th November 1899. His money was left to Mrs Elizabeth Linton who lived on Circular Road Coleraine. The 1901 census shows Elizabeth to be a widow with eight children.

⁴¹ Coleraine Petty Sessions – Alleged Larceny of £27, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 22 January 1870

~Constable John Bratton 8471~

John Bratton joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Wednesday 1st December 1847 having previously been a shoemaker. John was born in County Donegal around 1824, the son of shoe maker John Bratton, and was recommended to the force by Captain Dyas RM. This would have been Joseph Dyas of Loughguile who was a magistrate in the Ballymena area and had married Mary Bailey from Farm Lodge, Ballymena. This suggests that John was living in County Antrim at his time of joining.

John was given the registered number 8471 and served in counties Antrim, Down and Londonderry. John was promoted to 1st class Sub Constable in June 1851. John married Abigail Miller from Saintfield on 2nd June 1863. Abigail was the daughter of Edward Miller a saddler. At the time of their marriage John was stationed at Saintfield. Following their marriage John would have been transferred out of the county and was moved to County Londonderry. John was serving in Garvagh from at least Saturday 18th March 1865 when his daughter Mary Ann was born there. John served along with Head Constable John Douglas and future Coleraine publican Richard Nolan. John was further promoted to Acting Constable on Saturday 1st January 1870. This was followed by the birth of his son John C Bratton on Friday 10th June 1870.

John was then promoted to full Constable on Saturday 1st April 1871. It seems that as a result of this promotion John and family were then moved to Swatragh where his daughter Martha Jane Hanna Bratton was born on Thursday 18th July 1872. A further daughter Sarah was born on Saturday 15th April 1876. John was reduced in rank to Sub Constable again on 6th November 1876, however no reason is shown for this.

John subsequently retired from the police on Thursday 1st August 1878. The family ultimately ended up in Coleraine and were living at 12 Brook Street in 1881 and by 1887 they were living at 5 New Row West.

On Tuesday 11th January 1887 John died of an apoplectic fit and bronchitis. His son John was present at the death. John C Bratton was noted in an article in *The Belfast News Letter* in 1888 as working as an officer for the Town Commissioners,

The Coleraine Town Commissioners prosecuted David Innes auctioneer for exposing articles for sale in the Diamond of Coleraine, and also for assaulting their officer, John C Bratton. Mr Anderson appeared for the Commissioners, and the defendant was represented by Mr R Hunter. After hearing the cases the magistrates dismissed them, warning Mr Innes to be more careful in future.⁴²

The following year John C Bratton was noted as being connected to Killowen LOL 930 in Coleraine.⁴³ His sister Sarah was listed as a national school teacher in the 1901 census and may have been connected to the Irish Society School choir as well as St Patrick's Church choir both in Coleraine. In the same year their mother Abigail was living at New Row West but by 1911 she was living on Union Street along with Jeanie (Martha Jane) who was also named as a national school teacher.

Research on the name Bratton for Union Street Coleraine produced the following article,

Second Lieut Fred Whitaker, New Zealand Infantry, killed in action, was a brother-in-law of Mr Samuel Bratton, Invercargill, son of Mrs Bratton, Union Street, Coleraine. Deceased, who was aged 24 years, rose from the ranks. He took part in the first landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula, where he was wounded. On reaching convalescence he spent a three weeks' furlough in Coleraine.⁴⁴

⁴² Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Belfast News Letter*, 20 August 1888

⁴³ Coleraine, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 28 December 1889

⁴⁴ Second Lieut Fred Whitaker, *The Belfast News Letter*, 28 April 1917

Although it appears to be the same family there was no satisfactory birth record for Samuel. A Samuel Alexander Bratton who was born in 1875 travelled to Wellington New Zealand from London in October 1899. His occupation at the time was a draper. By 1911 he was living at Dipton and was employed as a hawker. Samuel signed up from Dipton for WW1 and his previous occupation was recorded as a storekeeper. Following the war Samuel returned to Dipton and by 1935 was a salesman living at 6 Irwell Street Gore and was married to Margaret Highton. Samuel died in 1951 in New Zealand.

Abigail died on Friday 12th January 1923 at Union Street. She died of bronchitis. Margaret A Henry from north Brook Street was present at her death.

~Constable William Henry 9544~

William Henry was born in the Coleraine area around 1828. He joined the Constabulary on Friday 22nd January 1847. William was recommended by Sub Inspector Thomas Thornley, who incidentally was the grandfather of Bram Stoker the author of Dracula. Thornley was the Sub Inspector at Coleraine in the period that William joined. Sub Inspector Thornley died at Cushendall County Antrim on 30th April 1850 about four and half months after he had received an injury to his head and shoulder following a fall at Cushendall. In 1842 Thornley had been living at Hanover Place in Coleraine. In March of that year it was recorded that his infant daughter died at that address.⁴⁵

William received the registered number 9544 and was eventually sent to County Kilkenny on Saturday 1st May 1847. The following year William was a 1st class Sub Constable, by Friday 1st December 1865 he was promoted to Acting Constable and by a year later William was full Constable. William served his entire career in Kilkenny city and was twice commended, one recorded as Thursday 1st July 1869. William was pensioned on Saturday 1st May 1875 after serving just over 28 years and initially claimed his pension at Kilkenny.

It appears that William owned or controlled properties in Kilkenny following his retirement. In 1893 and 1894 he was summoned to court for the poor condition of a house in Maudlin Street. On the former occasion the property as being lived in by a Constable Michael Egglison. In June 1900 William was summoned to court by the Mayor of Kilkenny for a breach of the Sanitary Act. The circumstances were,

that in upon certain premises situate at Patrick Street and John Street in said city the following nuisance exists to wit. The yards at the several houses in Patrick Street and John Street occupied by Jayne Campbell McDonnell and others

⁴⁵ Deaths, *The Belfast Commercial Chronicle*, 21 March 1842

(were) with out proper sanitary arrangements (drains and privies) and are injurious to health.

In 1901 William was living at John Street Lower Kilkenny and was listed as a widower living with his daughter-in-law and grandchildren. The grandchildren were born in India or England. William then moved to Coleraine by Thursday 25th September 1902.

William's pension was paid to his son George Henry who appears to have been RIC constable 40,171. George had been born in Kilkenny in 1856 and had joined the police on Monday 9th March 1874. Like his father George was commended twice and was promoted to full constable. George does not appear to have had any connections to the Coleraine area.

By 1911 William was living with his brother John Henry at Curragh, Somerset, Coleraine. John was a member of the Ballinteer Orange Lodge. In September 1912 William signed the Ulster Covenant giving his address as Crosscanley. William died Saturday 17th May 1913 at Curragh. William was 84 years of age and died of natural causes.

~Constable James Ray 10069~

James Ray was born in County Wicklow around 1828 and was the son of James Ray, a farmer. James joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 22nd May 1847 receiving the registered number 10,069 and was initially posted to County Roscommon. On Friday 16th January 1852 James was sent to the Reserve where he served until Friday 1st April 1853 when he was posted to County Londonderry.

James was promoted to Acting Constable on Tuesday 1st March 1870 and then Constable on Friday 1st January 1875. James only served as full Constable for just over two years when he was pensioned on Thursday 1st February 1877. In June 1876 James brought two young lads to court on separate charges of throwing stones on the Strand Road and Lecky Road in Londonderry.⁴⁶ It likely that James was actually stationed at the Waterside barracks as in July 1876 he was involved in a case where another two young men, William Gray and David Ferguson, had been suspected of stealing bottles of porter from Mr Archibald McSparron's premises. James gave evidence that "he then went to the prisoners' residences and found them both drunk, and found some porter bottles, one full and some empty, beside or near them." The boys were ultimately discharged.⁴⁷ There was a previous case in 1874 where an Acting Constable Wray had brought a man Alexander Keys to court for being drunk on the Prehen Road. Although the spelling of the name is incorrect this was probably also James.⁴⁸

James's first wife Margaret died on Friday 15th May 1896 at 6 Bond's Hill Londonderry aged 63. James remarried just over a year later on Thursday 5th August 1897. His new wife was Mary Anne Williams (nee McDermott) a widow from Long Bog in the city. Mary Anne was a cook and was the daughter of shoemaker Watson McDermott. They were married at the Methodist church in the Waterside area.

⁴⁶ Derry Petty Sessions, *The Londonderry Journal*, 23 June 1876

⁴⁷ Derry Police Court, *The Londonderry Journal*, 10 July 1876

⁴⁸ Derry Police Court, *The Londonderry Journal*, 5 August 1874

On Thursday 14th July 1898 James claimed his pension at Coleraine. James appears to have taken up employment at Coleraine Masonic Hall, on the Lodge Road, as on Monday 5th February 1900 this was the location of his death. James died of cancer and exhaustion.

~Constable John Crowley 12924~

John Crowley was born in County Kerry in approximately 1826. John was recommended to the Constabulary of Ireland by Sub Inspector Edward Ledger. John joined on Wednesday 16th May 1849 and was assigned the registered number 12,924. He initially served with the Reserve during which period he was promoted to 1st class Sub Constable on 1st May 1850. On the turn of the New Year 1852 John was transferred to County Monaghan.

In 1855, according to the petty sessions records John was serving in Ballybay in Monaghan. By 1868 John was serving in Monaghan town having been promoted to Acting Constable on Friday 1st May 1868. The following year John married Elizabeth Doherty, a native of County Monaghan on Monday 18th January 1869 and as a result was transferred to County Londonderry on Thursday 1st July.

John was promoted to Constable on Saturday 1st April 1871. He was noted as serving in Limavady in October of the same year when he “charged a stolid looking rustic, named McGonigal, with being drunk, disorderly and assaulting an equally obtuse individual named Samuel Broomfield at Newtownlimavady,” the magistrates viewed the man’s conduct as “improper” and sentenced him to a week’s imprisonment. John spoke up for the man stating that it was only his first offence and the sentence was reduced to a fine. In the same edition of the *Coleraine Chronicle* John was recorded as rescuing a woman who had intended to drown herself in the Rover Roe at Limavady. It appeared to be a case where the woman had been traumatically affected by her husband’s death. Again John spoke up for the woman stating that in the month she had come to Limavady “she has conducted herself very well.” The chairman of the Bench discharged the woman named Bell.⁴⁹

In October 1874, still at Limavady, John was a witness to an alleged theft of geese.

⁴⁹ NewtownLimavady Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 7 October 1871

Sarah and Henry Wilson were put into the dock and indicted for that they did steal five geese on the 24th August last, the property of Thomas Bradley, and secondly that they did receive said geese, knowing them to have been stolen. The prisoners were undefended and pleaded not guilty.

The following jury were sworn to try the case:- Messrs Henry McDonnell jun. (foreman); John Burnside, William Cowan, William McDaid, Robert Strawbridge, John Burnside (Glenkeen), Henry Stewart, William Coyle, William Swan, James McElhinney, Thomas McElroy and John Craig. Mr F Reid SCS prosecuted.

John Swan sworn – I was going to Newtownlimavady and I overtook the prisoners going to the town. They had geese with them and a barrow of a servant man of my father's. I did not count the geese then, but I saw the prisoners about half a mile from Newtownlimavady, and I counted the geese then, and there were seven.

The male prisoner said it was after he admitted to the constable that he was the person that witness identified him. Constable John Crowley gave evidence of getting information about the geese that he went to Newtownlimavady and found the female prisoner on the road feeding five geese with corn; that he saw two geese a little further on; that he saw a man going away from the direction of the female prisoner, about 300 yards off; that he followed that man and arrested him about a quarter of a mile off, and arrested the woman also, bringing them and the geese back to the barracks. Those two persons were the prisoners and have their names as Sarah and Henry Wilson. The latter said he was from Derry.

Thomas Bradley deposed that he owned two geese and a gander, and that his daughter owned a goose and a gander;

that he lost the five geese on the 22nd or 23rd August; that he went to the barracks at Newtownlimavady and was there shown geese, where he identified his own five. He could identify them among a hundred.

This concluded the case for the prosecution and His Worship then charged the jury, reviewing the evidence previously given in the usual way and adding that there were some principles of law which he considered it necessary to mention to them. They should know that if these prisoners were proved to be driving the geese to sell them, they not being the property of the prisoners, they were guilty of robbery. Or if they picked the animals up straying on the road and were taking them for sale, it was also robbery. Again the prisoners admitted that they were husband and wife, and the law held, in such minor cases as the present, that the wife was supposed to be acting under the control, guidance, and influence of her husband, and therefore, though it should be proved that the wife was a participator in the guilt of her husband, she must be freed.

The male prisoner addressed his Worship and the jury at some length in his defence, arguing from several circumstances which he mentioned that the geese could not have been stolen. The jury retired to their room for consultation and his worship considered.

The jury after about half an hours deliberation had returned a verdict of not guilty against Henry Wilson on the count of stealing but a verdict of guilty of receiving the geese, knowing them to have been stolen. Sarah Wilson was brought in not guilty. Henry Wilson was then indicted for several previous offences at divers places under different names, when he had received sentences. He pleaded guilty.

His Worship in passing sentence, observed – You Henry Wilson have been convicted of being an accomplice with that woman who says she is your wife, of stealing five geese, and I do not see how the jury could have given any other decision. Now, although I have other information before me that you had been convicted on several occasions previously that did not in any way influence your trial here. I find that fourteen years, almost half of your life have been spent in gaol.

The prisoner – I was early taken away your Worship from home and led astray. When I got out of gaol in '62 I made a vow that I would never deprive any man of a shilling, and I have kept my word. As to the geese, I know no more of them than the child unborn.

His Worship – the less you say on that now the better. Indeed, the less you say altogether the better. In 1855 you committed a criminal offence and were sent four years to gaol for it. You got out in 1858, and in the very same year and for the same offence you were sent four months to gaol. You got this light sentence, I presume, because there was not the second indictment on the former conviction. Well, you got out of that, but on the 6th of January 1862, you were again sent to gaol for three years. You got out in 1865 and you were not long out till you were sent to penal servitude for seven years more. Again you were indicted for an attempt for stealing and you were imprisoned for twelve months thus bringing us up till the present time. So that more than half your time has been spent in gaol. After some further observations his Worship sentenced the prisoner to eighteen calendar months imprisonment with hard labour. The sentence, said his Worship, was not his, but that of the magistrates on the Bench who felt disposed to give the prisoner one more chance. And let him (the prisoner) be warned that if he ever again be convicted of a criminal

offence his judge could not, with all the previous convictions before him, give him less than ten years penal servitude.

At Sarah Wilson's desire she was permitted to remain in the gaol till Monday (to-day) when she will be discharged.⁵⁰

The following year in December John was reduced in rank to Acting Constable. There is no mention of whether this was by choice or as the result of some incident, however there are no relevant entries in his service record to suggest wrong doing. Two years later on Monday 16th July 1877, after 28 years and 2 months service John was pensioned.

John and Elizabeth (Eliza) had a number of children. The first Mary Jane Crowley was born on Monday 20th October 1879 at Maghera. Charles Crowley who was born Saturday 5th August 1882. James Crowley who was born in 1883 and Ellen/Nellie Crowley who was born on 12th August at Moyagoney, Kilrea.

In 1893 a man called John Crowley was employed as a member of Coleraine fire brigade under the stewardship of former Head Constable John Douglas. It is highly likely that this was the same John Crowley. At this time John and family were living at 13 Albert Terrace, Coleraine. In November 1894 John's pension was paid to John Dillon of Railway Place Coleraine. Valuation records link John Dillon to properties on Albert Terrace, formerly Highland Row, Coleraine. Dillon was power of attorney for John. John and family emigrated on Saturday 10th November 1894 from Londonderry bound for New York on board the *State of California*. After their emigration the power of attorney was transferred to Mr R O'Neill solicitor Coleraine from 17th November 1896.

This is where John's connection to Coleraine ends. However the story relating John to the Coleraine fire brigade is one that leads to notoriety. The following is the report of the fire in *The Derry Journal* from July 1893;

⁵⁰ Derry October Quarter Sessions, *The Derry Journal*, 12 October 1874

Yesterday morning, shortly after one o'clock, the discovery was made by a member of the local fire brigade, named John Crowley, that a fire had broken out on the premises of Mr Henry Cummins, hay and produce merchant, the "Old Creamery," Millburn, Coleraine. Mr Cummins is the owner of several traction engines and threshing machines, some of which he keeps at this produce stores. On discovering the flames, Crowley alarmed Superintendent Douglas and Mr Stormouth, waterworks manager, who at once had the fire-bell rung, and the town hose brought out. They then proceeded to the scene of the fire, accompanied by Head Constable Tilson, Sergeants Love and Prior, and several constables. They found that the flames had got a strong hold on the hay sheds, and that two valuable threshing machines were on fire, while the flames had also partly destroyed three steam engines. Three other threshing machines were saved at great personal risk by Dr WH Caldwell and Messrs Stormouth, Douglas, Cummins, D Todd, Thomas Mackey, JS Cohen and others. The danger was increased by a high pressure of steam, which the great heat had caused in one of the traction engines and in which there was very little water. In consequence the town water supply being unavailable the hose was practically useless, and the large crowd of people had to let the hay shed burn itself out. The damage is estimated at nearly £1,500, which is, so far as could be ascertained, only partially covered by insurance. The burning material smouldered for several hours.⁵¹

The Mr Stormouth mentioned was William Scott Stormouth who was arrested in September 1897 in Derby for the murder of "Mrs Scott" at Turner's Temperance Hotel, Guildford Street, Russell Square London. The death was initially attributed to Laudanum poisoning. It transpires that this was the murder of a Coleraine Barmaid. Mrs Scott was actually Sara Jane McLean who had previously been manager at a

⁵¹ Destructive Fire in Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 7 July 1893

hotel in Bushmills and prior to that in Bangor. Stormouth had met her at the Corporation Arms Hotel at The Diamond Coleraine where she was manageress. Sarah appears to have come from Liverpool, or at least her family lived at 35 Flaxman Street at the time of her death.

Stormouth had met her in Coleraine in 1894 when he was the manager of the gasworks. He may have lost this position due to his association with McLean, probably due to the fact that he was already married and his wife was at home in Derby. From the evidence given at the inquest and afterwards Stormouth and Sarah seem to have checked into Turner's hotel and over a period of time purchased a large amount of laudanum in order to take their own lives. Sarah was successful, however William Stormouth survived. The following is the summation of the coroner and the decision of the jury;

The Coroner then addressed the jury and said they must be impressed by the evidence for persons buying as much of a poison such as laudanum as any chemist chose to sell to them and they would probably think that the provisions under the Pharmacy Act in that respect ought to be soon amended. With regard to the case now in question it was noteworthy that it was only the prisoner and not the deceased who had by letter or otherwise expressed any intention or determination to commit suicide. On the other hand it was probable that she could not have been compelled against her will to take sufficient laudanum to cause her death and if she had resisted we should have expected to find some signs of a struggle. If the prisoner aided and abetted her suicide or assisted in it, he would be considered in the eye of the law guilty as a principal to murder. It was said he had attempted to take his own life but there was not much evidence on that point. Either Stormouth did not take enough laudanum or he lost heart and failed in other attempts on his own life. In a letter he had said that if laudanum failed there was the river but the prisoner did not seem to have tried to drown himself. On the contrary they

next heard of him at Derby although there were many rivers and plenty of water between London and Derby. The prisoner appeared to have led a dual life and at Derby wrote an abject letter asking the assistance of the wife he had deserted.

The jury then retired and after an absence of nearly half an hour they returned with the verdict setting forth that the deceased died from laudanum poisoning; that she took the poison willingly and that she was aided and abetted in her act by WS Stormouth. The jury added that in their opinion some further legislative restrictions should be imposed on the sale of poisons detailed in schedule A part 2 of the Pharmacy Act.⁵²

Stormouth was later convicted of murder however the death sentence was commuted by Queen Victoria.

⁵² The Mysterious Death of a Coleraine Barmaid, *The Belfast News Letter*, 11 September 1897

~Constable Richard Nolan 14062~

Richard Nolan was born around 1831-1833 in County Wexford and worked as a Chandler before joining the police. He was the son of John Nolan a farmer. Richard joined on Friday 19th July 1850 having been recommended by Sub Inspector Thomas Fitzsimon and given the number 14,062. Richard served with the Reserve from November 1850 before being transferred to County Donegal.

Richard was promoted to 1st Class Sub Constable on Saturday 1st March 1851. On 1st July 1857 he was transferred to County Londonderry and promoted to Acting Constable on Wednesday 1st August 1860. In July 1863 Richard is noted as being a constable in Coleraine.⁵³ The following year in January 1864 he was the Inspector of Weights and Measures at Garvagh, where as mentioned he was working alongside a number of future Coleraine residents.

Acting Constable Nolan, Inspector of Weights and Measures at Garvagh, charged Catherine Mullan of Ballymacally with selling in Garvagh market on the 18th December fraudulently made up butter. The butter was produced and an order made that the defendant pay a fine of 2s 6d and costs and forfeit the butter.⁵⁴

Richard's wife Mary died at Garvagh on 30th July 1864 of diphtheria. At the end of the year Richard had been promoted to full Constable. On 1st May 1868 Richard was transferred to County Antrim following his marriage to Susan O'Hagan at Bolerin, Garvagh on Sunday 23rd February 1868. At the time of his marriage Richard was noted as residing at the townland of Owenreagh which is south west of Draperstown. There appears to have been a police barracks at Owenreagh between 1865 and 1871. Richard can be linked to Owenreagh from the end of August 1866 as detailed in the following article;

⁵³ Receiving Stolen Goods, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 18 July 1863

⁵⁴ Garvagh Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 9 January 1864

On the 8th instant, Constable Richard Nolan and party, of the Owenreagh Police-station, proceeded on still-hunting duty. In the mountains of Glengomna, about four miles from their quarters, they came upon a still house of no ordinary dimensions, where they found an illicit still at full work. They also found sixteen gallons of singlings, 160 gallons of wort, and eight bushels of malt, undergoing the process of mashing, together with 16 stones of treacle, and a number of expensive and valuable vessels well got up for illicit purposes, all of which they destroyed, with the exception of the still head, and worm, which they removed to the barrack. The smuggler had decamped. Constable Nolan deserves great credit for his still hunting tact, seeing that he had not been more than three weeks in charge of the Owenreagh station, and was wholly unacquainted with the district.⁵⁵

Susan was the daughter of Daniel O'Hagan a farmer probably from the Draperstown area. At the time of her marriage she was recorded as residing at Glenkeen, near to Garvagh. Richard served at Rasharkin County Antrim and was there in 1870 when his daughter Rose Anne was born on 22nd November. Susan and Richard then had a son Daniel who was born 29th June 1873. On 29th April 1875 a daughter Catherine Ann was born at Main Street Limavady, which was given as Susan's address although Richard was still at Rasharkin. Richard was transferred to County Sligo in August 1877. In the same year Richard was noted in petty sessions records as serving at Moytura and the following year at Castlebaldwin.

Richard was pensioned from the Royal Irish Constabulary on Thursday 10th March 1881. By September 1882 Richard was in Coleraine, and was running a public house. Richard applied to the court for the transfer of the spirit licence from Mr James Lyons, however the court was "disinclined to grant two licenses to one person

⁵⁵ Seizure of Illicit Still, Still Head and Worm, *The Londonderry Standard*, 15 September 1866

as he could not manage them both properly.” Richard’s solicitor argued that Richard’s brother-in-law would take charge of one of the places however this was not enough. It was then argued that Richard could not sell his old house until he had a new one to go to and that he had paid £330 for the new property in which he intended to reside.⁵⁶ The property in question belonging to Lyons was at 8 New Market Street Coleraine.

In February 1895 Richard was responsible for arranging the funeral of 21 year old James Craig a fellow member of the St Malachy’s Literary and Debating Society and son of another Newmarket Street publican Mary Craig. James Craig had been the assistant clerk of the Coleraine markets. A “large concourse of people including almost all of the Town Commissioners....assembled at the residence of the deceased’s mother in New Market Street from which the mournful procession started.” James was buried at St John’s and the service was conducted by Rev Father Carroll of St Malachy’s. In the article Richard was named as a “prominent member” of the society.⁵⁷ The serious nature of the debating society can be seen in a topic debated in March 1895, “Does Free Trade benefit Great Britain and Ireland?”⁵⁸ In August of the same year Richard, Fr Carroll and others made a presentation to a deputation of the Honourable the Irish Society asking for a grant for the establishment of a night school which was granted. They also applied for £200 to wipe a debt of the parochial buildings which was taken for consideration before the Court of the Society.⁵⁹

In 1901 Richard was living and working as a publican on New Market Street Coleraine. The property was owned by John Glen who had previously owned the constabulary barracks when they were on New Market Street. This was not however the same building. Richard and

⁵⁶ Coleraine Petty Session, *The Derry Journal*, 23 September 1882

⁵⁷ Funeral of the Late Mr James Craig, Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 8 February 1895

⁵⁸ St Malachy’s Literart and Debating Society, Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 11 March 1895

⁵⁹ Visitation of the Hon the Irish Society in Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 9 August 1895

Susan had a son Charles Henry Nolan who was born on 17th May 1887 at New Market Street. He died the following year. In 1901 their daughter Susan, who was born around 1872, was working as a barmaid and Rose Ann was an unemployed milliner.

Richard died on Thursday 19th February 1903 and was buried at Bolerin/Ballerin Catholic graveyard between Garvagh and Ringsend. An article in the *Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, reflected the significance Richard had in the community,

On Sunday morning there were laid to rest in the graveyard of the Catholic Church, Bolerin, Ringsend, the remains of the late Mr Richard Nolan, Newmarket Street, Coleraine and formerly a respected member of the RIC. Deceased was a native of County Wexford, but had been a spirit merchant in Coleraine for about twenty years. The late Mr Nolan was president of St Malachy's Conference of St Vincent de Paul, and the vice-president, officers and members walked in procession two deep immediately after the chief mourners, followed by the members of St Malachy's Club, of which Mr Nolan had also been a prominent member. Beautiful wreaths were sent by members of St Malachy's Conference, St Malachy's Club, Head Constable E Durnan, Coleraine and Mr and Mrs Harry McGrath. The chief mourners were – Mr Patrick Nolan (son of deceased), Mr DJ O'Hagan and Mr P O'Hagan (nephews) and the attendance included – Rev Father John Carroll PP St Malachy's; Head Constable Durnan, Sergeant McCorry, Messrs Andrew Clarke, Richard O'Doherty, John McWilliams, Charles Craig, James McAnally, Samuel Moore (Lougher), M Young (Bellemony), John McCormick, M McLoughlin, James O'Kane, Robert Ferris JP, D Craig, H Loughbridge, Henry Mullan, H McDermott, C Dempsey, W McLoughlin, T O'Doherty (Belfast), Patrick Doherty (Portstewart) &c, &c. The remains were carried into Bolerin Church, where the service was

conducted by Rev Father Moyes, who afterwards officiated at the grave.

There was an application to Coleraine court by Susan on 27th February 1903 for a temporary transfer of the licence following Richard's death. It was noted that their "son" was examined by the court and there were no objections from the constabulary.⁶⁰ Susan was granted a full licence in April of the same year.

In November 1910 Susan was brought to court on the prosecution of District Inspector Alexander Dobbyn for breach of the licensing laws. It was alleged by Sergeant Farry, who was with Constable Richard Dillon at the time, that at approximately 7.55am on Sunday 6th November an old age pensioner named Thomas Valley (perhaps the same Thomas Valley as mentioned previously) was seen coming to the corner of Newmarket Street "to see if there were any policemen about as those fellows generally did." Solicitor Dan MacLaughlin and the RM commented that the "those fellows" was an improper term. Sergeant Farry stated that they had previously heard a knock at the door before Valley had appeared and so they then observed him entering Mrs Nolan's property without knocking. Farry and Dillon then observed Miss Nolan sweeping the step and then went inside. Farry then knocked the door and was admitted by Miss Nolan. They observed Valley sitting in the kitchen and the door to the bar was open. Farry asked Miss Nolan to account for Valley's presence and she stated that she had taken him in to give him refreshments. On cross examination by MacLaughlin, Farry could not directly link the sound of the knocking to Nolan's premises and admitted that he was not long in Coleraine and was unaware that Valley had worked for some time at the markets directly across from Nolan's. Farry then admitted that there was no evidence of the sale of alcohol. The case was subsequently thrown out.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 28 February 1903

⁶¹ Licencing Prosecutions at Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 12 November 1910

In 1911 Susan was still running the pub. Susan died at Coleraine on 10th May 1914. In 1923 Susan Nolan, daughter of Richard, applied to Coleraine court to gain permission to open her licensed premises at 8 o'clock. Dan MacLaughlin, solicitor, argued that Susan had extensive stabling and the 10 o'clock opening was "a great inconvenience to farmers coming to the town early." The application was denied.⁶²

⁶² Application Refused at Coleraine, *The Ballymena Observer*, 24 August 1923

~Constable John Graham 16565~

John Graham was born in County Monaghan around 1834. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Monday 13th December 1852 with registered number 16,565 and was posted initially to County Leitrim in April 1853. As John was only 18 when he joined it was likely that his father was also a member of the force. John was noted as serving at Carrick-on-Shannon in 1853 from the petty sessions records.

On 1st September 1865 John was transferred to Belfast. A court case of 1867 links John to a detection on Durham Street suggesting that he was stationed near the city centre. Another in the same year at Albert Street perhaps confirms this and points towards the Cullingtree Road barracks. John was promoted to Acting Constable on Friday 1st October 1869. In March 1871 John was mentioned in a court case involving a detection in Castle Lane in the city centre, however it was not the details of the case that was most noteworthy;

During the course of the evidence a summons was handed to the magistrates endorsed on the back as follows:- "John Graham, Queen Street, peeler!" The summons server, Morrison, was called, and acknowledged having endorsed the summons, but said he had merely written the word "peeler" for the other summons server's guidance. He was ordered to apologise to Acting Constable Graham for the offensive term.⁶³

John was promoted to full Constable by Monday 1st July 1872. John was pensioned from the police on Saturday 10th October 1874 aged around 40 and claimed his pension at South Belfast. He then moved to Glasgow on Saturday 13th May 1876 where he remained for a number of years. John finally claimed his pension at Coleraine from Thursday 4th April 1889.

⁶³ Belfast Police Court, *The Belfast Morning News*, 13 March 1871

John died unmarried on Wednesday 28th April 1909 at Stone Row Coleraine. His death was witnessed by barber George Doherty, also of Stone Row. John's last Pension was paid to a Jane Douglas for funeral costs. The 1911 census lists a Martha Jane Douglas of Stone Row Lower who had a son called George Doherty Douglas indicating that there might be a connection between the two people involved at the end of John's life.

~Constable Henry Brandon 21046~

Henry Brandon was born in Dromore County Tyrone in approximately 1836. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on Tuesday 17th March 1857 receiving the registered number 21,046. Henry was recommended to the police by Samuel Galbraith DL JP of Newgrove, also known as Clanabogan House, Omagh. Henry was posted to County Antrim from Thursday 15th October 1857.

On 9th July 1862 Henry was involved in a joint operation along with Dunloy police targeting illegal distillation in the townland of Killadouhy in the parish of Rasharkin. At this time Henry was stationed at Cloughmills and along with Constable Kerr found “forty bushels of malt and six vats, with one hundred and fifty gallons of wash, in a house connected with a mill belonging to Mrs Robinson, but let to John Walsh.”⁶⁴

Henry married Susanna McCully in October 1863. Susanna was from Clough in County Antrim. As a result Henry was transferred to County Londonderry on 1st October 1863. It is likely that he was moved to Gulladuff station as his daughter Susanna was born there on Sunday 17th November 1867. On Wednesday 1st March 1871 Henry was promoted to Acting Constable and was transferred to Coleraine.⁶⁵ Henry was later promoted to Constable on Tuesday 20th July 1880.

Henry retired on Friday 16th July 1886. His retirement did not go unnoticed in Coleraine. The following address was published in the *Belfast News Letter* the following month,

Dear Sir – a few of your friends embrace the occasion of your retirement from active duty as a fitting opportunity for expressing in tangible form their high appreciation of your worth as an officer of a Force which has won for itself respect in Coleraine. For over fifteen years you have acted as an

⁶⁴ Illicit Distillation, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 19 July 1862

⁶⁵ The Constabulary, *Coleraine Chronicle*, 13 May 1871

efficient Officer of that Force and during that time you have discharged your duties faithfully, and at the same time earned the respect of a large circle of friends. We ask your acceptance of the accompanying watch, gold chain, and purse of sovereigns, as tokens of our good wishes for your future prosperity and happiness, and we rejoice to know that your home is still to be amongst use. We are dear sir, yours faithfully.

Henry had replied to the address,

My Dear Friends – I am altogether at a loss to find words to thank you as I would wish for your too flattering address, and for the way you have referred to the manner in which I have discharged my duties as a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary during the term I have been stationed in Coleraine. In the course of my official duties and in private life I have ever experienced at your hands kindness and friendship that I shall never forget. I am conscious of my many shortcomings and I feel that the enviable position in which I am placed tonight is due far more to your consideration and indulgence than to any good qualities I may possess. To have gained your confidence, however, and to have received the good wishes and regard you have expressed will ever be a source of pride and satisfaction. I am deeply thankful to you for your costly and beautiful gift which is unexpected as it is undeserved. I am also grateful for your earnest wishes for my future prosperity and happiness, and those wishes I heartily reciprocate. – I am, dear sir, yours sincerely.⁶⁶

In 1887 Henry was living at Waterford Place, Coleraine. By 1895 he moved to Union Street where he lived in a property owned by the late

⁶⁶ Address and Presentation to Mr Henry Brandon, *The Belfast News-Letter*, 18 August 1886

Captain Olpherts until his death. Susanna, his wife, died in 1905 and Henry died four years later on Monday 7th June 1909. Their daughter Susanna was present at his death.

~Constable John Henry Conway 27984~

John Henry Conway was the son of 2nd Class Head Constable Patrick M Conway 3231. John was born around 1844 in County Roscommon. He was recommended to the Constabulary of Ireland by Captain John Woulfe Flanagan DL JP from Drumdoe, Boyle, County Roscommon. Conway joined on Saturday 2nd August 1862 obtaining the number 27,984.

John was posted to Sligo after training arriving there on Saturday 13th December 1862. In 1865 John was serving in Sligo itself according to petty sessions records. On Tuesday 1st November 1870 he was transferred to Londonderry city. Within eight days of arrival John had charged a man, John Murphy, “for being drunk in Waterloo Street.” Murphy was fine 2s 6d.⁶⁷ The following week John had arrested and charged another man called John. This time it was John Sweeny, a badge porter (someone who carries bags outside of a railway station area), for assaulting his wife. According to the *Derry Journal* “the woman was examined and proved the ill treatment she had received. The Bench sentenced Sweeny to three months’ imprisonment with hard labour.”⁶⁸

John’s father died on 5th December 1875 in County Wexford having retired in March 1871. John was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st March 1873 and was sent to Coleraine. He was then promoted to Constable from 1st February 1877 and was posted to Castlerock from the beginning of March.⁶⁹

Not long after arriving at Castlerock John was the attending officer at the suicide of local property owner and farmer John McKeeman. McKeeman at the time of his death was the owner of the property that the RIC barracks were sited in Castlerock village. An inquest was held at McKeeman’s home by the coroner Daniel Gailey in which

⁶⁷ Londonderry Petty Sessions, *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 11 November 1870

⁶⁸ Derry Police Court, *The Derry Journal*, 19 November 1870

⁶⁹ Constabulary Promotions – County Derry, *The Derry Journal*, 6 March 1877

McKeeman was described as being “universally respected as an honest, industrious man, with whom much public sympathy was shown when about two years ago he lost his wife.” The body of John McKeeman was viewed by the jury and identified by Henry Perry of Freehall. McKeeman’s daughter Sarah deposed that she saw nothing out of character in her father and that she had no “fears that he would do anything on himself; and I never heard him say that he would like to be out of the world, or threaten that he would do anything to himself.” Sarah subsequently fainted and was carried from the inquest. The key evidence was given by Mr John Harbinson the proprietor of a hotel at Castlerock as follows;

I knew deceased John McKeeman well. I saw him on Saturday morning last, and told him Mr Warke wanted to see him at the station. About a quarter till two o’clock in the afternoon of same day, his son John and I were standing in deceased’s barn door looking at a picture of the boat race between the Cambridge and Oxford races; and deceased was inside the barn door with a flail in his hand. I made the remark that the race was a dead heat, and deceased then said, “It must be run over again.” His son and I then came away. I went to the hotel, and a short time afterwards came back to the barn to show deceased a curious shell I had got. When about halfway through his gate I saw him stop at the corner of the wall opposite the barn. He then went into the barn and I followed him. In about half a minute or so he said, “I’m not well; I think I’ll lie down and have a sleep;” so he lay down on the straw and I asked him if I would put two or three “battles” of straw over him, but he made no answer. Just as I was pulling to the door to come away he gave a terrific shout, “Hold my head; I’m mad! I’m mad.” I then ran for Mr Wolsely who was the nearest man to the place. Deceased was at the time lying on his back working in convulsions and in a perfect state of agony. The whole body was convulsed, except the legs, which did not move. He did not speak; and remained in the above state about 5 minutes

when he died. I found at the place where I saw him stooping a small bottle labelled “poison.” It appeared empty; I gave it to the police constable. The bottle (now produced) I believed to be the same. It seemed to have been hidden as it was covered on the top with a piece of brick, and at the side with a stone. Deceased was in my hotel on Sunday night, and bought two nagins of whisky which he took away in a bottle. Since his wife died he has been in the habit of tipling.

Mr Wolsley as mentioned was the station master at Castlerock. He gave the following account;

I am station master at Castlerock. Mr Harbinson called on me on Saturday afternoon, requesting me “to come fast” and see John McKeeman as he thought he (McKeeman) had poisoned himself or something to that effect. I went and saw McKeeman who was fearfully convulsed from the bottom of the abdomen upwards. He was then lying on his back and the body was bowed forward, the head turned backward and the under-jaw chattering. When Mr Harbinson ran for the police I tried to lift deceased but was unable to do so on account of the rigidity of the body. The convulsions became weaker before death.

John Conway gave evidence that he had obtained the cup from Harbinson and took it to Dr Forsythe, Medical Officer of the Articlave Dispensary District. Dr Forsythe the attending doctor stated that he tested the bottle and found that it contained strychnine. The result of the inquest was that John McKeeman had come to his death by poisoning which may have been linked to a difficult financial situation he had found himself in. The suicide occurred “whilst in a fit of temporary insanity.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ The Recent Case of Suicide at Castlerock, *The Derry Journal*, 16 April 1877

In June of 1877 John was transferred to Garvagh station with Constable James McMeekin taking his place at Castlerock.⁷¹ On Wednesday 27th April 1881 John married Sarah Cecilia Flanagan at St Malachy's Coleraine. Sarah was the daughter of Thomas Flanagan who was an auctioneer and pawnbroker with premises on Meetinghouse Street (later Abbey Street). A witness to the marriage was James Dillon, who may have been a china merchant in Coleraine. At this time John Conway's residence was given as Londonderry where he appears to have been moved to by September 1878.

Sarah and John had a son Patrick J Conway who was born on 2nd January 1883. John Conway was then transferred to County Donegal in July 1883 and was stationed at Castlefin. He subsequently retired on Thursday 1st April 1886. John initially claimed his pension in Londonderry, however he moved to Coleraine by December 1886. Around this time his daughter May Kathleen Conway was born in Coleraine. Unfortunately for John he did not get to enjoy much of a retirement or his new daughter as he died aged 43 on Friday 8th July 1887 at Meeting House Place Coleraine. For some reason his death certificate put his age at 38 which is incorrect. His father-in-law Thomas Flanagan was present at his death.

In 1901 Thomas Flanagan was living on the Lodge Road Coleraine and is listed as being a pawn broker. At this time Sarah, John's widow and their son Patrick were living there. Patrick, now aged 18, is recorded as being a chemist's apprentice and Sarah a housekeeper.

Sarah died on 31st August 1910 at her home 'Marie House' on Lodge Road Coleraine. It was noted that she "had been in delicate health for some time, but was at business with her sister, Miss Flanagan, in Abbey Street during the day." This business was the family pawn brokers. Following complaining of weakness Sarah's sister Mary summoned Dr Allison who found that the problem was "acute heart weakness." Sarah died being comforted by her priest the Rev Father

⁷¹ Constabulary Reports, *The Derry Journal*, 20 June 1877

Magill of St Malachy's. An article in the *Derry Journal* stated that Sarah was the grand-daughter of "the late Peter Dempsey" who may have been connected to publicans in the town. It also noted that Sarah had a brother as well as a daughter Miss May Conway "who is well known in educational circles."

Sarah's son Patrick was noted at the time of her death as being "an assistant in a Derry pharmacy and was formerly apprenticed to Mr RF McCartney MPSI Coleraine."⁷² RF McCartney was Robert Freeborn McCartney who had been living in a boarding house in 1901 but by 1911 was married and living on Adelaide Avenue. He later lived at 'Lincluden' 54 Lodge Road. Robert became an Alderman in Coleraine and in 1946 was given the freedom of the borough "in recognition of his outstanding public services over a period of forty-two years. (He) was formerly chairman of the Urban Council and afterwards, for two terms, he was Mayor."⁷³ The 1911 census shows Patrick Flanagan as being a lodger in a house on Magazine Street Londonderry and he was working as a chemist. In 1901 May was a student at a college in Thurles County Tipperary, however by 1911 she was living with her aunt Mary Elizabeth Flanagan at Bath Terrace Portrush. May is recorded as being a music teacher and Mary was retired.

⁷² Death of a Coleraine Lady, *The Derry Journal*, 2 September 1910

⁷³ Freedom of Coleraine, *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 26 September 1946

~Constable Michael Love 31816~

Michael Love was born in County Fermanagh around 1846 and was recommended to the police by priest Father Traynor. The Rev Father Traynor was connected to the townland of Drumelly in the parish of Cleenish County Fermanagh. Michael was given the service number 31,816 after joining the Constabulary of Ireland on Thursday 21st June 1866.

Michael served in Donegal from Wednesday 31st October 1866. He was promoted to Acting Constable on Friday 1st April 1881 and then became a Constable on Wednesday 1st February 1882. On Tuesday 16th September 1884 Michael married Mary Ann McGarrigle from County Donegal. This marriage meant that he was posted to Westmeath from Thursday 15th January 1885. While in County Donegal he served in Aughkeely in 1883, while in Westmeath he was stationed at Mullingar in 1885 and Raharney the following year.

Michael then moved to Coleraine after being transferred to County Londonderry on Thursday 27th October 1887. Michael and Mary Ann had two children before they left Donegal, Cassie Agnes born in 1886 and Mary Anne born 1887. They also had a son Daniel who was born in Donegal in 1890 after Michael's transfer. They then had five further children after coming to Coleraine; Margaret born 1893, Cecelia born 22nd October 1895, Elizabeth born 1897, Michael born 24th May 1898 and Isabella born 21st November 1900. Michael and family lived at a house at Circular Road Coleraine from 1889.

In July 1893 Michael was one of the attending police at the fire that future convicted murderer William Stormouth also attended as previously mentioned (along with Portstewart pensioner Thomas Prior). At the end of the year Michael arrested a woman named Annie Watton of Society Street Coleraine. Annie was accused of concealing the birth of her illegitimate child and unlawfully disposing of the child. Annie was brought before Joseph Cuthbert JP and evidence was given by Mrs Steele of Society Street, in whose house Annie had been

living. Mrs Steele stated that Annie had given birth to a child. Annie initially denied the charge however she eventually admitted disposing of the child in the River Bann. It was noted that the body had not been recovered.⁷⁴ Annie was later indicted and sent for trial. The following year Michael had to contend with an equally as upsetting case where a female child had been found in a garden at Shuttle Hill in a small wooden box “two or three inches below the ground.” A midwife by the name of Fulton identified the remains as that of a child still born to a woman named Maggie Mars. Dr Creery gave evidence that from examination of the child he had formed the opinion that the “child had never breathed” and that the child was about six weeks premature.⁷⁵

Michael retired on Saturday 15th August 1896 which earned a mention in the *Irish Weekly News*.⁷⁶ In the 1901 census Michael is recorded as living at Albert Terrace Coleraine (located at the beginning of the Bushmills Road) and was employed as an insurance agent. By 1911 the family were living at Burlington Street Belfast. Those children who were not at school were employed in the mills.

Michael died on Thursday 15th August 1918 at 147 New Lodge Road Belfast. Michael died of senile decay and exhaustion, his son Michael, of the same address, was present at his death.

The previous year his other son Daniel had been summoned to Coleraine court by former RIC man Inspector Archibald Huston of the NSPCC (who will be examined later in this work) for neglect of his eight year old son Alphonsus. It appears that Daniel was supposed to have undertaken to pay 10s per week in child support and had not sent any money to his, presumably estranged, wife Jane Love in Coleraine. Jane was the daughter of Alexander and Elizabeth McCormick of Pates Lane, Coleraine. The court sentenced Daniel to six months “but put a

⁷⁴ Charge of Concealment of Birth at Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 29 December 1893

⁷⁵ A Child’s Dead Body Found in Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 28 May 1894

⁷⁶ Retirement of Sergeant Michael Love, *The Irish Weekly News*, 5 September 1896

stay of execution on the warrant for a few weeks to see if the accused would pay the contributions.”⁷⁷ Although not an excuse for his behaviour in April 1915 Daniel was stabbed and received an injury to his eye and back when he was attacked by an Italian called Antonio Motara.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Child Neglect at Coleraine, *The Belfast News Letter*, 10 September 1917

⁷⁸ Belfast Custody Court, *The Northern Whig*, 12 April 1915

~Head Constable George Tanner 31919~

George Tanner was born in County Longford around 1848. He was recommended to the Constabulary by the Very Rev Augustus William West, Dean of Ardagh, JP, County Longford. George was 18 years of age when he joined on Tuesday 7th August 1866 receiving the number 31,919. Given his age it was likely that he was the son of a serving or former Constabulary member.

George was initially posted to County Louth on 26th January 1867 and was noted in court records as being at Martinscross. Ten years later George was stationed at Quay Street Dundalk. In January 1878 it was noted in his record that he dislocated his left ankle, however there were no details on how this came about. By 1880 George was stationed at the main station in Dundalk at Anne Street after being promoted to Acting Constable on Saturday 1st February 1879. George was promoted again to Constable three years later on Monday 1st May 1882 and was moved to Bridge Street Dundalk. He remained at this station until his marriage to Anna Eliza Townley on Tuesday 17th February 1885.

As was the way following his marriage he could not serve in the county of his wife and so he was transferred to County Armagh in the same month. It is possible that their first child Florence Elizabeth Tanner was born after George was transferred but before Anna moved as she was born in Dundalk in 1886. While in County Armagh George was promoted to Head Constable on Friday 15th April 1892 which saw the family transferred to County Donegal on Sunday 1st May 1892. In 1894 George was noted as being the Head Constable at Buncrana.

Three further children were born while the family were in Armagh. Violet May Tanner was born at Loughgall where George was the Sergeant on 13th May 1888. Evelyn Jane Tanner was born on 7th May 1890. Dorothea/Dorothy Tanner was born at Obin Street Portadown on 6th January 1892. Of the three Violet was to have the most notable story marrying Petty Officer John Henry Primmer RN on 19th March 1919 at St Patrick's parish church Coleraine. John was serving on HMS

Victory at the time and was the son of James Primmer a boiler maker. John was from Southampton and had joined the Royal Navy in 1906. He served in WW1 on the following ships; Hazard 1st May 1914-27th April 1916, Excellent 28th April 1916-11th September 1916, Renown 12th September 1916-13th March 1917, Victory 16th March 1916-10th June 1917, Renown 11th June 1917-3rd December 1918.

While at Loughgall George enjoyed the distraction of gardening and in July 1889 he exhibited at the Industrial and Cottagers Show at Loughgall. In that show he won, best six carrots; best six onions; 1st mention for best two York cabbages, and 1st mention for best two Dutch cabbages.⁷⁹

In Donegal a daughter Georgina Tanner was born in 1894. Two years later on Thursday 1st October 1896 George retired aged 48. George claimed his pension straight away at Coleraine. On Sunday 2nd May 1897 George and Anna's only son William James Tanner was born at Bushtown, a townland outside of Coleraine. Another daughter Edith was born in 1899. 1899 was also to see Anna's death on Sunday 11th June 1899 at Dundarg which was close to Bushtown. In the 1901 census George was still at Dundarg and was employed as a clerk for Robert Alexander Sinclair, land agent and rate collector. In 1906 George worked alongside a fellow ex-RIC man William Armstrong (see section on Armstrong for further details). By the 1911 census George was promoted to assistant land agent and was living at Farranlester near to Macosquin. Dorothea by 1911 was a post office clerk. In September 1912 George signed the Ulster Covenant at Coleraine town hall.

In 1913 George was living in Coleraine at Hanover Place. In July he advertised a litter of red setter pups for sale "cheap; champion breed; pedigree on application."⁸⁰ In 1929 George was recorded as being elected a "sidesman" of St Patrick's Church Coleraine. This is an

⁷⁹ Industrial and Cottager's Show at Loughgall, *The Belfast News Letter*, 1 August 1889

⁸⁰ Livestock, *The Belfast News Letter*, 18 July 1913

assistant to the church warden who would show people to their seats and lift the collection during the service.⁸¹ He had previously sat on the select vestry of St Mary's Church of Ireland in Macosquin while he lived in that area.

George died on 11th May 1929 and was living at Hanover Place Coleraine. His effects went to Florence. George's funeral was at Macosquin and was buried along with Anna at St Mary's.

⁸¹ Easter Vestries, *Belfast News Letter*, 16 April 1929

~ Constable Bernard Sheridan 33238~

Bernard Sheridan was born in County Galway around 1843. Bernard joined the Constabulary on Tuesday 16th July 1867 and received the service number 33,238. Bernard had been recommended to the force by Peter Blake JP of Hollypark, Loughrea County Galway.

Bernard was initially posted to Belfast on Sunday 16th February 1868. Two months after arriving in Belfast Bernard had charged a man, Henry Evitt, to court for being drunk and disorderly and cursing the Pope on Peter's Hill.⁸² In September 1869 Bernard charged a man called Henry Nugent "with making use of party expressions" as it was proved that Nugent was "driving up Townsend Street on a car when he cursed the Pope." Nugent was fined 40s.⁸³ Two years later in July 1871 Bernard was mentioned in the court reports for charging two men, John Kelters and James Black, with "fighting in Mill Street on Saturday evening."⁸⁴ These three locations would suggest that Bernard was stationed somewhere around the city centre and the Lower Falls (Mill Street is now the upper part of Castle Street), possibly Cullingtree Road. This would have been at the same time as John Graham as previously mentioned was stationed there. Indeed in 1882 Sub Constable Sheridan was still prosecuting people in the same area.

Bernard was promoted to Acting Constable on Friday 1st June 1883 and to the new rank of Sergeant on Sunday 1st February 1885. Bernard clearly remained in the same approximate area as in January 1886 he was dealing with a case of alleged assault and robbery on a shop owner called John Comerford at Plevna Street which was off the Falls Road. The following year Tuesday 5th July Bernard was transferred to County Londonderry on and appears to have served in the city of Londonderry. At the beginning of January 1890 Bernard was reduced in rank to Constable although no reason is given for this. Bernard then

⁸² Belfast Police Court, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 4 April 1868

⁸³ Party Expressions, *The Belfast News Letter*, 24 September 1869

⁸⁴ Fighting, *The Belfast News Letter*, 4 July 1871

was pensioned from the RIC from Wednesday 1st August 1900 and collected the payments at Coleraine.

In the 1901 census Bernard was living as a boarder in a house on Stone Row Lower, Coleraine. The head of the household was Elizabeth O'Conner/O'Connor whose occupation was listed as "refreshment house keeper." In 1911 Elizabeth was recorded as being a publican living at Lone Moor Road Londonderry. Bernard died of cancer and unmarried on Tuesday 8th September 1908 at the Coleraine Workhouse. His death was witness by the Master James McLarnon. McLarnon was also a former RIC member and will be discussed in due course. What is notable, and perhaps perplexing, is that although Bernard was in the Workhouse he was not there because he was destitute. Bernard's will showed that his estate was £2,603 10s 11d. Indeed in April 1911 a notice was placed in the *Derry Journal* as below

Late of Upper Captain Street, Coleraine, in the County of Londonderry, retired Constable Royal Irish Constabulary, deceased.

Notice is hereby given pursuant to the Statute 22 and 23 Vic., cap. 35, that all persons having any claims or demands against the estate of the above deceased who died on the 7th day of September, 1908, are hereby required on or before the 1st day of June 1911 to furnish (in writing) particulars of such claims or demands to the undersigned the solicitor for the executors of the will of the said deceased to whom probate was granted forth of the Londonderry District Registry of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, King's Bench Division (Probate) on the 6th day of November 1908.

And notice is hereby further given that after the said 1st day of June 1911 the executors will proceed to distribute the assets

of the said deceased having regard only to the claims of notice which shall have been given as above required.⁸⁵

Two things can be drawn from this notice, firstly Bernard had his own address in Coleraine at Upper Captain Street and secondly he had no claimants on his estate in three years indicating he had no contact with his family. In the first case it is probable that Bernard may have again been a boarder/lodger in an address at Captain Street as there is no trace of him in the valuation records. The executors of his will were Matthew Connery, parish priest at St John's Killowen, and Head Constable James McCorry. James McCorry had been a Sergeant at Coleraine from 1897, having been promoted from Magherafelt to Castledawson in 1893 and then to Claudy in 1895. James did not leave Coleraine until after he was promoted in July 1908. While at Coleraine James was noted on occasion working with Thomas Heaslip, another Coleraine pensioner, who will also be discussed.

⁸⁵ Statutory Notice to Creditors in the Goods of Bernard Sheridan, *The Derry Journal*, 28 April 1911

~Head Constable John Eakins 36616~

John Eakins was a farmer before he joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Saturday 7th May 1870. John was born in County Sligo around 1850, however he was recommended to the RIC by Sub Inspector Thomas Hayes who was working in Ballina County Mayo at the relevant time suggesting John was living there.

John was given the number 36,616 and was sent to County Cavan on Thursday 10th November 1870. Petty sessions records places John in Cavan town in 1876, Coroneany in 1877 and Bailieboro in 1879. John married Rebecca Gilliland from County Monaghan on Thursday 26th December 1878. On 15th April 1879 John was transferred to County Londonderry and served in Londonderry city. John and Rebecca's first child James Frederick Eakins was born at Eden Place Londonderry on Wednesday 17th September 1879. A daughter Margaret Emma Eakins was born in Londonderry on Thursday 5th October 1882 and another daughter Rebecca was born in 1885. While in Londonderry John had been promoted to Acting Constable in April 1882 and Constable in June 1883. John was stationed at Bishop Street barracks by 1884.

John was transferred to Castlerock between 1885 and 1886 with their daughter Annie Gertrude Eakins being born in the village on Wednesday 3rd March 1886. A second son Henry Gilliland Eakins was also born at Castlerock on Sunday 23rd November 1890. John remained in Castlerock until March 1891 when he was transferred to Garvagh. Garvagh had been in the temporary charge of Michael Love as previously mentioned.⁸⁶ John was transferred again to Portstewart by mid 1892. Another son John Fraser Eakins was born at Agherton Portstewart on Tuesday 25th October 1892, followed by Florence Edith Eakins on 11th September. John was then promoted to Head Constable on 1st May 1896 and transferred to County Donegal. The magistrates at Coleraine court made mention of John's promotion and posting to Moville. Mr Mains JP stated that he "had been acting as a magistrate

⁸⁶ Royal Irish Constabulary, *The Belfast News Letter*, 5 March 1891

for twelve or thirteen years and he could speak in the highest terms of the abilities of Head Constable Eakins as he had discharged his duties in a most straightforward and zealous manner.”⁸⁷

In Donegal John remained at Moville and served there for three years before being transferred to Omagh, County Tyrone, on Friday 17th March 1899. In 1901 the Eakins family were recorded as living at Carlisle Terrace, Omagh. John subsequently retired from the RIC on Sunday 7th June 1903. John initially claimed his pension at Newtownstewart County Tyrone. In 1908 John’s son Henry joined the Royal Marines at Glasgow, he gave his next of kin as Mrs R Eakins of Rylands, Newtownstewart. Rylands is a townland east of Newtownstewart which straddles the Killymore Road and is closer to Gortin. The family appear to have been at that address from around 1905.

John and family moved to Coleraine eight years later and John claimed his pension there from 6th November 1913. In May 1914 John Eakins went to New York from Queenstown on the ‘*Oceanic*’. There is a later record in 1959 showing John sailing from Liverpool to New York on board ‘*Media*’. John at this stage was a US citizen and was married. John’s profession was listed as an attorney. John and his wife had been staying at 37 Flower Lane, Mill Lane, London, NW7. The following year they stayed at the Piccadilly Hotel, London.

James Eakins had also sailed to New York in 1906, however by 1918 he had signed up for service in WW1. His employer was listed as Chester Ship Co. Like his brother Henry, James’ next of kin was Mrs R Eakins, however this time the address was given as Coleraine. In 1921 James applied for citizenship, by this time he was an electrical wireman living at 1536 Cherry Street, Philadelphia.

Florence Eakins married Nathaniel Boyce of James Street Coleraine on Monday 21st February 1921. Nathaniel was the son of William Boyce

⁸⁷ Constabulary Intelligence, *The Derry Journal*, 10 June 1896

and in 1911 had been listed as an apprentice painter. On Thursday 19th January 1922 Florence had a son who died three days later. This was not to be the only misfortune as on Saturday 28th January 1922 Florence also died at the Cottage Hospital in Coleraine.

The final daughter Rebecca was listed in 1901 as a telegraphist, by 1924 she was a typist and was onboard a ship heading for South Africa. Her address was given as 5 Circular Road, Coleraine. In 1928 she was again afloat bound for South Rhodesia.

John's wife Rebecca died on Friday 31st August 1928 at 5 Circular Road Coleraine. John also died at the same address in on 5th March 1933 and his estate of £476 10s 3d was left to Rebecca. In October 1933 Rebecca was bound for South Africa again as a typist however now her address was given as 23 High Street Hollywood.

~Sergeant William Armstrong 37083~

William Armstrong was born in County Monaghan around 1853 and joined the RIC aged 18 Monday 7th November 1870. William was given the registered number 37,083 and was posted to County Donegal from 30th March 1871. In Donegal he was noted as serving at Raphoe in 1872, Lifford in 1873 and Ramelton in 1877.

William was married to Elizabeth Doherty from Donegal on Thursday 24th May 1883 in the Milford area suggesting that he was still posted to Ramelton. Due to his marriage William was then posted to Belfast from 1st September 1883. William was later moved to County Louth on 16th September 1886 where he finished his career on 1st February 1899 as a sergeant having been promoted in December 1887 (William was noted in petty sessions records as being at Gilbertown RIC in 1887). What is notable is that three of William and Elizabeth's children were born in County Donegal between 1893 and 1897 when William was working in County Louth. Mary Louisa Armstrong was born around 1893, George Doherty Armstrong was born around 1895 and Ethel Elizabeth Armstrong was born around 1897. The only child not to be born in County Donegal was Annie Gertrude Armstrong who was born on New Year's Eve 1899 at Bushtown, Coleraine.

William claimed his pension at Coleraine from October 1899 having first claimed it at Rathmullan County Donegal. This would indicate that there was a place in this area, probably Elizabeth's family home, here William was able to retire to having finished his career on the other side of the country. His attraction to Coleraine may have purely been down to an offer of employment. Fellow RIC pensioner George Tanner was also living at Bushtown at the time William and family were there and William gained employment under Robert Sinclair (land agent, rent collector and from 1895 High Constable) along with Tanner. The connection between the two men is not obvious. Although they both served in County Louth they did not serve there at the same time.

In the 1901 census William and family were living at a house still in Bushtown owned by the Rev William Irwin DD. Rev Irwin was the Presbyterian minister at Castlerock and originally from the Killure area not far from Bushtown. At this time William's employment was given as RIC pensioner. By 1906 William was a clerk in the employment of Sinclair, however by October William was to meet his untimely death. William died on Wednesday 17th October 1906 following an accident at work. At the inquest George Tanner gave evidence that William was a "sober man and always very careful with horses" and the horse that he had been working with that day was "perhaps the quietest animal Mr Sinclair had about the place." Another witness Archibald Moore (possibly a merchant and grocer from Ballymoney) stated that he saw the horse that William was driving with a trap had bolted tossing William onto the road. Archibald "found Mr Armstrong lying partly on his left side in an unconscious state his face covered with blood" and then summoned help and took William to Alexander Smith's house (a local farmer) at Drumcroon and sent for the doctor. The coroner's son Hugh Morrison gave contradictory evidence that "that he passed the deceased on this morning at Killure. The horse seemed to have been in a temper and the deceased, as witness thought, was punishing it for misbehaviour." Dr Charles Forsythe attended William noting "an abrasion on the right side of the face. The right eye was swollen and the right shoulder was contused and there was also concussion on the brain." William remained unconscious until his death and it was agreed by Forsythe Dr Tate J Creery and the jury that compression of the brain was the cause of death.⁸⁸ William was buried at Englishtown graveyard (Macosquin Presbyterian church off the Drumcroon Road).

The next fatality for the family was the death of George Armstrong. George had went off to fight in WW1 and had been a Lance Corporal in the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Rifles. George was killed in France on 25th March 1918. Elizabeth had left Bushtown by 1915 and was living at Railway Place in Coleraine where she remained until she died on 31st

⁸⁸ Sad Drowning Accident at Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 19 October 1906

October 1935. Elizabeth was also buried at Englishtown. The gravestone for William, Elizabeth, George and Ethel (who died 18th February 1973) is to the right of the front door of the church.

~Constable Thomas Elliott Carson 38539~

Thomas Elliott was born in County Antrim around 1850. He may have been part of the Carson family as referred to in the 1851 census living at the townland of Craigs, which is to the north west of Ballymena. If this was the case Thomas was the son of William Carson, a bleacher and Mary a nurse. Thomas was recommended to the Royal Irish Constabulary by Sub Inspector Mason Alcock. Alcock was Sub Inspector in County Antrim from March 1859, initially at Ballymoney until 1870 when he moved to Ballymena. This would tie in with Thomas being from Craigs.

Thomas joined on Saturday 9th March 1872 receiving the number 38,539. Thomas was sent to County Donegal following the completion of his training on 31st October 1872. In 1878 Thomas was a Sub Constable at Letterkenny according to petty sessions records. On 9th May 1883 Thomas Married Louisa White in the Inishowen area. In August of that year Thomas was transferred to County Londonderry and by 1889 he was in Coleraine as indicated by the birth of his son John Francis James Carson on Sunday 11th August 1889. John was born at Circular Road, Coleraine. Thomas was not present at the birth which was witnessed by Margaret Carter of Boyd's Row, Coleraine. The family had been at Circular Road from approximately 1887 until 1894. This was therefore the location of the birth of further children Maud Mary Louisa Carson on Saturday 15th November 1890, William Thomas Carson on Sunday 20th March 1892, and Sarah R (Susannah) Carson who was born on Wednesday 6th February 1895

Thomas' wife Louisa died on 7th January 1897 at Hanover Place, Coleraine. This was the address that they moved to after Circular Road and remained in until 1901 when Thomas moved to Russell Terrace, Coleraine. Thomas by this stage was retired having been pensioned on 1st May 1900. In 1901 Thomas was working as an insurance agent and was raising four children aged 11 or under. Thomas was able to employ a house keeper Sarah McCready. By 1911 Thomas was employed as the keeper of Coleraine courthouse and was living at Institution Road,

which is part of the modern Castlerock Road. Thomas was living in premises tied to the court. In the census return Maud and William were at the property. Maud was 20 and had no employment listed. William was noted as being a soldier with the North Irish Horse. In September 1912 Thomas signed the Ulster Covenant at Coleraine town hall.

John Carson married Caroline Finlay at Coleraine on 6th August 1912. Caroline was originally from County Down and was the daughter of William Finlay a power loom mechanic. In 1911 the Finlay's lived at Landscape Terrace, Coleraine. John's occupation at the time of his marriage was listed as a police man, however he was not a member of the RIC and his residence was given as Liverpool. In July 1920 a "JF Carson" and "C Carson" his wife sailed from Liverpool to Quebec. This strongly suggests that this was John and Caroline.

Maud married on Monday 12th September 1921,⁸⁹ however the ceremony was not at Coleraine. Maud was married at St Andrew's Church, Richmond, Staten Island New York. Of particular interest was her husband, John Frazer Eakins. This was the son of former Head Constable John and Rebecca Eakins of Coleraine. John was a chemist and was noted to have sailed to New York in February 1920 and was eventually naturalised in October 1927. Maud was naturalised two months later. Their address was 535 Michigan Avenue, Evanston Illinois. John went on to become a patent attorney.

Thomas kept working at Coleraine Court as keeper and in April 1919 he was granted an increase in pay of £5 by Londonderry County Council.⁹⁰ He was also to end his days there. On Friday 17th November 1922 Thomas died at the Cottage Hospital, Coleraine, which was directly across from the court building. Thomas died of pneumonia and cardiac failure.

⁸⁹ Marriages, *The Northern Whig*, 5 October 1921

⁹⁰ Derry County Council, *The Derry Journal*, 28 April 1919

~Constable James Francis Bethel 38610~

James Bethel was born in County Monaghan around 1853 the son of farmer Robert Bethel. James joined the RIC on Monday 8th April 1872, was given the number 38,610 and was posted to Londonderry city on Friday 29th November 1872. Although initially in Londonderry he was noted as working in Coleraine during March 1879, however from contemporary news reports he seems to have moved between Londonderry, Coleraine and the Limavady areas.

Coleraine 1879

The presiding magistrates at the usual fortnightly Court of Petty Sessions, held on Friday, were: - BM Givern Esq., and John Boyd Given Esq. Constable James Bethel charged a young man named William Maguire, Killowen Street, Coleraine, with assaulting an old woman named Mary Jane Murdock at Dunlop Street, on the morning of Sunday 23rd inst. The defendant was charged with breaking several panes of glass in the house occupied by Wm Leslie and Thomas Murdock, in a similar locality, on the same date. Evidence was given in support of the constable's statement, and the accused, who got a good character, was ordered to pay only 5s and costs, he undertaking to repair damages.....

A young man named Robert Wallace was brought up n the charge of Constable Higgins for having on the evening of Sunday 23rd inst, been drunk and used obscene language, and assaulted Sub Constables Bethel and Crossan, at Kings Gate Street. Bethel said he had been kicked on the head; his knee was bitten, and he was as much injured that he was confined to barracks for three days. Wallace was sentenced to six week's imprisonment.⁹¹

Londonderry 1880

⁹¹ Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Belfast Morning News*, 31 March 1879

Sub Constable James Bethel charged William Thompson with assaulting a person in his presence at St Columb's Court. Sub Constable Platt charged the same defendant with being drunk at London Street. The defendant, who did not appear, was fined 5s in each case, or in the alternative to go to gaol for a fortnight.⁹²

Limavady 1884

For some time past numerous complaints have been made to the police at Limavady by farmers in the district with reference to the stealing of fowls, which have been carried on rather extensively, but notwithstanding the vigilance of the constabulary no trace of the pilferers could be found to lead to their detection. A few nights since a farmer named John Kane, residing at Main North, lost seventeen geese. He at once communicated with the constabulary, and Sergeant Fuller, who is in charge of the station at Limavady, was immediately on the alert. He advised Kane to come to Derry and endeavour, with the assistance of the constabulary, to discover his lost property. On his arrival in the city Mr Kane visited the establishments of the various fowl dealers and ultimately succeeded in finding his geese at the establishment of Mr McDonald, Horsebarrack Row, who purchased them from two men who brought them into Derry for sale. Mr McDonald gave a description of the men from whom he purchased to the police who at once forwarded them to Limavady. On receiving the description of the men the matter was taken up very energetically by Sergeant Fuller and the men under his charge. Constable Bethel succeeded in gaining some particulars respecting the persons suspected and at once proceeded to Coleraine. He was there joined by one of the men of the station, and having obtained some further particulars he traced the parties to Ringsend and on

⁹² Londonderry Petty Sessions, *The Derry Journal*, 10 September 1880

to Aghadowey. From Aghadowey he went to Moneycannon about three miles from Ballymoney, where he arrested in their beds William Curry, *alias* Lyons, and his son, John Lyons, on the charge of stealing the fowls. The prisoners were brought to Limavady, and tried at a special Petty Sessions held on Friday, before Mr JO Horner JP in the office of Mr Lowry Clerk of Petty Sessions. Mr Kane identified the geese as his property and Mr McDonald identified the prisoners as the men from who he purchased them. The senior prisoner was then returned for trial and his son was remanded pending further evidence of identification. Such cleverness on the part of the constabulary at Limavady, particularly that of Constable Bethel, is well deserving on notice in the proper quarter. It is only due to Mr McDonald to state that he afforded every facility to Mr Kane and the police in connection with the matter.⁹³

Coleraine 1885

Mr R Harvey RM attended at the County Gaol on Saturday and heard a charge against a prisoner named James Clinton who was accused of assaulting Constables Bethel and McDermott on the previous day as they were escorting him to the gaol. It appears that Clinton had been sentenced to nine week's imprisonment by the Coleraine Bench and the warrant for his committal was entrusted to Sergeant Madill for execution. He and Constable Bethel took charge of the prisoner and brought him to this city where they were joined by Constable McDermott of the local force. On the way from Coleraine, Clinton used threats towards Constable Bethel, and in connection with them he referred to a previous sentence of imprisonment, which he had undergone as punishment for an offence which the constable had proved

⁹³ Fowl Stealing Near Limavady – A Clever Arrest, *The Derry Journal*, 1 September 1884

against him. When the party left the train at the Waterside Clinton became troublesome, and assaulted Constable McDermott. The police were obliged to force him along with their rifles. As soon as he reached the prison, and had the handcuffs taken off him, he struck Constable Bethel a deliberate blow on the mouth with his fist and bled him. The prisoner was immediately after secured by the warders and prevented from doing any further acts of violence. Mr Harvey took Constable Bethel's information setting forth these facts and remanded the prisoner until Thursday next when he will be brought up at Petty Sessions.⁹⁴

Clinton was later sentenced to one month's imprisonment under the threat of being "transported" to Australia if he did not change his ways. Clinton claimed that he had committed the offence in the "horrors of drink."⁹⁵

Two years later on 28th October 1887 James married Elizabeth Hartford at St Patrick's parish church Coleraine. At that time James' residence was given as Limavady. Elizabeth was the daughter of William Hartford, carrier and grocer of Hartford Place Coleraine (25 Circular Road). William was also a member of the Orange Order and his brother had been the Worshipful Master of LOL No 87. Hartford house still currently stands on the junction of Circular Road and Brook Street. A witness at the wedding was John Milliken, publican of Alexander Terrace and Church Street. Milliken had previously had a bar at the harbour in Portrush in the 1860's.

Subsequent to their marriage James was transferred to County Cavan on 18th November 1887. Despite James working in Cavan, only two children were born there. They were William Alfred Bethel born in 1889 and Harold J Bethel who was born in 1891. The rest of his children were born in Coleraine while he was working in Cavan. Kathleen

⁹⁴ Assaulting an Escort, *The Derry Journal*, 26 January 1885

⁹⁵ Derry Petty Sessions – Assaulting an Escort, *The Derry Journal*, 30 January 1885

Bethel was born at Coleraine on 10th August 1891, Mary Catherine Bethel was born the following year however died aged 2 on 22nd March 1894. Robert Ernest Bethel and Elizabeth (Lillie) Eveline Simpson Bethel were both born in Coleraine on 29th August 1893 when James was stationed at Arvagh County Cavan. The children were born at Hartford Place. Kathleen M Bethel was born on 19th November 1898 and finally John EC Bethel was born in 1902.

On Thursday 4th April 1895 James was transferred closer to home, this time to County Antrim. In October 1895 James was recorded as dealing with a theft in Ballymoney where a man described as a “tramp” named William Proctor was charged by James for stealing money from the bakery of Robert McKillen of Main Street, Ballymoney.⁹⁶

James was pensioned from the police on Thursday 8th July 1897. By the following year he was a grocer living at Margretta Terrace, Coleraine. Margretta Terrace is at on the Bushmills Road and the shop was at the junction of James Street. The shop may have been at 21 Bushmills Road. James retained the premises although he later moved to 3 Adelaide Avenue Coleraine which was a more exclusive part of the town which reflected his social status. James also owned a number of properties on Adelaide Avenue.

In 1910 and 1911 James was in civil court twice taking cases against a man named McAfee, “commercial traveller and manager,” in relation to money owed for goods supplied by James. In October 1910 the judge, Mr Justice Madden, was satisfied that McAfee had “honestly tried to pay his debts” and the case was dismissed.⁹⁷ In March 1911 James appealed the decision and sought the committal of McAfee “for failure to pay an instalment decree amounting to £2.” The case was that James had supplied goods to McAfee who formerly had a temperance hotel in Coleraine. McAfee had made frequent promises to pay but had failed to do so. McAfee had then given up the business

⁹⁶ Larceny in Ballymoney, *The Belfast News Letter*, 16 October 1895

⁹⁷ Action for Committal Order, *Belfast News Letter*, 28 October 1910

before James was able to secure a decree and that the goods had then been supplied to McAfee's wife Harriet. Samuel McAfee's defence was that the hotel business was wholly independent of his business as a traveller and had been conducted by his wife. Harriet in 1909 had found "it impossible to carry on the business owing to financial difficulties." His defence continued,

The furniture was sold with the exception of a billiard table and some other things that realised £23. His wife told him that £50 or £60 would clear off the debt. In 1909 he paid £202 to creditors. Afterwards he went to live in Portstewart and bills continued to come in. He sold the billiard table and some furniture and paid a claim from the bank. As a matter of fact there were still £115 of unpaid bills in connection with the hotel. His salary was £160 per year and this was required for the support of his wife and family, the payment of rent, insurance and interest to the bank secretary. He had seven children living and none of them earning. His employers had advanced him some of his salary to meet current expenses. It was impossible for him to pay the debt.

The judge upheld the appeal and "was certain defendant could pay £2 every three months if he liked."⁹⁸ From the 1911 census Samuel, Harriet and family had moved to Castleroe, where Samuel continued to work as a commercial traveller.

James expanded his involvement in local affairs by becoming a member of the Coleraine Board of Guardians in July 1916⁹⁹ and by 1918 was a member of Coleraine Urban District Council. James was a member of the Coleraine Miniature Rifle club from at least 1911.

In June 1914 James took part in a shooting competition at the rifle range at Coleraine Academical Institution. He was part of "Coleraine Town" team that competed and won against the 'A' and 'B' teams from

⁹⁸ Record Court – Appeals, *Derry Journal*, 20 March 1911

⁹⁹ Tyrone and Donegal News, *The Derry Journal*, 3 July 1916

the school. The Coleraine team were William J Given (architect, civil engineer and town surveyor), Robert F Steedman (connected to Coleraine Building Society and an egg and butter merchant), J McMullan, J Blair, William Wilton (watchmaker), Howard B Gribbon (linen manufacturer), Thomas G Lynd (as previously mentioned) and James Bethel. The 'A' team were; Thomas G Houston (principal), G Carson (may be Graham Carson son of grocers from Church Street), Samuel Willis (mathematics teacher), Samuel J Hunter (classics teacher), W Small, J McClatchie, Sergeant Smith, John Quigley (pupil from Park Co Londonderry).



Coleraine team as outlined: Back row, Robert Steedman, J Blair, J McMullan, William Wilton. Front row, Howard Gribbon, William Given, Thomas Lynd and James Bethel. Picture courtesy of Jane Gribbon

The Inst 'B' team were Torrens A McKeag (pupil from Drumcroon), William Robertson (English teacher), Robert Davison (pupil from Belfast), George Walker (pupil from Newtownards), Merle Kirke (pupil born in Singapore), Alex Schneider (pupil who was born in Russia), Frank Walker (pupil from Newtownards) and F Franklin. Margaret Houston, daughter of the principal provided the tea and the

prizes were distributed by Mrs Giles the wife of Rev WH Giles rector of Killowen.¹⁰⁰

Samuel Willis became a Captain in the Royal Irish Rifles (YCV) and served in the First World War. At Thiepval on 1st July 1916 he was believed to be captured. Despite a rescue attempt he was not recovered and was later declared dead. Alex Schneider also served and was a Second Lieutenant in the King's Own (Royal Lancashire Regiment). He died in service in 1921 in India with the 2nd battalion 21st Punjabi's. His family were living in Belfast, they had originally lived in Gilford Co Down but had emigrated to Russia in 1851.



Samuel J Hunter, Samuel Willis and Alex Schneider. Picture courtesy of Joe Cassells

James Bethel was also involved with the local bowling scene and was noted in 1920 playing along with D McKeary, J McCloskey and JA Love against a Ballymena team in a senior cup final¹⁰¹ and again in 1928. James was not the only member of his family active in the community, his daughter Kathleen (referred to as May) is noted on several occasions being involved in fund raising events for Coleraine Orange Hall and Lillie was a bellringer at St Patrick's as well as involved in

¹⁰⁰ Tournament in Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 16 June 1914

¹⁰¹ Bowling- Senior Cup-Ballymena Into Final, *Ballymena Observer*, 6 August 1920

singing in operettas.¹⁰² John (known as Jack) Bethel was a member of the Bann Rowing Club.

James died on Thursday 11th November 1938 at the home of his daughter Kathleen and son-in-law Ernest Victor Cochrane at 18 Dorchester Park, Belfast which is on the upper Malone Road. The executors of James' will were his brother-in-law James Hartford and Edward Walker master painter. His estate came to £1108 18 2d. James was subsequently laid to rest at Coleraine cemetery.

James Hartford was the head of JR Watt & Son coal merchants of Coleraine prior to his death in 1948, having taken over from Captain FH Watt JP on his passing. He was a well known figure in the Orange Order and within Unionist circles. Hartford had been the treasurer of the County Derry Grand Orange Lodge for 20 years and a representative of the Lodge on the Ulster Unionist Council. In addition Hartford was an honorary Deputy Master of the County Derry Grand Black Chapter. He was also a member of Coleraine Harbour Board and treasurer of St Patrick's Church.¹⁰³ Edward Walker was from Killowen Street and was the son of tailor James Walker. He and his brother Thomas worked as painter and decorators. Edward had premises on Bridge Street Coleraine trading as E Walker & Co. The firm carried out picture framing as well as painting and decorating. They traded by appointment to The Governor of Northern Ireland in 1934. Of interest when Hartford died Edward Walker was one of the executors of his estate of over £24,000.

In comparison when Ernest Cochrane died his estate was worth over £25,000. Ernest Cochrane, known as Jack, was a cycle agent, manufacturer and distributor with a shop at 75 Ann Street Belfast. Ernest had married James' daughter Kathleen. Ernest was the son of Sam Cochrane who was famed for his links to Ivy Cycles and had premises at 144 North Street and 283 Newtownards Road Belfast. The

¹⁰² Coleraine Operetta Class, *The Northern Whig*, 22 February 1913

¹⁰³ Mr James Hartford, Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 1 December 1948

shop at Ann Street opened in 1934 and at that time Cochrane's had branches at Portadown, Armagh, Newry and Dungannon.

~Constable Samuel John Kennedy 47163~

Samuel Kennedy was born in County Londonderry in approximately 1856 and may have come from the Coleraine area. Samuel joined the RIC on Tuesday 7th December 1875 having been recommended by Sub Inspector William Bingham Kelly who was stationed at Coleraine at that time and was living at Clifton Terrace. Samuel was given the number 47,163 and was initially posted to County Monaghan on 30th June 1876 and was noted in petty sessions records as being at Tydavnet in 1876, Monaghan town in 1878 and Glaslough in 1880. On 3rd August 1877 Samuel was admonished for some minor matter. Two years later on 11th August 1879 Samuel was fined 30s for another matter. Samuel was then transferred to County Donegal on 8th June 1881 where he was noted as serving at Creeslough in 1883.

On Friday 3rd August 1883 Samuel married Maggie Barry in Monaghan. As Donegal was not Maggie's native county there was no requirement for them to be moved however on 10th April 1884 Samuel was transferred to County Armagh. Their first child Annie Elizabeth Kennedy was born in Armagh on 4th March 1885. Samuel was then transferred twice in a short time going to County Meath on 9th June 1886 and then County Antrim on 10th October 1886. The first move may have been the result of a further fine of 40s on 24th May 1886. Whatever Samuel's reason for moving his family may not have went with him as his second daughter Eva was born in County Monaghan in 1887. In September of 1887 Samuel was fined, again, this time only 10s. By October 1890 the Kennedy's were together as the third daughter Olive Louisa Kennedy was born at Templepatrick on Friday 31st October.

Prior Samuel being pensioned from the police on Wednesday 1st April 1891 he managed to get fined one more time on 9th January 1891, this time for 10s. After leaving the police Samuel and his growing family moved around the country. Samuel initially collected his pension at Lisburn and his first son Albert Thomas Kennedy was born at Barrack Street Lisburn 25th November 1891. At this time Samuel was an

insurance agent. In 1892 Samuel claimed his pension in Belfast indicating a move. In 1893 his pension was collected at Antrim, Portadown and Strabane. The Kennedy's remained in Strabane until 1895 during which Samuel Kennedy junior was born on 8th May 1894 at Meetinghouse Street. Again Samuel was working as an insurance agent. Samuel then claimed his pension at Greenock Scotland in 1895 for a short period before claiming at Coleraine from Friday 5th July 1895.

It is possible that Samuel's family never left Ireland in this period as another son Hugh Ernest Kennedy was born at Pate's Lane Coleraine on 28th June 1895, however it is more likely that the 5th July payment was the date claimed there rather than the date returned. Samuel's stay in Coleraine was to be short and eventful. On 13th April 1896 Samuel was charged by District Inspector Rogers and Head Constable George Wheatly (as previously mentioned) "with having stolen a quantity of lager beer" from his employer Thomas Mackey wine merchant of the Diamond, Coleraine. Samuel admitted his guilt in court "and said it was his first act of dishonesty and appealed for leniency on account of his seven little ones and, to save his pension." He was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.¹⁰⁴ As a direct consequence of this conviction Samuel's pension entitlement was withdrawn meaning that there was no income for his family.

Following his release from incarceration Samuel seems to have left Coleraine for Belfast. A daughter Gertrude Kennedy was born in Belfast on 4th July 1899 and a son Robert (Bertie) Kennedy was born on 29th July 1900. In the 1901 census the Kennedy's were living at McDowell's Row in Belfast and Samuel was working as a general labourer. Annie and Eva were flax spinners. By 1911 the family were living at 54 Moyola Street, Belfast and Samuel had been promoted to foreman labourer. Annie and Olive were ornamenters, Eva was a sample maker, Albert was a clerk and Samuel and Hugh were linen lappers. Clearly the linen industry was a large provider of employment

¹⁰⁴ Larceny at Coleraine, *The Belfast News Letter*, 14 April 1896

and the multiple incomes to the household replaced Samuel's former pension.

In 1927 Samuel and Maggie were living at 42 Kansas Avenue Belfast. They were listed as sailing to Canada, however their names were scored out on the manifest. The following year they appear to have made the journey and sailed to Quebec. Their address and the fact that they were able to sail to Canada showed an improvement in their fortunes. This good luck was not to last as in July 1936 Samuel was killed following a car crash. Samuel was the front seat passenger in a car driven by his son Albert and his wife, one of his daughter and two granddaughters were in the rear of the car travelling on the Upper Newtownards Road in the direction of the city centre. The car skidded and collided with another car travelling in the opposite direction, driven by James Graham of 104 Belmont Road. Samuel "sustained injuries to the shoulder and left leg and suffered considerably from shock" and Maggie "received a cut head and an injury to the hip." Albert received a cut to his head and one of the girls was slightly injured. Samuel was taken to the Royal Victoria Hospital where he died after an hour.¹⁰⁵ The Coroner returned a verdict of accidental death and the cause of death was due to shock. "I am satisfied," he added "that this accident was caused by a skid and that it was unavoidable. There is no evidence whatsoever of negligence on the part of any person."¹⁰⁶ At his time of death Samuel had been living at 38 Madison Avenue, Belfast and Albert at 49 Kansas Avenue.

¹⁰⁵ Belfast Motor Fatality, *The Northern Whig*, 16 July 1936

¹⁰⁶ Belfast Road Fatality – Inquest on 89 Year Old Victim of Motor Skid, *The Belfast News Letter*, 23 July 1936

~Sergeant James McLarnon 43361~

James McLarnon (also spelled

and McLernon) was born in County Antrim in November 1857. James was recommended to the RIC by Sub Inspector Bernard George Shaw who was working in the Ballymena area at the time James joined the RIC on Friday 7th September 1877. James had worked as a shoemaker before he joined. Bernard Shaw had previously been stationed at Coleraine and was a member of the Chemical Agricultural Society of Ulster.

James was given the registered number 43,361 and was sent to County Monaghan on Saturday 27th July 1878. James was noted as being stationed at Ballytrain in 1878 and Ballybay in 1880. The following year James was transferred to County Donegal on 8th June. He remained in Donegal for eight years. In 1886 he was stationed at Aughkeely at the same time as fellow Coleraine pensioner Michael Love. While in Donegal James married Donegal girl Mary Starrett on Monday 19th September 1887. Unusually James did not get transferred following his marriage.

The transfer came on 19th January 1889 shortly before the birth of James and Mary's first child Ethel. James was transferred to County Londonderry however Ethel was born in County Donegal as were John Starrett McLarnon around 1892 and Jennie W McLarnon around 1893. Valuation records shows that James lived at a house at Beresford Place Coleraine from 1892. It is of course entirely possible that Mary went home to Donegal to have the two children, or it may be the case that they came along when James had suitable accommodation arranged. The first child to be born to James and Mary at Coleraine was Violet Mary McLarnon on 28th September 1894 at their home at Beresford Place. The McLarnon's remained at this address until 1897, the year when James Ernest McLarnon was born.

On Saturday 1st July 1899 James was promoted to Acting Sergeant, a rank that he held when the 1901 census was taken and the family were living at Hamilton Terrace, Coleraine. Hamilton Terrace is on Captain Street Lower just above the old court house. The McLarnon's had probably moved to this address after Beresford Place and remained there until around 1903.

In July 1900 James was assaulted by Hugh McNaught of Killowen Street, Coleraine. A complaint had reached the barracks at Abbey Street that McNaught "was acting in a disorderly manner at the Cottage Hospital." James went across the bridge to the hospital, which was not far from his own home, and arrested McNaught. Hugh "resisted violently assaulting the constable with his head and feet and also injured his arm with his teeth." James required assistance from "several civilians" and conveyed McNaught to the lock-up. It was noted that McNaught had just "returned after doing four months for a similar offence" and was given six months imprisonment with hard labour.¹⁰⁷

James was promoted to Sergeant on 1st November 1901. By February 1902 James was serving in the Moneymore area where he remained until the end of his service on Monday 6th December 1902. James, now only aged 44, had already begun to plan for his life after the RIC. In November 1902 he had applied for the position of master of Coleraine workhouse. The job was advertised on 28th October with the closing date for applications being 8th November.¹⁰⁸ On Saturday 8th November the Board of Guardians sat to consider the applications to replace the outgoing master James Norris. Norris had only tendered his resignation on grounds of poor health on Saturday 25th October. He had held the position since January 1899. (Norris was aged around 33 and married the next year and had moved to Belfast by 1911. His marriage may have been the real reason for quitting.) There were five

¹⁰⁷ Assaulting the Police in Coleraine, *The Derry Journal*, 27 July 1900

¹⁰⁸ Coleraine Union Master of Workhouse Wanted, *The Belfast News Letter*, 28 October 1902

applications for the vacancy “Arthur Mullen, Coleraine; James McLernon, Moneymore, William James McKay, Killowen Street; George Nicholl Garvagh and James McFall, Boghill.” James McLarnon was “elected by a large majority.” The position held a salary of £50 plus rations, apartments, fuel and light.¹⁰⁹ It is significant that James was aware of the position and able to get his application in within two weeks. It may suggest that he was perhaps hand picked for the job. In addition he applied for the position around six weeks before he was due to retire and as such was unable to take up the position immediately.

On 19th November 1904 James appeared before the Board of Guardians reporting that he had secured the services of a woman named Annie Torrens “for the fever hospital at a salary of 10s per week, as directed by the Board.”¹¹⁰ On 3rd December James again appeared before the Board and informed them that Annie had left.¹¹¹ Annie, in May 1905, later unsuccessfully applied for the position of attendant in the infirmary.¹¹² In September 1905 Annie applied for the position of wardmaid at the fever hospital and again was unsuccessful.¹¹³ The 1911 census shows an Annie Torrens, shirtmaker, living with her father at Ferryquay Street Coleraine. Obviously her aspirations to join the caring profession had failed.

James and family moved to a house on Abbey Street Coleraine around 1907. The property was owned by the Trustees of the Presbyterian Meeting House. The house was listed as being beside the Baptist Chapel in the 1911 census return, although the valuation record would indicate that it was beside the Presbyterian church. The valuation records show that this property was the manse and that the McLarnon’s remained there until around 1920. However in 1912 James Ernest McLarnon, aged approximately 15, signed the Ulster Covenant,

¹⁰⁹ Board of Guardians – Coleraine, *The Belfast News Letter*, 10 November 1902

¹¹⁰ Board of Guardians – Coleraine, *The Belfast News Letter*, 21 November 1904

¹¹¹ Board of Guardians – Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 5 December 1904

¹¹² Board of Guardians – Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 8 May 1905

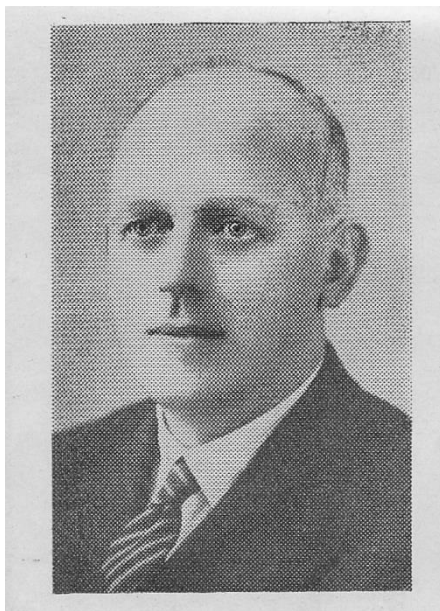
¹¹³ Board of Guardians – Coleraine, *The Northern Whig*, 25 December 1905

and gave his address as Arbana Terrace, Coleraine which is at the start of the Mountsandel Road. His sister Jeannie signed the women's covenant giving the address as 7 Ardbana Terrace and their mother Mary signed as well. What is noteworthy is that all three signatories spell their surname *MacLarnon*, which is how the family (other than James senior) have their names recorded in the 1911 census. James senior in 1901 and 1911 however uses *McLarnon*. The valuation records also showed James McLarnon at Arbana Terrace until 1920. It is possible that the Ardbana property was tied to the workhouse job.

The family then moved to 2 Bellevue Terrace, Coleraine, a short distance from 7 Ardbana Terrace. This was to be James' final move as he died on Friday 26th October 1923. An obituary for James appeared in the *Northern Whig* which stated that he died suddenly. It noted that he had "efficiently discharged the duties of Workhouse Master, being frequently complimented by the Local Government Board inspectors and the Guardians on his management of the institution." Mary had died before him and he was survived by his five children. Ethel was a teacher at the Honourable the Irish Society's Girl's School and Jeannie and Violet ran a stationers and newsagents shop on Bridge Street which moved to premises on Church Street in 1924. The sign above the shop door used the spelling *MacLarnon*.

John McLarnon was described as having held a commission in the Ulster Division, with the Royal Irish Rifles, during the First World War (although he was invalided out of service) and at the time of James' death was secretary to the committee of the County Derry War Pensions area. He went on to manage the Coleraine Savings Bank and lived at Hillcrest, Mountsandel Road. John had married Mary Alice Neill daughter of grocer James Neill of Union Street in September 1923 at Ballywillan Presbyterian church Portrush. His brother James officiated. John's occupation at the time of his marriage was listed as District Officer and military pensioner, his address was Bellevue Coleraine. On his marriage certificate John signed his name *MacLarnon*. John was later Chairman of the Coleraine District Junior Football Alliance. John was noted in his obituary as having been a

“Bann senior oarsman” with the Bann Rowing Club and having been goalkeeper for Coleraine Alexandra Football Club.¹¹⁴



John S MacLarnon

James Ernest was then the Reverend JE McLarnon/MacLarnon of Ahoghill Presbyterian Church.¹¹⁵ James was ordained minister to Ahoghill (Trinity) on 9th April 1923 and resigned on 2nd September 1930 on becoming an agent of the Sabbath School Society. He then became Minister at Corboy on 3rd May 1934. He remained in Corboy for thirty eight years and retired on 31st May, 1972. James then went to live in England where he died on 7th May 1976.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Mr JS MacLarnon, *The Belfast News Letter*, 4 November 1950

¹¹⁵ Mr James M'Larnon, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 27th October 1923

¹¹⁶ www.roscommontownheritage.com

~Sergeant Thomas Henry Hughes 44283~

Thomas Henry Hughes was born in County Armagh in July 1860. Thomas was recommended to the RIC by Sub Inspector Thomas Hayes. Hayes was the Sub Inspector at Portadown at the time Thomas signed up for the police on 6th February 1879 indicating that Thomas was from north Armagh. Thomas was given the service number 44,283 and was posted to the Reserve from Wednesday 23rd July 1879. He was subsequently posted to County Westmeath on 31st August 1879 and was noted as serving in Mullingar in 1884.

In October of 1884 Thomas was transferred to Belfast. In October 1886 Thomas gave evidence to a commission in relation to his duty at Home Rule riots in Belfast. The rioting appears to have been around the Crumlin Road and Shankill areas. Part of his evidence was that he had questioned Head Constable Tilson on whether he was going to “allow the men to be killed” to which he was told by Tilson to “be quiet and cool.”¹¹⁷ This may have been the same Tilson who was later Head Constable at Coleraine and as previously mentioned had attended the fire in 1896 along with Michael Love, John Crowley and John Douglas. At the beginning of July 1897 Thomas was promoted to Acting Sergeant and in December of that year may have been attached to the York Road station. On the first day of September 1899 Thomas was promoted to Sergeant and by the time of 1901 census he was stationed at Glengall Street Belfast. Thomas’ service ended on 20th November 1906.

Thomas claimed his pension at Coleraine from the outset and so must have had some reason to come to the town as he had no obvious service or family connections. There may be a connection in his employment as in 1908 at the time of his marriage he is listed as a rate collector’s assistant and was living at Bushtown. This was only two years after the death of former constable William Armstrong who was employed by Robert Sinclair, a rate collector, linked to the Bushtown

¹¹⁷ The Belfast Riots Commission, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 16 October 1886

area. George Tanner, also a former policeman in the employ of Sinclair, was still living in the same area. Thomas' bride was Mary Jennings who was an American. Mary was the daughter of John Jennings an architect and at the time of her marriage was living at Dundarg/Dunderg. This was also the home area of Robert Sinclair. Thomas and Mary married on Tuesday 21st January 1908 at Coleraine First Presbyterian Church.

In 1910 Thomas was mentioned in a newspaper article as being a member of the North Derry Unionist Association. He was granted membership on Wednesday 30th March 1910 along with a number of other men. The Rev Giles, as previously mentioned, spoke at the meeting and was noted as being one of the committee.¹¹⁸ Thomas was to sign the Ulster Covenant in September 1912 at Kilrea.

Thomas and Mary had the majority of their children between 1909 and 1915. John Jennings Hughes was born 27th January 1909, Robert George Hughes born 18th May 1910, Mary Hughes born 18th November 1911, Wilbur Gerald Hughes born 16th February 1914 and Ronald Kenneth Hughes born 1st August 1915. Sadly Mary died aged just under three months on 17th February 1912. Wilbur was the first child to be born in Coleraine town as the family had moved to Captain Street Lower around 1913 and were living at Hamilton Terrace by 1916. Thomas and Mary's final child Victor Hughes was born 14th November 1924. He was later killed in action with the RAF over Germany on 22nd November 1943.

Thomas died on 17th May 1942 at "Glenara" Portrush Road Coleraine. This may have been Glenara Cottage. Thomas was buried at Englishtown Presbyterian Church which was the same church as William Armstrong was buried at. Mary died later on 28th November 1959.

¹¹⁸ Unionist Association – North Derry, *The Northern Whig*, 1 April 1910

~Constable James Hewitt 44530~

James Hewitt was born in County Cavan in approximately 1858. He joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Friday 23rd May 1879 receiving the number 44,530. James was sent to County Limerick following the completion of his training and was stationed at Grange in 1880. Four years later he was transferred on 16th March from Bruff County Limerick to Nobber County Meath.

On Tuesday 29th September 1885 James was transferred to County Antrim. James was stationed at Ballycastle when he married Hester Sharpe on Saturday 5th May 1888 at Ramoan Presbyterian Church Ballycastle. Hester was the daughter of William Sharpe a farmer and was from Drumawillan. The marriage resulted in James' transfer to Belfast on 5th June where he remained for five years.

On Saturday 1st April 1893 James was transferred to County Londonderry. By 16th August he was recorded as serving at Castlerock at the time of the birth of his daughter Jane Hewitt. Another daughter Esther/Hester Hewitt was born at Castlerock on 4th May 1896, a son James on 15th July 1900, daughter Annie Elizabeth on 18th June 1904 and daughter Mabel on 28th March 1907. The next child born was Stella Hewitt on 3rd August 1908. Stella was born at McDonald's Terrace (Mount Street), Coleraine. James' only son James died at Castlerock on 7th January 1906.

In September 1906 James gave evidence at the inquest of the death of former Sergeant William Henry Douglas who had drowned in the sea at Castlerock. James had heard William shouting but thought he had been shouting to another man who had been entering the water at the time. A short time later James realised that there was a problem and summoned help from a nearby boat crew whose vessel was on the shore. James then "divested himself of his clothes and entered the water." The boat reached William first however he was face down and

efforts to resuscitate him failed.¹¹⁹ William Douglas was a native of County Londonderry and was believed to have come from Ardinarriff, Boveva, Dungiven.

James retired on 22nd August 1907 and as mentioned moved to Coleraine from Castlerock. On 4th October 1907 James was appointed summons server by Coleraine court in place of John Redmond from Killowen Street who had died. James' address was given as Mountsandel, which would tie in with McDonald's Terrace. At the time of his appointment James was the caretaker of the Belfast Bank in Coleraine. By 1911 James and family were living on the Bushmills Road and James was working as a rent agent as well a summons server. Like Thomas Hughes, James signed the Ulster Covenant at Coleraine town hall in September 1912.

Earlier in the same month James was appointed temporary lock-keeper at Castleroe by the trustees of the Lower Bann Navigation.¹²⁰ The position then became permanent in January 1913.¹²¹ The land around the lock was cultivated by James for fruit and vegetables and for grazing goats.¹²²

In February 1928, aged 70, James was struck by a cyclist while walking on the Kilrea Road and was knocked unconscious and taken to the Cottage Hospital, Coleraine. His address was given as Castleroe, however this may have been linked to his lock-keeping duties.¹²³ In 1930 James lost the land after the Bann Drainage Scheme was brought into effect.¹²⁴

James continued with his employment as a process/summons server until his death on 16th February 1936 when he was 78. At this time his

¹¹⁹ Bathing Fatality at Castlerock, *The Belfast News Letter*, 4 September 1906

¹²⁰ Lower Bann Navigation, *The Derry Journal*, 2 September 1912

¹²¹ River Bann Navigation, *The Larne Times*, 18 January 1913

¹²² Gamble, R, 2016, *The Killowen Series 3:Industrial Life*, Great Britain, Lulu.com, page 26

¹²³ Cycling Accident at Coleraine, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 14 February 1928

¹²⁴ *Ibid*

occupation was defined as “civil bill officer.” James died at Mountsandel.

~Sergeant Archibald “Archy” Huston 47201~

Archibald Huston was born in County Armagh around 1861 and joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Friday 13th May 1881. Archibald was recommended to the force by Head Constable (later District Inspector) John Cosgrove who was serving in Armagh city at the time. Archibald was the cousin of Thomas Houston also of the RIC (number 51,645). Thomas later worked for WG Baird printing company in Belfast.

Archibald was given the registered number 47,201 and was posted to County Sligo from 16th October 1881. He served in Sligo until 9th July 1887 when he was transferred to Belfast for two months returning on 11th September 1887. The following year on Thursday 19th July 1888 Archibald married Annie Craig a native of Sligo in the area of Boyle Roscommon. This of course resulted in Archibald being transferred. On 1st November they moved to County Roscommon where their first child Charles William Archibald Huston was born around 1893. Archibald was then successful in promotion to Acting Sergeant on Saturday 1st August 1896 which resulted in his transfer to County Monaghan at the beginning of November 1896. Archibald and Annie’s second child Maud F Huston was born in County Roscommon prior to this transfer.

Their third child, and second son, George Edward Huston, was born at or near Clones County Monaghan around 1898. By the beginning of the next year Archibald was promoted to Sergeant. The following month Maud and Charles started to attend Drum School Monaghan. Charles was noted as having previously been at Ballybay. Drum was where Archibald was noted as being Sergeant in the 1901 census. Emily M Huston was then born around 1900.

Archibald Huston was pensioned from the RIC, aged 45, on Wednesday 16th January 1907 receiving an annual pension of £48 7s 2d. He initially collected his pension at Clones County Monaghan however he began to claim it at Coleraine from 15th May 1907. This move was probably due to Archibald securing employment as the Inspector for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children at Coleraine. The family moved to a house on Abbey Street. The post of Inspector entailed bringing cases of cruelty and neglect to court. Huston appeared regularly in the papers and in the courts bringing cases of abuse against the parents of the unfortunate children. In July 1907 he brought James Mearns of Killowen Street, Coleraine, to court for ill-treatment and neglect. Mearns was convicted and sentenced to one month's imprisonment.¹²⁵ On this occasion Dan MacLaughlin represented the NSPCC. MacLaughlin was to feature again in the Huston's life as he later took on Archibald's son George as an apprentice. George Huston was to sign up with the 10th Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers in September 1914 and was killed in action aged 19 on 25th October 1916 in Belgium.

Huston continued in his role as NSPCC Inspector until the beginning of 1927 when he was appointed as the probation officer for the Dervock district,¹²⁶ although this later expanded to North Derry and Antrim. Archibald appears to have excelled at this job matching his previous efforts with the NSPCC. His conduct drew comment from TG Houston, then Chairman of the petty sessions at Coleraine and headmaster of Coleraine Academical Institution, in April 1928. Houston wrote a letter to the *Northern Whig* which described Archibald as the "police court missionary," and detailed a report of some of the cases that Archibald had dealt with. The report was commissioned by the magistrates and was written by Archibald and read as follows:

¹²⁵ Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Derry Journal*, 29 July 1907

¹²⁶ Probation Officer for Dervock, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 2 February 1927

Dear Sir, Re Probation of Offenders Acts 1907-1928, I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter on this date and in compliance :-

I was appointed probation officer on 21st January 1927. From 21st January 1927 till 19th January 1928 I paid 162 visits of supervision. The total number of supervision visits of April 1928, I have paid 84 visits of supervision. The total number of supervision visits paid from my appointment up till 21st April 1928 was 246.

First Case – Offender aged 17 years. He, parents, and 7 younger sisters occupied a poor class of one apartment house, very congested. The father addicted to drink. Since my second visit on 14th February 1927 the father has taken no intoxicating drink and has moved long since to a suitable house and because of our action the probationer (who was idle) commenced work, and has made good and done well.

Second Case – Offender aged 12 years. His education was being neglected and he was in danger of getting into further trouble because of running about the streets. Has attended school regularly since probation commenced and done well. He lives with his grand parents.

Third Case – Offender aged 22 years. Had wife and child was half time idle. Because of our actions he enlisted into the Irish Guards, made a good allotment to his wife, which is continued, and all going on well.

Fourth Case – Offender aged 22, reared by a foster mother. Because of how troublesome he had been previously and how well he had done from supervision commenced, his foster mother wished supervision to be continued after it had been completed satisfactorily.

Fifth Case – Man aged 50, widower, addicted to drink, and having a family of young children. Drink was the cause of his downfall. Because of our action this probationer has kept sober, done well, attended well to his work, and made satisfactory provision for his children.

Sixth Case – [Mr Huston's sixth case was that of an offender of 19 years of age who had been badly conducted from his infancy. To this unfortunate youth Mr Huston showed the greatest kindness providing him at his own expense with clothing and sometimes with small sums of money doing his utmost to awaken the youth's conscience. To Mr Huston's greatest respect his efforts proved unavailing. The lad committed a further offence, for which he was tried and sentenced to three years' detention in Belfast Borstal Institution. The case was probably one of mental deficiency – TGH]

Seventh Case – Offender aged 19 years, an apprentice painter. Lost his employment over the offence he had committed and alleged impertinence. Because of a letter of recommendation from the probation officer to the a master painter this boy was taken into work, has made good, and is doing well.

Eight Case – Offender aged 14 ½ years, running about the streets. Because of our action he was admitted into a foundry and millwright's place as an apprentice and is doing well.

Ninth Case – Offender aged 17 years had left his apprenticeship. Because of our action he was taken back and is doing well.

Tenth Case – Offender aged 14 ½ years, running about the streets. Because of our action his father took an interest in this boy whom he took into his own trade and he subsequently done well.

Eleventh Case – Offender aged 13 years, running about the streets, not attending school. Because of our action he commenced attending school and has done well.

Twelfth Case – Female offender aged 40. Because of our action this woman who had committed a serious assault and had been otherwise troublesome has given no trouble and has done very well and improved her way of going on very much.

Thirteenth Case – Offender aged 13 years with the least education, running about and doing as he wished. Because of our action he attended school regularly since supervision commenced, and has made great progress at school, far exceeding our anticipations.

Fourteenth Case – Offender aged 20 years, mason's labourer, and of unsettled disposition. Because of our action he has attended well to his work, and is doing well.

Fifteenth Case – Female aged 26 years, not of good repute, and unsettled in every respect. Because of our action she has kept regular hours, looked after her child, is behaving and doing fairly well.

Sixteenth Case – Female aged 22 years of doubtful repute and unemployed, of good appearance and under the influence of a married woman whose husband is in America, and who brought this child with her as a decoy to dances and night socials. Because of our action this young girl and this undesirable woman were separated and because of our advice instructions and help this young girl and her sister who had also fallen into serious trouble are both in Canada. Their parents expressed grateful thanks for our action and also wrote us a letter of thanks for our kindness and all we had done in this case.

Seventeenth Case – Offender aged 17 years unemployed running about and doing bad acts. Because of our action he got employment, and is attending well to his work, has made good, and is keeping his poor parents, who have expressed their thanks for the action taken.

Eighteenth Case – Offender 16 years, whose upbringing was bad, unemployed and badly disposed. Had for some time been giving trouble in many ways to farmers and committing injury and pilfering. Because of the action taken the bad acts and pilfering in the locality ceased. The probationer is now doing casual work and behaving fairly well and 1st May he will have regular employment. The parents have expressed thanks several times.

Nineteenth Case – Offender aged 14 ½ years, unemployed, running about, and committing mischievous acts. Parents very poor. Because of our action this boy took up regular work suitable to his age, is earning regular wages, is doing remarkably well, and is now helping his poor parents to provide for younger children. These parents also expressed thanks for the action taken. This boy got employment which the boy in case 6 declined to accept.¹²⁷

At the time of his report Archibald's address was Bann View Villas, Coleraine. Archibald was to die at that address on Wednesday 21st April 1937 still working as a probation officer. Archibald was replaced by John Leonard of Abbey Street Coleraine. Leonard went on to be an ARP warden during WW2 and was a Captain in the Boys Brigade. John had been a Sergeant in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers during WW1 and had been wounded in 1918.

Huston's son Charles was present at the death and his address was given as Cregagh House, Knockbreda Road, Belfast. Charles was to

¹²⁷ A Year's Probation Work – "Police Court Missionary" in Ulster, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 30 April 1928

become Canon Huston and was described as “a man of stern quality, a man who lived by precept, with utter obedience to the rules and procedures of the Church” although also “in an era when most Protestant churches remained closed on days like Good Friday and Christmas, his observance of the saints’ days and holy days was controversial.” Charles suffered from arthritis but he showed determination as in 1953 when he was 61 and in great pain he climbed Slieve Donard “simply to prove to himself that it could be done.”¹²⁸

¹²⁸ <http://www.stfinnians.org/our-history/>

~Constable Thomas Heaslip 50309~

Thomas Heaslip was from County Cavan and was born around 1865 a son of Isaac and Margaret Heaslip. Thomas joined the RIC on 19th September 1882 having been recommended by Sub Inspector Lowndes who was stationed at Ballyduff at that time. Thomas was assigned the number 50,309 and was sent to serve in County Kerry on Tuesday 31st July 1883.

Thomas was transferred to Bangor County Down on Wednesday 31st August 1887. On 19th January 1889 Thomas was assaulted along with a colleague John Edmundson by John Whitla and John Lightbody of Ballyvernett. Thomas gave evidence at court in February that he and Edmundson had went to a property on Church Street in Bangor having had a report the previous night of an assault carried out by Whitla and Lightbody. The house they went to was of “ill-fame.” On being arrested Whitla struck Edmundson and knocked him against a table, he then attempted to bite Thomas, and kicked him so “severely upon the calf of his leg as to temporarily displace or ‘ruffle’ the flesh.” They took Whitla to the barracks in handcuffs and then returned for Lightbody, who for some reason had remained there. Lightbody also struggled and had to “be put down and handcuffed.” Lightbody “kicked so violently that Constable Edmundson had to proceed to the railway station for a handcart to wheel him down to the barracks in.”¹²⁹

While stationed in Bangor on 16th February 1891 married Mary McConnell at St Comgall’s Church of Ireland Bangor. Mary was the daughter of sea captain John McConnell. As was the practice Thomas had to be transferred which was noted in the newspaper. The report stated that Thomas was to be transferred to Templepatrick and that while in Bangor he had “made many friends and his removal is regretted by a large circle of acquaintances.”¹³⁰ Thomas was officially

¹²⁹ Bangor Petty Sessions, *The Belfast News Letter*, 7 February 1889

¹³⁰ Constabulary Intelligence, *The Belfast News Letter*, 8 April 1891

transferred from 10th April 1891. Thomas may have been in Templepatrick around the same time as Samuel Kennedy as previously mentioned.

At Templepatrick Thomas and Mary had their first child Florence MJ Heaslip on Thursday 23rd February 1893. Sadly on 8th May 1893 Mary died at a consumption hospital at 5 Fisherwick Place, Belfast. It seems that Florence then went to live with Thomas' mother Margaret at Moher County Cavan near Ballyjamesduff as she was listed there in the 1901 census and Thomas was at Coleraine. By 1911 Florence was a domestic servant working for Baron Kilmaine at Nealepark County Mayo.

On 26th July 1900 Thomas married Margaret Jane Bovill from Kilvaleese County Antrim at St Tida's/Grange Church Ballyscullion near Bellaghy County Londonderry. Margaret was the daughter of farmer James Bovill. At this time Thomas address was given as Millquarter near Toome County Antrim. At the beginning of September 1900 Thomas was again transferred due to his marriage and was sent to Coleraine. By the census of 1901 Thomas and Margaret were living at a house on Railway Road Coleraine between Alexander's drapery shop and George Glenn's carpentry shop on Bankhead Terrace.

At Coleraine Thomas was involved in the usual work of the constabulary. In December 1901 he again found himself the victim of another assault this time by Robert Stirling of Kirkistown. Stirling was found drunk outside Coleraine railway station by Thomas and was told to go home. Stirling offered to "box" Thomas and was duly arrested. On the way to the barracks, in the area opposite Taylor's Mill on Railway Road Stirling kicked Thomas on the shins and bit his finger. A constable who was assisting Thomas was also kicked twice and his finger was bitten.¹³¹

¹³¹ Alleged Assault on Coleraine Policemen, *The Northern Whig*, 25 December 1901

In November 1904 Thomas and Sergeant (later Head Constable) McCorry investigated a burglary at the stores of HT Barrie on Union Street where “a considerable quantity of oats was stolen therefrom.” Thomas and McCorry were able to determine that,

the burglars had clambered over a wall at the rere, and thereby gained an entrance to the stores. Other marks showed that a sack or sacks of corn had been lowered from the top storey of the building to the ground and then taken over the wall and as these sacks are from 14 to 16 stones in weight it shows that more than one person was engaged in the burglary.¹³²

By the time of this burglary investigation Thomas and Margaret had two children Margaret born in 1901 and Thomas who was born on 1st April 1904. It may be commented on that the naming of their first children was hardly original however their third child Neville Chamberlain Heaslip, who was born at Railway Road Coleraine on Friday 15th September 1905, is possibly a different matter. Neville appears to have been named for the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary Neville Chamberlain whose greatest claim to fame was as the inventor of snooker.

On the day young Neville was born a story appeared in the *Derry Journal* where Thomas was a witness. A “well known character” and “frequent offender” Lizzie Watkins was in court charged with drunkenness and disorderly conduct on Saturday 9th September 1905 and the same offences on Tuesday 12th September as well as vagrancy also on 12th September 1905. Again Sergeant McCorry was involved. He gave evidence that Lizzie had been pestering people at the train station and that she had to be taken to the barracks in a wheelbarrow given her state. Lizzie seems like quite a tragic person with issues with alcohol, however it was noted that the master of the workhouse (not

¹³² Alleged Burglary in Coleraine, *The Belfast News Letter*, 18 November 1904

named but known to be James McLarnon) had commented that while she was there she “did more work than a dozen women.”¹³³

Prior to Thomas’ retirement at the beginning of May 1908 he dealt with one case that was particularly difficult. On 4th May 1907 a widow named Matilda Cameron aged around 70 of Long Commons was “burned to death” at her home. Some children who were playing in the area had smelled the burning and went to the house and looked inside and “saw the body of the poor woman lying in flames by the fireside.” The screams of the children were heard by Thomas and Sergeant McCorry “who forced the door of the dwelling-house and found the body of a woman partly over the fire, with clothes and flesh both in flames. Part of the body was charred to a cinder and both arms were almost completely burned away.” The report stated that Matilda was undergoing treatment for heart disease and that at the time of her death she was preparing a meal and suffered weakness and fallen onto the fire.¹³⁴ Also in 1907 Thomas gave evidence in a case involving Kate McLaughlin of Stable Lane, Coleraine, which Archibald Huston and the NSPCC had brought to court. In the same year on 24th October Thomas and Margaret had a further daughter Lizzie.

By the time of, or shortly after, his retirement in 1908 Thomas moved to Circular Road Coleraine and set up business as a “car owner.” In August 1908 Thomas had a bad accident at his home where it was reported that he had been coming down a ladder from the hayloft “with a bundle of hay under his arm when the ladder slipped” and he fell heavily. “The right ankle joint was knocked out and the leg badly staved.”¹³⁵ Thomas appears to have controlled a business listed as a “fancy warehouse” on Abbey Street as well as living at Circular Road. In September 1912 Thomas signed the Ulster Covenant at Coleraine town hall.

¹³³ A Lively Coleraine Prisoner, *The Derry Journal*, 15 September 1905

¹³⁴ Shocking Occurrence at Coleraine, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 9 May 1907

¹³⁵ Accident at Coleraine, *The Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, 7 August 1908

Thomas died on Tuesday 6th April 1926 and was buried at Coleraine cemetery. Two years later his daughter Margaret married Joseph Fulton, fifth son of JA Fulton of Mount Street Coleraine. At this time Thomas' widow was listed as living at Abbey Street.¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Irish Police News, *The Weekly Irish Times*, 20 October 1928

~Head Constable John Michael Culkin 51733~

John Michael Culkin was born in Co Mayo in 1864. John was 5'11 when he joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Wednesday 28th April 1886. His registered number was 51,733. John was recommended by Head Constable Peter Cox. Cox retired in 1886 and claimed his pension at Swinford Co Mayo. This may indicate that John was from this area.

John completed his training and was posted to County Donegal on Sunday 22nd August 1886. He was promoted to Acting Sergeant on 1st January 1900 and at the end of the following January he married Sarah Curran a native of County Donegal. What is unusual is that John was not transferred from the county as would be expected following his marriage. At the time of 1901 census John and Sarah were living in a house on Main Street Letterkenny. The census records show that this was both a shop and a dwelling. On Thursday 1st May 1902 John was then promoted to Sergeant. 1902 was also the year of the birth of John and Sarah's son Patrick Joseph Culkin on 11th January.

The following year in July 1903 John was part of a tug-of-war team competing at Letterkenny show. The RIC team was as follows; William Lewis, John Fallon, Thomas Hill, John M Culkin, James Martin, John Mooney, R Ryan, Charles Sharkey, James McGowan and Patrick Agnew. In the first heat John's team defeated the Literary Institute and received a bye to the final where they beat the Asylum staff.¹³⁷ In 1910 John was noted as being the treasurer of the RIC Sports Committee. An article in the *Derry Journal* noted

A meeting of the civilian members of the committee was held subsequently, when the following resolution was unanimously passed – "That we desire to place on record our appreciation of the excellent services rendered by Sergeant J M Culkin and Constable Michael Andrews, hon treasurer and hon secretary respectively, in connection with the RIC sports

¹³⁷ Letterkenny Shows, *The Donegal Independent*, 24 July 1903

recently held at Letterkenny. We are of opinion that the very marked success of the sports is in a great measure due to the untiring energy of the hon treasurer and hon secretary and we are also of opinion that the meeting has tended in no small degree to bring the members of the RIC and the public generally into closer touch and has fostered a feeling of mutual appreciation which tends to the peace and welfare of the community.¹³⁸

By 1911 the Culkins were living at a house at Leck Terrace, Letterkenny. As well as Patrick the following children were present, John Michael Culkin aged 8; Ernest Edward Culkin aged 6; Albert James Culkin aged 4 and Leo Alphonsus Culkin aged 2. One child had died between 1902 and 1911. All the children were born in Co Donegal.

On 18th February 1916 John was granted a favourable record, received £5 and was mentioned in the *Larne Times* for good police duty.¹³⁹ The previous month John was reported in the *Donegal Independent* as the organiser of the RIC Cycling Club ball at Letterkenny which was to be held on 13th February. Again this was another event that brought in the community. Any proceeds of the ball were to provide for comforts for the Irish Guards.¹⁴⁰

On 1st October 1917 John was promoted to Head Constable and was transferred to Coleraine on 1st November. A newspaper article at the time stated that the Letterkenny magistrates “while regretting the departure of Sergt Culkin RIC who had 25 years’ service in the town, congratulated him on his promotion to Head-Constable rank.”¹⁴¹

Apart from a brief period of temporary duty at Magherafelt in June 1920 John spent the rest of his service in Coleraine. On 20th August 1920 John received a further favourable record for saving a girl named

¹³⁸ Meeting of Letterkenny RIC Sports Committee, *The Derry Journal*, 22nd July 1910

¹³⁹ RIC Intelligence, *The Larne Times*, 11 March 1916

¹⁴⁰ RIC Cycling Club Ball, *The Donegal Independent*, 27 January 1917

¹⁴¹ RIC Sergeant Promoted, *The Weekly Freeman*, 27 October 1917

Annie Mooney aged 10 from drowning in the Bann on regatta day. Coleraine Urban District Council under DH Christie directed that a letter was to be written to John to express “the council’s appreciation of his prompt and plucky action.”¹⁴² Census records would indicate that Annie was the daughter of John Mooney a tailor from Shuttle Hill, Coleraine.

In April 1922 John and a detail of men represented the local RIC at the funeral of local Unionist politician HT Barrie.¹⁴³ John’s service with the RIC ended with disbandment on 31st May 1922 and he then transferred to the Royal Ulster Constabulary. He received £236 13s 4d annual pension. At the time of disbandment he had served 36 years and 1 month with the RIC. On 16th January 1924 there was a dance at Coleraine Town Hall organised by the RUC with over 500 guests attending at which the Belfast RUC band played. Unsurprisingly John was the vice-president of the committee.¹⁴⁴

John retired around June 1924 having served 38 years as a police man. This led to tributes being paid at Coleraine court;

Speaking at Coleraine Petty Sessions yesterday Mr TG Houston MA said they had learned with regret of the impending retirement of Head Constable JM Culkin, Coleraine, and he described him as one of the finest surviving members of that grand old force the Royal Irish Constabulary. Mr Daniel McLaughlin and Mr HR Jones RM also paid tribute to the efficiency and popularity of Head Constable Culkin.¹⁴⁵

Following retirement John continued to participate in local events. In July 1927 he acted as one of the judges at Coleraine Gun Club’s second

¹⁴² Head Constable’s Plucky Act, *The Belfast News Letter*, 4 August 1920

¹⁴³ The Late Right Hon HT Barrie – Impressive Funeral at Coleraine, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 21 April 1922

¹⁴⁴ Royal Ulster Constabulary, *The Weekly Irish Times*, 26 January 1924

¹⁴⁵ Ulster, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 7 June 1924

annual clay bird shooting.¹⁴⁶ In 1928 John acquired the bar which became known as Culkins on Captain Street Coleraine. The property was owned at that time by the Bruce family of Downhill.

Although John had a long and at times distinguished police service he was not above the law;

JM Culkin, publican, Waterside, was summoned for a breach of the licensing laws on Sunday 23rd June, and Wm Vaulls, Killowen Street, for being on the premises during prohibited hours. The defence was that Vaulls, a gardener, called with flowers for Mrs Culkin. He was only on the premises two minutes and the police found no signs of drunkenness in the bar. Culkin was fined 40s and costs, without record, and Vaulls 10s and costs.¹⁴⁷

In addition to his bar John was still involved in organising events as he had done in RIC/RUC. A newspaper article in September 1929 noted that there were to be horse races at Somerset Coleraine on Thursday 26th September 1929, “four open events, good stakes.” Further information was available from JM Culkin or William Edmiston, Honorary Secretaries.

John died at his home at Captain Street Coleraine on 2nd April 1932. The funeral was held on Monday 4th April and he was buried at Coleraine cemetery.

John’s son Patrick joined the RIC on 21st October 1920 having been recommended by District Inspector John McNally of Coleraine RIC. McNally had only arrived in Coleraine on 1st July 1920 and had moved to Downpatrick by 1st November 1920, not really enough time to get to know anyone. Patrick’s registered number was 74,680. At the time of joining Patrick had been working as a clerk.

¹⁴⁶ Royal Ulster Constabulary, *The Weekly Irish Times*, 23 July 1927

¹⁴⁷ Coleraine Court Cases, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 20 July 1929

Patrick was posted to Wexford on 1st February 1921. Given that he had been training for a few months indicates that Patrick was a regular constable rather than part of the temporary constable programme (commonly known as the black and tans). The tans had a shorter period between joining and being posted largely due to their military background.

Patrick's service with the RIC lasted until disbandment with his service ending on 3rd April 1922. Patrick received an annual pension of £50 14s and he subsequently transferred to the Royal Ulster Constabulary on 13th June 1922 like his father. Following a short service with the RUC Patrick took over his father's bar. This may have been around the time of John's death in 1932. Patrick died in December 1935 having fallen on ice at Portstewart. An inquest was held and was reported as follows;

The first Ulster victim of the severe weather conditions is Patrick J Culkin (33) of Waterside Coleraine. At the inquest at Portstewart yesterday evidence was given by Bandsman G Pratto at present on leave, that while walking near Port-na-Happie bathing place Portstewart, yesterday he discovered Culkin's fully dressed body lying on the rocks near the water's edge. The clothes were wet and the tide was low. There was a lot of ice at the place and it was possible that Culkin had slipped and fallen on his back and got frozen.

Dr JA Kennedy said there was a deep gash on the forehead. In his opinion death was due to shock and exposure resulting from a fall. He did not think Culkin had been drowned.

Robert Stirling, hackney carriage owner, said he had driven Culkin from Coleraine on Sunday afternoon. He said Culkin was in the habit of walking at Portstewart on Sunday afternoons.

A verdict of accidental death in accordance with the medical evidence was returned.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ First Ulster Victim – Body on the Rocks, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 24 December 1935. Correct spelling of the location is Port-na-Happle

~Sergeant Robert Crawford 53588~

Robert Crawford was born on 8th November 1866 in County Fermanagh. Robert was the son of labourer James Crawford and Mary Cranston of Crocknakreevy. Robert joined the RIC on Friday 25th January 1889 receiving the registered number 53,588.

Robert served in County Leitrim from 17th August 1889 until he was transferred to the Reserve in Belfast on 21st November 1890. Robert was in Belfast just under two years when he was transferred to County Tyrone on 1st July 1892. While in Tyrone he met and married Matilda Mitchell on 16th June 1896. They married at the Presbyterian Church at Seskinore with the wedding witnessed by two members of Matilda's family. Robert was stationed at Omagh at the time.

Robert was then transferred to County Donegal from 10th July 1896 and was stationed at Ballyshannon. While in Ballyshannon Robert was twice recognised for his work, the first time on 8th February 1897 and then on 17th September 1901. In this period Matilda and Robert had two children, John James Crawford born around 1898 and Matilda Jane Crawford born around 1899. Robert then found himself transferred to County Armagh on 14th December 1901, it is not clear if his family came with him. However on 22nd September 1902 Matilda died at her family home at Raveagh County Tyrone of intestinal difficulties leaving Robert with the two young children.

Robert was then transferred back to County Donegal from 25th March 1903, probably to be closer to his children. Robert re-married on 29th December 1903 while stationed at Milford. Robert married widow Fanny Jane Glenn (nee Stewart) who had been the wife of Moses Glenn a publican from Milford. Following the marriage Robert was transferred to County Mayo on 1st February 1904.

Robert was transferred to County Londonderry on 16th August 1904. Fanny and Robert had their first child together, Henry Stewart Crawford, on 21st January 1906. At this time they were living at Main

Street Limavady. Their next son, Robert George Richardson Crawford, was born at 11 McDonald's Terrace Coleraine (Mount Street) on 24th August 1909. This was around the same time as James Hewitt and family were on the same street. At this stage Robert and family had been in Coleraine for some time as a newspaper article from February 1909 records Constable Crawford being assaulted in Coleraine by James McGrath a "jarvey" from Fahan Street Derry.¹⁴⁹

Robert was promoted to Acting Sergeant on 1st May 1910 and by the following year the family were living a short distance from the savings bank and barracks on Abbey Street in the town. Along with Robert's previous two children John and Matilda, and then Henry and Robert, three other children were living with them from Fanny's first marriage; Moses Knox Glenn born around 1897, Rachel M Glenn born around 1899 and Elizabeth S Glenn born 22nd November 1900.

Further promotion came again on 1st March 1912 when Robert became a full Sergeant. In April of the following year Robert was involved in a good piece of detective work along with Portrush police which was reported in the *Derry Journal* as follows;

At a Special Court held in Portrush – before Captain FH Watt JP – a man named David Bradley, described as an itinerant dealer, or ragman, was charged by Sergeant Fraser with having stolen certain articles of silver and electro-plate, the property of Miss E Harvey, Portrush, from a store at the rear of the Parochial House. It was stated in evidence that on the morning of the 26th inst Sergeant Crawford of the Coleraine Constabulary, ascertained that a young woman named Lizzie Quinn who is alleged to have been living with Bradley pledged an electro-plated teapot in Mr Thompson's pawn office in Coleraine. He questioned Quinn about it, and was told by her that some other articles of stolen property were in a

¹⁴⁹ Assaulting a Constable at Coleraine, *The Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, 25 February 1909

cotter house occupied by Bradley at Craigahullier near Portrush. Sergeant Crawford traced Bradley in Coleraine on the 26th inst and arrested him. On going to the house, which is about five miles from Coleraine the sergeant found a cruit, a lamp and a candlestick, which Quinn said had been stolen by Bradley. He went on to Portrush and gave the articles to Sergeant Fraser, who is in charge of the constabulary there. They found the name "E. Harvey" was scratched on some of the articles and they further ascertained that these had been stored by Miss Harvey in an out house adjoining the Parochial House since she resigned her position as teacher in the national schools there. After hearing the deposition of Miss Harvey and the police sergeants Captain Watt remanded Bradley in custody to the Portrush Petty Sessions.¹⁵⁰

Robert received his pension from the RIC in November 1915 as he was medically unfit to continue to serve. Robert remained in the Coleraine area and died on 31st October 1942 at the Courthouse Coleraine which was where he had been living, his step-daughter Rachel was present. Robert was buried at Coleraine cemetery. Robert may have taken over the position of keeper from Thomas Carson, however there is no information to support this direct transfer. However in an article from 1927 a George Crawford is listed as being of the Courthouse Coleraine. This was probably Robert George Crawford which would explain the connection. Fanny died four years after Robert also at the same address. In her death notice it stated that she had family in Omagh, Glasgow, Coleraine and Canada.

¹⁵⁰ Possession of Stolen Property – Itinerant Dealer in Trouble at Portrush, *The Derry Journal*, 30 April 1913

~Sergeant James Robert Clendinning (Glendinning) 53273~

James Robert Clendinning (or Glendinning) was born around 1867 in County Cavan, probably from the Corfree area. James was the son of James who was a farmer. James was given the number 53,273 when he joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Tuesday 14th August 1888. Following training on 11th May 1889 James was transferred to County Kilkenny where he served until 28th December 1894 when he was transferred to County Fermanagh.

James remained in Fermanagh for five and a half years until he was sent to County Londonderry at the beginning of June 1900. In the 1901 census James was recorded as being a constable at the Bishop Street barracks in Londonderry city. On 1st July 1909 James was made an Acting Sergeant however he remained in Londonderry for some time until he was transferred to the Bellarena station. In the nominal roll James was stationed at Victoria barracks in January 1910, he also had been a Sergeant at Lecky Road after it had opened. James was moved to Bellarena at some stage before 12th April 1911 when he married Margaret Elizabeth Thompson (nee Creaney) from County Louth. Margaret was from Sunbeam Terrace Londonderry, and was the daughter of George Creaney, farmer. George was a former land steward. They married at St Columb's Cathedral and a colleague William James Wishart (61,306) stood as a witness.

While at Bellarena James was promoted to Sergeant on 1st August 1911. James had taken over from Sergeant Alexander Forbes who will be examined later. Life in Bellarena differed greatly to that of the city which was reflected in the cases that James brought to court. In March 1913 James had charged William Welch, a chimney sweep of Limavady, with "the larceny of three ferrets, the property of Colonel RG Heygate, DSO, Bellarena." The offence was deemed so serious that Welch was remanded until the next sitting of the petty sessions!¹⁵¹ In June of the same year James was involved in what the *Belfast News Letter*

¹⁵¹ Alleged Larceny of Ferrets at Limavady, *The Belfast News Letter*, 1 March 1913

described as an “interesting case” in which John Conn of Benone was summoned by James for “having allowed two head of cattle to wander on the public road.” The legal argument proceeded as stated;

Complainant said the only excuse the defendant offered was that there was no fence between his field and the road. Mr Horner said in the section of the Summary Jurisdiction Act under which the summons was brought the words used were “turned loose” on the public road. Could the sergeant say if the defendant turned the cattle on to the road?

The sergeant said he did not believe he did, but at any event he allowed them to wander. Mr Horner said the word “wander” did not appear in the particular section at all. In another section it was stated that a person was liable to prosecution for erecting a fence within thirty yards of the public road. This matter had been engaging the attention of rural councils for a considerable time.

Complainant said the road at Benone was very much traversed by motorists, and it was very dangerous to have cattle at large. The Chairman said he thought the county council should have some sort of fence put up. At any rate, the magistrates dismissed the case.

Complainant - On what grounds?

The chairman said on the grounds that no legitimate offence had been permitted by the defendant. The magistrates however thought the sergeant was quite justified in bringing the case.¹⁵²

James was pensioned from the police on 1st May 1914 and went to live in Hawkin Street Londonderry. James and Margaret remained there

¹⁵² Cattle on the Public Road – Interesting Case at Limavady, *The Belfast News Letter*, 11 June 1913

until 1926 when they moved to a farm at Ballysally outside Coleraine. James' life came to an unfortunate end at Ballysally on Friday 9th July 1926. Margaret was out shopping and returned home and missing James from the house discovered him "hanging from a beam on an outhouse of his farm." Margaret summoned help from two men who were passing at the time and they cut him down, however it was too late.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Tragedy of RIC Ex Sergeant, *Weekly Telegraph*, 10 July 1926

~Constable Samuel Robert Powell 73466~

According to Samuel Robert's Powell's RIC service record he was born in County Londonderry on 26th March 1895, however his official birth certificate recorded the date exactly two years later. Samuel was born at New Row West Coleraine and was the son of RIC man Samuel R Powell 53,127 and Ellen Edgar. Ellen was the daughter of Hugh and Elizabeth Edgar of New Row West.

Samuel senior was born in County Wicklow around 1869. He joined the RIC on 8th June 1888 and served in County Londonderry between February 1889 and August 1895. He later married Ellen on 23rd July 1896 who was probably pregnant with Samuel junior. Samuel was pensioned from the RIC on 17th November 1906 and collected his pension at Coleraine even though he had been last posted to Roscommon. He remained in the Coleraine area until 1909 when he had moved to Swatragh. By 1912 the family had moved to England and Samuel collected his pension at Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

On 23rd September 1914, aged 17, Samuel junior signed up to the 4th North Howitzer Brigade Royal Field Artillery (territorial) as a gunner. At the time of his attestation he was working for the Bauxite Refining Company Hebburn as an aluminium maker and lived at 17 Glen Street New Town, Hebburn-on-Tyne Durham. Samuel stated on his forms that he was 19 rather than 17, either through ignorance of his actual year of birth, or to seem older in order to sign up. The former would explain the inaccuracy on his RIC paperwork. During the war Samuel was sent to France from April to May 1915 when he was wounded by a gunshot wound to his left thigh. After a period of recuperation he was sent back to France in October 1915 until March 1916 when he was again wounded this time another gunshot wound to the right thigh. He was then sent to India from September 1917 until the following September. In November 1917 he was posted to the Armoured Column at Amritsar. Samuel ended up being transferred to the reserve for shipbuilding. On 20th September 1918 he was pensioned and was classified as 20% disabled.

Two years later on 28th September 1920 James joined the RIC at Liverpool, his occupation was given as pressman and ex-soldier. His record showed that he had married Lotta Ellamnea Rhamn from

County Durham at South Shields on 28th July 1919. James was sent to County Roscommon on 16th October 1920, this quick move indicates that he was part of the temporary constable (Black and Tan) programme which was taken up by so many ex-servicemen who were needed by the government to support the regular RIC. Samuel's RIC career was to end abruptly on 10th December 1920 when he resigned due to "family trouble." In 1929 Samuel and Lotta were still in the Hebburn area at 49 Campbell Street but by 1939 they were living in Greenwich London. Samuel remained in Greenwich until his death in 1980. Samuel senior died in South Shields in 1929.

Castlerock

~Constable John Bell 37509~

John Bell was born in County Antrim in approximately 1845. He was the son of John Bell who was a farmer. John joined the RIC on Wednesday 8th March 1871 and was given the number 37,509. John had been recommended by Sub Inspector Mason Alcock who served in the Ballymoney area from 1859 to 1870 and then in the Ballymena area until 1876. It is likely that John was from the Ballymoney area. After training John was sent to serve in County Londonderry on Thursday 26th October 1871.

In May 1872 John was noted as serving in the town of Coleraine in what even today seems quite a shocking case of apparent abuse of power;

At the Coleraine Petty Sessions on Friday, when the magistrates presiding were BM Giveen, Esq., (chairman), Robert Given, Esq., Daniel Taylor Esq., HJ Robinson Esq., and James Orr Esq., the facts of a case in which it appeared a desperate encounter had occurred between the police and the people was heard. The parties charged were James Hinds who was said to have assaulted the policemen named John Sherman and John Bell, and Thomas Valley, Michael Doherty, George Corscadden and William Maguire, who were summoned for interfering with the constables in the discharge of their duty and attempting to rescue the prisoner Hinds. Mr TG Carson appeared for the defendants, Hinds and Corscadden, now up for training as militiamen, being absent in Derry. The complainants stated that Hinds had been arrested for being drunk and that upon hands being laid upon him to take him to the lock up he rebelled, threw himself upon the street and kicked his captors so severely that they were compelled to use great exertion to put him upon a hand cart and convey him back to the barrack. While engaged with the prisoner the other defendants did all they could, by inciting the mob and pushing the constables, to

effect the rescue of Hinds. In cross-examination by Mr Carson both the constables admitted that they had retained their prisoner by pressing upon him with their knees. Several most respectable residents were called and examined for the defence. Mr AD Williamson, hardware merchant, Bridge Street, said Hinds was walking down the street quietly and that he said to the policemen when they proceeded to arrest him, "I am going home boys," smiling agreeably at the time. However each took a hold of him and on his resisting they "put him down," and gave him such abuse as only a brute might be exposed to. In fact, he believed that what the crowd shouted, when they called out "Murder," was true – the clothes being torn from his body, and blood issuing from his mouth. Mr WH McMurdy gave corroborating testimony. The Bench, much to the astonishment of the people who heard the evidence, did not give much weight to the evidence of these gentlemen; and though a gentleman in court made a strong appeal in favour of Valley, who is a corporal in the Londonderry Light Infantry Militia, for a remission of punishment, the defendants were sentenced to one month's imprisonment each.¹

Sherman, whom John was working with, had roughly the same amount of service as John. Sherman had only been posted to County Londonderry on 28th September 1871. It is difficult to surmise what caused this behaviour, whether it was what they believed was acceptable or maybe one leading the other one on. Either way neither appeared to have been disciplined for their actions. Sherman left the police in 1874 to "emigrate." Thomas Valley, as mentioned, was no stranger to the court in Coleraine. In March 1859 Valley and others were in court charged by Head Constable Robert Jenkins with assisting, aiding and abetting an assault at Churchlands, Killowen.² In August 1863 he was charged by Robert Jenkins, Town Officer (see

¹ The Police and the People, *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 21 May 1872

² Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 19 March 1859

Coleraine chapter) for fighting on the street.³ The following month Jenkins had Thomas and another man Samuel McKillip charged with “creating a disturbance in Coleraine, on the night of Saturday, the 5th September, by whistling and singing at the pitch of their unmusical voices.” Both were fined 5s and costs.⁴ However in June 1867 Thomas had saved a woman Margaret Hyndman who had attempted suicide, for his actions Thomas was awarded a bronze medal by the Royal Humane Society.⁵ Clearly this fact was missed in his defence. Hinds, the alleged originator of all the trouble, had also previously appeared in court for assault in 1869.⁶ George Corscadden had only been in court six months previously for an allegation of sheep stealing, along with his mother Matilda, at Churchlands. The Corscaddens were noted as being butchers and from Killowen. They were found guilty based on how the skins had been removed from the animals and were sentenced to three months hard labour.⁷

On Thursday 6th May 1880 John Bell married Annie Semple second daughter of farmer James Semple from Glassakeeran at Faughanvale Presbyterian Church, Eglinton. At this time John was stationed at Eglinton RIC station. As a result he was then transferred to County Cavan from Tuesday 15th June 1880. The first station that he was noted from the petty sessions records was Crossdoney RIC in July 1882. On Wednesday 29th June 1887 he received a favourable record. John appears to have remained at Crossdoney, certainly in Cavan, until he was pensioned on Friday 1st May 1896.

John initially claimed his pension at Limavady but subsequently changed to Coleraine from Saturday 27th October 1900. By the following year John and Annie were living at Freehall Dunlop, Castlerock where they remained for a number of years in a property owned by the Bruce family of nearby Downhill. John signed the Ulster

³ Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 29 August 1863

⁴ The Whistling Thief, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 26 September 1863

⁵ A Gift for Saving Life, *The Belfast Morning News*, 7 October 1867

⁶ Fighting on the Street, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 16 October 1869

⁷ Coleraine Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 16 December 1871

Covenant in 1912 at Articlave. There was no mention of John and Annie having any children. Neither were mentioned as having any employment in the census records and may have been living on John's pension of £42 2s 4d per annum.

John died on Friday 24th August 1923 at 'The Cottages Castlerock', which may have been on Main Street. He was buried at 1st Dunboe Presbyterian graveyard. John died from apoplexy. Present at his death was Sergeant Thomas David Sturgeon. Thomas Sturgeon had been promoted to Sergeant at the time of the disbandment of the Royal Irish Constabulary at the end of May 1922 and was sent to Castlerock,⁸ he later transferred to Limavady.

⁸ Royal Ulster Constabulary, *The Belfast News Letter*, 1 June 1922

~Constable Martin Rooney 43081~

Martin Rooney was born around 1857 in County Sligo. He joined the RIC on Monday 9th July 1877 and given the registered number 43,081. Martin was recommended to the force by Sub Inspector Michael Stephen Regan who had been in the County from December 1875. Martin was initially posted to County Tyrone on Thursday 28th February 1878 then to County Londonderry on Wednesday 1st October 1879 .

In June 1880 Martin was noted as serving in Limavady where he was attacked along with a colleague whilst on duty,

Joseph Kennedy, who it appears is at present in the Londonderry Militia, was charged with being drunk and disorderly on the public street on the 5th June, and assaulting Sub-Constables John Fuller and Martin Rooney in the execution of their duty. The defendant did not appear, and service of the summons having been proved by Constable Pugh, Derry, Mr Proctor said he appeared for the defendant, and on his behalf submitted to the charge. He had been instructed that his client was drunk, and that his brother had got beaten by a number of parties, which caused the defendant to be a little excited, and when he was arrested he refused to go to the barrack with the constables, and of course, being drunk, he resisted all he could. He could only ask that their Worships would deal leniently with him as possible. The Chairman said – There are three cases against the defendant, and we will fine him 5s in each case, including costs, and I think he is being very leniently dealt with.⁹

In March 1882 Martin was a witness at an alleged manslaughter of a man called John Dillon which had occurred on the Curragh Road Dungiven. He describes finding the body of the deceased after it was

⁹ Limavady Petty Sessions, *The Derry Journal*, 18 June 1880

pointed out to him by a witness, “the body was about sixteen yards from the road. The body was lying on the face, partly on the right side. The left ear appeared to have been eaten off, and there was a recent cut on the right ear. There was a wound on the forehead.” The defendant Bernard McLaughlin was found not guilty. It could be assumed that Martin was, at this stage, posted to Dungiven.¹⁰

By 1901 Martin was stationed at Castlerock RIC station and was still unmarried. He was working alongside, amongst others, Constable James Hewitt (see Coleraine chapter). He retired from the force the following year receiving his pension from Thursday 21st August 1902. He then moved to the north Belfast area for a short while before returning to the Coleraine area by Saturday 30th May 1903.

Martin married Elena McGuinness (also recorded as Lily McGuinness/McGinnis) also from Sligo in the last quarter of 1905 in Dublin South. Martin was 24 years her senior. By the following year they had returned to Castlerock where their daughter Mary Eva was born on Sunday 25th November 1906. At this time Martin’s occupation was listed as a barman. In 1907 Martin was recorded as living in the townland of Bogtown which would have been not far from the RIC barracks. In 1909 he was still working as a barman at the time of his son Norman Thomas’ birth on Monday 13th August 1909. The following year Martin was the greens keeper at Castlerock Golf Club living at Railway Cottage. The 1911 census record for 1911 stated that Martin was retired and still living in Castlerock. The house was a 2nd class private dwelling with a shed and a turf house outside. The valuation records show that at this time Martin owned the property and by 1915 had rented it to Constable John F McIlroy a native of Cavan. He also appears to have owned the adjacent property. On Tuesday 26th March 1912 Martin and Lily had a second daughter Kathleen Norah Rooney who was born at Castlerock. At this time Martin had no occupation listed and was noted as being a “retired policeman.” A woman named

¹⁰ City and County of Londonderry – Crown Court – Charge of Manslaughter, *The Belfast Morning News*, 28 March 1882

Mary Platt was present at all three births and may have been the local unofficial midwife. The 1911 census shows that Mary was an unmarried “washerwoman” from Articlave.

In 1915 Martin claimed his pension at Londonderry and the following year in Belfast. The Rooney family then returned to the Coleraine area in 1918 where they lived at Brookley Villas in Castlerock. By 1925 Martin was leasing property at Brookley again to John McIlroy. John had retired in 1922.

~Constable William Hall 50568~

William Hall was born around 1857 in County Tyrone son of James Hall a miller, and possibly a soldier. He was recommended to the RIC by Sub Inspector William Bingham Kelly who was serving in Omagh at this time. Hall joined on Tuesday 17th October 1882 having previously served as a soldier. William was posted to Belfast on Thursday 14th June 1883. While serving in Belfast he received a caution on 13th August 1891. A short time after he was transferred to County Louth on Tuesday 1st September 1891. While in County Louth he was stationed at Bridge Street Dundalk in October 1891 from petty sessions records. William then transferred back to Belfast on Saturday 12th August 1893

Prior to his move to Dundalk William married Mary Anne Jackson who was from Lancashire. They were married on Saturday 18th July 1891 at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast. William's address at this stage was the constabulary barracks at Mountpottinger, in east Belfast and Mary Anne was living at 40 Hillman Street in the north of the city and was a 22 year old dressmaker. Mary Anne was the daughter of Ezekiel Jackson a butcher. Ezekiel lived or had premises at 99 Castlereagh Street, Belfast. Witnesses were George and Annie Hall.

Mary Anne died of phthisis on Friday 2nd September 1892 at 36 Rathmore Street, east Belfast. Her father Ezekiel was present at her death.

On Thursday 5th May 1898 William received an award from the Royal Humane Society

At the time of the census in 1901 William is listed as a widower at Leopold Street Belfast which was off the Crumlin Road in the north of the city. However on Wednesday 18th September 1901 William married Mary Ellen McMordie daughter of Samuel McMordie a farmer from County Armagh. At the time of their marriage Mary was living in Belfast. The witnesses were Alexander Hall and Sarah Jane McMordie.

They were married at Fortwilliam Park Presbyterian Church in Belfast. Mary's family were living at Silvio Street in the Shankill area of Belfast. Mary was a linen winder and Sarah was a linen weaver.

William and Mary had two children by 1911, Ann Victoria Hall born on Wednesday 30th July 1902 at 23 Ashley Street, Ballysillan (north Belfast) and Sarah Jane Hall born on 5th July 1904 at 251 Cambrai Street Belfast. 251 Cambrai Street is at the junction of the Shankill Road close to Mary's family. However by 1911 Mary was living with her two brothers Robert and James, her sister Sarah and a cousin along with her two children at a house at Ainsworth Avenue which is directly across the Shankill Road from Cambrai Street.

William at this stage was retired from the RIC having been pensioned on Sunday 1st May 1910 and finishing his service at Brown Square off the lower Shankill Road. At the time of the census return Mary and the girls are living at Ainsworth Avenue in the west of Belfast, William was living at Willowfield Street in the east of the city. He is the only recorded occupant and is still listed as married. What is noteworthy is that Mary was recorded as being Methodist and William as belonging to the Church of Ireland.

William did not come to the Coleraine until Friday 28th December 1917. Prior to this he had claimed his pension at Downpatrick, Newtownards, Belfast, back to Newtownards and then Banbridge by March 1916. By 1932 living William was living at Freehall Castlerock.

~Sergeant James Dinsmore 53202~

James Dinsmore was born in County Donegal around 1867 and was the son of farmer Alexander Dinsmore. James was probably from Muntermellan where Alexander was listed as being a farmer in the 1901 census. James joined the RIC on Tuesday 10th July 1888 having been recommended by District Inspector Robert Ievers Sullivan MA LLB. At the time of James' joining Sullivan was the District Inspector based at Dunfanaghy from January 1884 until February 1887. James was given the registered number 53,202.

Dinsmore was posted to County Clare from Friday 15th March 1889. Court records show that he was stationed at Ennis in the period he was in the county. On Tuesday 10th November 1896 James was transferred to Londonderry city. In 1901 he was stationed at Waterside Barracks and in the 1911 census at Victoria barracks on the Strand Road.

James received a number of awards from the Royal Humane Society all while serving in Londonderry city. In November 1899 James carried out some deed which "gallantly saved the life of the man in question" for which he received a vellum parchment certificate from the Royal Humane Society and £2. James felt that he was "only doing his duty in making every effort to save the life of a fellow man in danger." ¹¹ Two years later in August 1901 James rescued a man named William Duckett of 2 Dark Lane in the city from the River Foyle. Duckett had just returned from South Africa, presumably from the Boer conflict. Duckett "having had a quarrel with his wife in a fit of remorse... rushed to the Quay opposite Lane's coal stores at the Waterside and jumped into the river which is about twenty feet deep at the place." Two people at the scene jumped into the river to help Mr Duckett but he refused their assistance, he in fact threatened to drown them if they came near him. Duckett who was "becoming very exhausted"

¹¹ A Constable's Bravery, *The Derry Journal*, 29 November 1901

when James, along with Sergeant Boyle and Constable Donaghy who were from Leitrim, who had been on duty on Duke Street arrived,

Seeing that Duckett would not allow the civilians to help him Constable Dinsmore without divesting himself of any clothing except his tunic, jumped into the water, and succeeded in keeping the drowning man afloat until Sergeant Boyle and Constable Donaghy who had secured a lifebuoy threw it to the men in the water and had both the would be suicide and his rescuers safely pulled ashore.

James then took Duckett before the magistrates who remanded him. The press remarked that

great praise is due to the rescuers on the occasion, and especially to Constable Dinsmore as but for his plucky conduct there is no doubt Duckett would have been drowned as he was sinking the second time when Dinsmore seized him and held him up.¹²

On the next occasion in November 1903, when James was a Detective at Victoria barracks, he saved a young man named Quinn from drowning. Quinn had fallen into the river accidentally when the Glasgow steamer was leaving. It was commented on that “there was a strong flood tide running at the time, and the suction caused by the steamer increased the difficulty of making the rescue.” A life buoy was thrown in by spectators. On this occasion James was presented with a bronze medal along with the certificate.¹³ He also received £1. In April 1905 James was awarded a first class “favourable record for efficient police duties” along with £2 by the RIC Reward Board.¹⁴ Along with his heroics James was also noted for his sporting prowess. In May 1905 he came first in a two mile bicycle handicap “won by a street 5 min 48 3-

¹² Gallant Rescue from Drowning, *The Derry Journal*, 14 August 1901

¹³ A Derry Policeman's Bravery, *The Belfast News Letter*, 11 December 1903

¹⁴ Favourable Police Record, *The Derry Journal*, 10 April 1905

5th secs” at a RIC sporting event held at the Brandywell stadium.¹⁵ James was also involved in sports outside of the RIC. In a report in August 1910 it was noted that at the Dunfanaghy Regatta in County Donegal Alexander Dinsmore and Sergeant Dinsmore of “Hornhead” came second in the four oared curragh race. On the same day he won a cycling race beating Constable Brogan of Creeslough. It was noted that at this time he was at Victoria Barracks.¹⁶

James had been a Detective from late 1901 and on Sunday 1st December 1907 James was promoted to the rank of Acting Sergeant. The following announcement was made in the newspaper;

The many friends of Detective-Constable James Dinsmore, Londonderry City, will be glad to hear that he has been promoted to the rank of Acting-Sergeant. He is eleven years in the city, to which he came from Co Clare, and about six years ago was selected for detective duty, in which capacity he has displayed conspicuous ability in the handling of many difficult cases, for which he has been rewarded by a first-class favourable record, and several local records. Of splendid physique, he is a noted athlete and swimmer and has on three occasions been instrumental in saving life from drowning, for which he has been awarded three certificates and a medal by the Royal Humane Society. He is also the holder of the King’s and Queen’s medal, and on the occasion of the funeral of Queen Victoria, was one of the few members of the force selected to represent the RIC at the ceremony. Of a courteous and obliging disposition, he is extremely popular with all classes of the citizens, who are extremely pleased to learn of his advancement.¹⁷

The following year on Monday 6th July he married Catherine McCaine originally from County Tyrone. At the time of his wedding James’

¹⁵ Derry Constabulary Sports, *The Belfast News Letter*, 27 May 1905

¹⁶ Dunfanaghy Regatta and Sports, *The Derry Journal*, 24 August 1910

¹⁷ The Royal Irish Constabulary, *The Weekly Irish News*, 21 December 1907

address was 139 University Avenue Belfast and Catherine was from Rathfriland Co Down. Catherine was the daughter of farmer John McCaine. There is no explanation for why James was in Belfast, although this may have been the home of a family member or friend rather than using the barracks address.

On Sunday 1st August 1909 James was promoted to full sergeant. His daughter Violet Elizabeth Sadie Dinsmore was born almost three months later on Saturday 30th October. At this time the family were living at 2 Northland Villas, Argyle Terrace, Londonderry. James was also linked to number 44 Governor Road Londonderry and is listed there in the 1911 census. His wife Catherine is listed as the immediate lessor in the Valuation records. In the nominal roll for January 1911 James was recorded as being a sergeant at Victoria barracks.

James retired from the police on Saturday 30th May 1914. An article in the *Derry Journal* earlier that week once again reflected how well James was thought of and what his plans were;

It will be learned with much regret all over Derry that Sergeant James Dinsmore, of Bishop Street Station, is about to sever his connection with the RIC, having been elected a short time ago to the stewardship of Castlerock Golf Club. Mr Dinsmore, though having served 26 years in the RIC, is particularly youthful looking, and one of the best looking men in the RIC, together with being an athlete of no mean ability. In the earlier part of his service he was stationed in county Clare, from whence he was transferred to Derry about 16 years ago. During many years in Derry he was attached to the Detective Branch, where he rendered valuable services and recently Sergeant in charge of Bishop Street Barracks. It may appear strange to man that a policeman 26 years in the Force has never made an enemy. Well this can be truly said regarding Mr Dinsmore as by his kind and genial disposition he won for himself the esteem and good wishes of all classes and creeds with whom he came in contact. Presentations are

on foot both by his comrades in the RIC and in civilian circles. While regretting the departure of Mr and Mrs Dinsmore from the city it is the earnest wish of their hosts of friends that they may enjoy many happy years in their new home at beautiful Castlerock.¹⁸

A number of months later there was a presentation held at the City Hotel to “do honour to ex-Sergeant James Dinsmore on the occasion of his retirement from the Royal Irish Constabulary.” All sections of the community were reported to have been represented and James and Catherine were given a handsome illuminated address and a purse of sovereigns and a beautiful gold watch.

The following is a record of the speeches made:

The chair was taken by Mr JP Thompson JP who said that in honouring Mr Dinsmore they honoured themselves (applause). He had known Mr Dinsmore for the past eighteen years and had the pleasure of meeting him in his official capacity on many occasions when he (the chairman) was chief magistrate of the city. He had ever found Mr Dinsmore a man of sterling character and exceptional ability, a man who in the performance of his important duties never forgot to temper justice with mercy. (Applause). From many in the district of which Mr Dinsmore had charge he had heard nothing but praise for the way in which he discharged his onerous duties. He was, indeed, beloved by the people. It was a pleasure to them to know that they were not met for the purpose of saying good-bye to Mr Dinsmore, who, on his retirement from an honourable force, had taken up an important appointment in county Derry not far from the city. They wished that evening to present to Mr and Mrs Dinsmore a little token of their appreciation and friendship. The address and other gifts had been subscribed to by all

¹⁸ Sergeant Dinsmore, RIC, *The Derry Journal*, 25 May 1914

creeds and classes in the city. (Applause). They wished Mr and Mrs Dinsmore God speed and every happiness in their new sphere of usefulness. (Applause).

Mr Fulton secretary of the Presentation Committee read letters of apology for absence from among others the Mayor (Alderman Sir William McCleary, JP DL) and Mr C O'Neill DL. Mr James Barr, treasurer of the committee the read the address which was as follows :-

Address and Presentation to Mr James Dinsmore Ex-Sergeant RIC

Dear Mr Dinsmore – Your recent decision to retire from the Royal Irish Constabulary was heard with much regret by your numerous friends in the City of Londonderry.

You have been long and honourably connected with that force and during the number of years you served in this city you gave many proofs of being possessed of those qualifications and characteristics which earned for yourself the confidence and esteem of your superior officers and gained the friendship of a large and increasing number of the citizens.

We remember your progress in the athletic field when you greatly distinguished yourself, also your bravery on more than one occasion when you were instrumental in saving human lives and received the highest recognition for your manly acts.

We regret that an important and responsible appointment removes you from our midst, but we wish to assure you of our continued interest in your prosperity though we may not have the pleasure of meeting with you so frequently as heretofore.

As a proof of our sincerity and as a gift of remembrance we ask you to accept of this address with a purse of sovereigns and the accompany gold watch for Mrs Dinsmore, ensuring you of our best wishes for your continued happiness.

Signed on behalf of the subscribers – Wm McLearn, JP DL, Mayor of Derry; JP Thompson JP DL Ex-Mayor of Derry; Thompson B Adams, Robert Fulton, Charles O'Neill DL, F Henry Miller Town Clerk, James Barr TC.

The Chairman made the presentation in felicitous terms, remarking that he was sure that straightforward and manly conduct which characterised Mr Dinsmore's career in the public service would continue to do so in whatever station of life he occupied in future. (applause).

Mr Ralph Mills and Mr Samuel Hamilton also spoke in eugilistic terms of Mr Dinsmore's high personal qualities and marked ability as a public servant.

Mr Fulton said it had been a real pleasure to him to be in any way associated with the presentation. No one whom he approached on the subject seemed to consider it other than a favour to be allowed to be associated with it and it was notable also that the presentations were not from large subscriptions by a small number of people but rather from small subscriptions from a very large body of citizens of all creeds and classes. (Applause).

Councillor James Barr, proposing the toast "Health and Happiness to Mr and Mrs Dinsmore." Said the half had not been told of the valuable work done by Mr Dinsmore and the many excellent qualities he brought to bear in the discharge of his duties. (Applause).

Mr Dinsmore who was received with cordial applause and musical honours responded in the following terms :-

Dear Friends – Permit me to thank you most sincerely for this most beautiful and far too flattering address and also for the munificent gifts that accompany it.

The knowledge that I have in the discharge of my duties gained the esteem and friendship of so many of the citizens of Londonderry would in itself be ample reward but to have that knowledge supplemented by such tokens of good will fill me with such feelings of gratitude that words fail to adequately express my appreciations.

For your kind remembrance of Mrs Dinsmore on her behalf I also beg to thank you.

We shall ever treasure these gifts as the most precious in our possession and will associate with them the happiest recollections. Again thanking you I am yours faithfully, James Dinsmore.

Mr Dinsmore added that of his 25 years service in the RIC 18 had been spent among the people of Derry. It was very gratifying to him to know that his conduct during that period had met with the approval of the citizens. It was to Mrs Dinsmore and himself a source of pleasure that they were not so far separated from their Derry friends, whose many kindnesses and cordial good wishes they would ever hold in warm remembrance. (Applause).¹⁹

James subsequently took up his position at Castlerock Golf Club and was noted as being the caretaker in January 1915. At this time he was a witness in the killing of an infant by her mother.²⁰ However his employment was to only last a short time as by March 1915 the following advertisement appeared in *The Belfast News Letter*;

¹⁹ Presentations to Ex-Sergeant and Mrs Dinsmore, *The Derry Journal*, 19 October 1914

²⁰ The Castlerock Sensation, *The Belfast News Letter*, 5 January 1915

Castlerock Golf Club

Wanted caretaker and wife; no encumbrances. Salary commencing £52 per annum. Unfurnished apartments, fire and light – Apply, stating age &c., to the Secretary.²¹

By October 1916 James, Catherine and Violet had moved to Plymouth and were living at 3 Union Terrace by November 1918. Violet subsequently married and unfortunately died aged only 38 in 1948.

²¹ Situations Vacant, *The Belfast News Letter*, 16 March 1915

Portstewart

~Sub Constable James Glass 7855~

James Glass was born in County Antrim around 1822 and was the son of farmer Samuel Glass. It is likely that he was from the Kilmahamogue area which is south of Ballintoy on the north Antrim coast. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 25th April 1846 having previously been a shoemaker. James was recommended to the Constabulary by James Stewart Moore Esq., JP of Ballydivity House between Bushmills and Dervock. In 1845 Moore was on the provisional committee in Ireland of the Dublin and Antrim Junction Railway. He also had served as a Captain under the Duke of Wellington in the 11th Hussars in the Peninsula War at Waterloo and in 1850 was appointed High Sheriff of County Antrim.

James was granted the number 7855 and served in County Leitrim. On 1st May 1847 James became a 1st class Sub Constable. James was admonished for some reason on 7th April 1864. However his record is quite confusing as it is stated that he resigned on 15th May 1857, which is obviously prior to his admonishment, and yet he is noted as being pensioned from 1st March 1871. There is no date of re-instatement and his length of service is given as 24 years and 9 months which would reflect the full period. It is possible that he resigned and subsequently withdrew the resignation however whoever was collating the service records may have failed to annotate this correctly.

James married Jane Glass at Ballintoy Church of Ireland on 30th June 1858. They were both listed as being from Kilmahamogue. Both were aged 36 and were probably related. Jane's father was also a farmer and named Hector Glass. The witnesses were John Glass and Charles McCaughan both from the same area.

As stated James was pensioned from the then Royal Irish Constabulary in March 1871 and he initially claimed his pension at Ballycastle until June 1879 when he received it at Ballymoney. James and Jane had returned to live at Kilmahamogue where Jane died aged 70 on 28th February 1892 (witnessed by Charles Glass also a resident of

Kilmahamogue). The Valuation records show James taking a house and garden in this area around 1884 beside Charles Glass as well as near Charles McCaughan. James then claimed his £24 per annum at Coleraine from 21st May 1892 when he gave up the house and it seems that he began to live with his son Constable Hector Glass and his family. At the time of the 1901 census James was still living with Hector and family at Lower Mullaghcoll Portstewart, however by 9th October James was collecting his pension in Londonderry where Hector had been transferred to. James died on 19th December 1901 at 2 Ferguson Street Londonderry, which was his and Hector's home.

Hector Glass was born in County Leitrim around 1861 and joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on 9th September 1879 from County Antrim, probably in the Ballymoney area. He was recommended by Sub Inspector Robertson who had been serving in County Antrim until August 1879 when he was moved to County Down. Robertson was stationed at Ballymoney at the relevant time and in 1878 (and again in 1879) was recorded as living at "Bleak House" Ballymoney.¹

Hector was given the registered number 44,792 and was sent to County Cork, East Riding on 9th March 1880. He remained in Cork until 21st October 1886 when he was transferred to County Londonderry. On 7th May 1887 Hector married Frances Rawlins daughter of George Henry Rawlins at St Thomas' Church of Ireland Rathlin. George Henry Rawlins was a "gentleman" from Springmount House Ballincollig County Cork. At the time of their marriage Frances was living on Rathlin Island and Hector was stationed at Garvagh. Witnesses were James Glass, and Catherine Smith. There were a number of members of the Glass family who had lived on Rathlin Island which may explain why Frances had taken this as her residence. By 1911 Hector's brother James had brought his family, all Leitrim born, to live on the island.

¹ Births – Robertson, *The Northern Whig*, 31 January 1878

Hector and Frances' first child, Jane, was born on 12th February 1888 at Swatragh County Londonderry where Hector was a Constable. Four further children were to be born at Swatragh, Mary Elizabeth Glass born 20th February 1889, Hector Glass born 2nd July 1890, James Henry Glass born 29th December 1891 and Harriet Catherine Glass born 6th July 1893. Between Harriet's birth and the birth of Frances Georgina Glass on 15th July 1894 the family had moved to Kilrea.

The Glass family again moved between Frances' birth and July 1899 when Hector senior was noted as working in Portstewart. As previously mentioned the family are noted in the 1901 census at Lower Mullaghcoll Portstewart and as stated they were, by December of the same year, living at 2 Ferguson Street Londonderry. Hector remained in Londonderry for the remainder of his service.

Hector was pensioned from the RIC on 1st October 1904 and immediately claimed his pension in Belfast. In 1911 Hector was recorded in the census as living at Claremont Street in south Belfast and was employed as a customs watcher. Also living at the address with the Glass family was Hester Gracey daughter of former RIC man James Gracey who was resident in Kilrea (see Kilrea chapter). The following year Hector signed the Ulster Covenant and gave his address as 13 University Street, which is close to Claremont Street. A later pension records lists his address as 33 University Street which is corroborated by a death notice for his wife Frances on 17th June 1921.²

² Deaths, *The Belfast News Letter*, 21 June 1921

~ Sub Constable James Henry 9024~

James Henry was born in County Londonderry around 1827. James joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 10th November 1847 receiving the service number 9024. He was recommended by Sub Inspector (later County Inspector) David Patton. At the time of recommendation Patton was working in the Magherafelt area indicating that James Henry was from this area. There were Patton's in the parish of Tamlaght O'Crilly.

Initially James served in the Reserve before being sent to County Dublin on Wednesday 1st March 1848. James remained there for just over four years when he was transferred to County Clare at the beginning of June 1852. He only remained in Clare for two months and was then sent to County Meath. While in Meath James was noted in petty sessions records in June 1855 as being stationed at Carlanstown. His stay in Meath was much longer than in Clare and he was then transferred to County Down at the start of August 1861. James served in Down until he was moved to County Roscommon on 1st March 1863. His final moves were to the Reserve in August 1865 and finally to County Waterford on 20th April 1867.

James was pensioned on Friday 1st August 1873 and he appears to have returned home as his pension was first claimed at Magherafelt. In 1900 James claimed his pension at Greenock, Scotland. The 1901 census in Scotland reveals information that was not recorded in James' service record – the main issue being his marriage and subsequent family.

James was living at Ardenlea Cottages, 1 Irvine Road, Kilmaurs, Ayrshire with his son William John Henry who was listed as a police constable. William was married to Margaret Jane Watterson in 1882 in the Magherafelt area and between 1884 and 1896 they had five children all born in the same area. From the birth certificate of Albert Edwin Leonard Henry born 30th August 1889 it appears that Margaret was living with James at Ballymaguigan and William was a policeman at Ardrossan, Scotland. The Valuation records show that James took

land at Ballymaguigan in 1871 which was owned by the Moravian Brethern.

By 10th June 1903 James had returned to Ireland and claimed his pension at Coleraine. He remained in this area for a year before returning to the Magherafelt area around 25th June 1904. He finally moved back to the Coleraine area by 25th September 1906. James died on 18th March 1907 at Cottage Hospital Coleraine, although his address was given at Portstewart. His daughter-in-law Margaret J Henry was the witness to his death. It is not apparent if Margaret had returned to live in Ireland, certainly by the 1911 census there is no sign of any of her family in Ireland.

~Constable Thomas Prior 29234~

Thomas Prior was born in County Leitrim around 1845 the son of farmer Hugh Prior. Thomas was recommended to the Constabulary of Ireland by the Rev George D. Beresford of Fenagh Church of Ireland in County Leitrim. The Beresford family were connected to the Marquis of Waterford and were strongly linked to Coleraine's history. Thomas joined the police on 29th January 1864, was given the number 29,234, and was sent to County Fermanagh on 18th June of the same year.

In Fermanagh in May 1869 Thomas was stationed at Arney and was the subject of a complaint of misconduct and a court of enquiry was held to investigate. The allegation was that he tampered with a voting document. Three sub inspectors, Archibald Kirkland of Enniskillen, and William Young of Derrygonnelly conducted the hearing and Sub Inspector Lees of Arney was also present.

The charge preferred against Sub Constable Thomas Prior No 29,234, by Mr George McVitty was that he did initial a voting paper when distributing one at the last annual election of the Poor Law Guardians for the electoral division of Laragh in the Arney sub-district on the 18th March last.

Essentially McVitty claimed that Thomas had made a mark "AP" on the voting paper left at the home of Alice Parsons so that it could be known whom the person had voted for. McVitty "stated he did not know anything whatever of the charge personally, but would produce the witnesses who had told him of the matter and on whose statements he had reported it." Thomas denied the allegation and had two witnesses who supported his account. One witness, and one of the candidates, Moore Betty of Derrygif gave the following evidence;

Was in your company on the 18th of Match when you were distributing the voting papers; did not see you sign or initial the voting paper (produced); did not hear you give any instructions as to how it was to be signed. You could not

have signed it without my knowledge as you left the house before me, nor was there any initial on the paper when you left it.

Following the hearing of the rest of the evidence it was reported that the “testimony and opinion of the court be sent before the Inspector General” for a decision.³ No adverse finding appears to have been reached as there are no punishments recorded on Thomas’ service record at or around this time.

Thomas married Sarah McManus on Tuesday 14th February 1871 at Garrison chapel. Sarah was the daughter of farmer John McManus. Both Thomas and Sarah were recorded as residing at Fassó which may be the same as Fassagh, which is a townland south of Belleek. On 1st July 1871 Thomas was transferred to County Tyrone. He seems to have been posted to Castlederg as on 30th October 1872 a notice in the paper announcing the birth of his son at Belleek gave his address as Castlederg RIC.⁴ This was the birth of William Prior on 22nd October. Two further children were born in Belleek while Thomas was in Tyrone; Mary Prior on 10th June 1874 and Bridget Prior on 20th December 1875.

Prior was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st December 1876 and then Constable on 1st May 1877. His next child Thomas was born on 11th October 1877 at Donemana County Tyrone where Thomas was posted to as Constable in charge. A daughter Sarah (Minnie) Prior was born on 9th January 1879 which was sadly followed on 23rd March by young Thomas’ death. One more child was born at Donemana, Francis Hugh Prior who was born on 13th June 1880.

On 1st December 1881 the Priors had left Donemana and had relocated to King Street Magherafelt where on 13th July 1883 another son Thomas was born. He was followed on 19th January 1886 by Emily Kate Prior. At

³ Constabulary Investigation, *The Fermanagh Mail and Enniskillen Chronicle*, 13 May 1869

⁴ Births, *The Derry Journal*, 30 October 1872

this stage Thomas was the sergeant at Moneymore station. By October 1888 Thomas was the Sergeant in charge at Gulladuff barracks. However he did not remain there as he was transferred to Coleraine where he was noted as being in July 1893 attending the fire which was mentioned in the Coleraine chapter involving former RIC men John Crowley and John Douglas and future criminal William Stormouth. Thomas was working along with another local pensioner Michael Love (see Coleraine chapter).

Thomas was subsequently pensioned on 11th March 1894. He died of pleurisy and pneumonia at Agherton Portstewart on 25th October 1897. He was aged only 54. His death was witnessed by his wife Sarah. Sarah continued to live in Portstewart and in 1901 was recorded as living at Tullymurry East along with her son Francis who was a fisherman and Emily who was still at school. By 1911 Sarah was recorded as living on the Coleraine Road along with her daughter Sarah who was a seamstress.

~Sergeant Richard Doud 37014~

Richard Doud was born in County Cavan around 1851. He was recommended to the Royal Irish Constabulary by Sub Inspector Gilbert Talbot who was stationed at Cootehill County Cavan at the relevant time. Richard joined on 11th October 1870 with the number 37,014 and was posted to County Londonderry on 30th March 1871 following training.

A series of newspaper articles between 1883 and 1885 places Richard (surname recorded as *Dowd*) in the city of Londonderry. The reports link him to Abercorn Road, Fahan Street, Waterloo Street, The Wells, Bishops Gate (in an incident that may have included Hector Glass as previously mentioned), and Northland Road. It is difficult to state which station he was at during this period as it could be Bishop Street, or Victoria on Strand Road. Victoria was opened in 1883. In 1872 and 1875 Richard was fined, however there is no indication where he was serving or what he had done.

Richard was promoted to Acting Sergeant on 1st October either 1885 or 1886. The service record scan does not show the full entry. Again in 1887 Richard was noted as working at Fahan Street which might suggest that he was at Bishop Street barracks. On 1st November 1888 he was promoted to Sergeant and was noted at Waterloo place in 1890 which suggests he was working at Victoria. The following October an article stated that Richard was the Sergeant at Waterside station. Confusingly another article from November 1891 and in 1892 places Sergeant Dowd at Rosemount which means that Richard was moved back across the river Foyle.

On 12th May 1894 Richard was transferred to Thurles County Tipperary. While in Tipperary Richard was commended on 18th July 1895. He was pensioned on 6th February 1897 and returned to Londonderry to claim his pension. In 1901 Richard was living at Argyle Terrace in Londonderry. Richard owned 4 houses on Argyle Terrace which were subsequently called *Northland Villas* and was living in one

of them. His name was recorded in the Valuations as *Dowds*. This was where James Dinsmore also had been living. An entry in the Valuation records from 1895 shows that Richard had taken the properties from Michael Dowd(s). The relationship with this person is not known.

Richard claimed his pension at Coleraine from 4th October 1910. In the 1911 census he is listed as a visitor at the home of former RIC man George McDonald at Back Street Portstewart. An entry in the Valuation records suggests that Richard was living at Church Street Portstewart. Richard died in Portstewart on 21st December 1918. The death was witnessed by Netta Wallace of Greysteel. In 1911 Netta was a National School teacher. Richard's final pension money was paid to John O'Neill and Coleraine RIC pensioner and shopkeeper James Bethel. His surname on his death certificate was recorded as *O'Dowds*.

~Sergeant Michael Brislane 40141~

Michael Brislane was born in County Roscommon in February 1850 and was the son of farmer John Brislane. Michael joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Saturday 7th March 1874 having been recommended by Sub Inspector Alfred Fleury who had been in the county from May 1873. Michael received the registered number 40,141 and was sent to County Londonderry on 30th September 1874.

On Thursday 27th April 1882 Michael married Sarah McKillip from Coleraine at St Patrick's chapel Portrush. At this time Michael was stationed at Eglinton. Sarah was the daughter of "artisan" James McKillip and Mary McKillip. In 1901 James and Mary lived at Cross Lane, Coleraine and James was recorded as being a boot maker. Sarah appears to have had a brother called Charles who was a clerk in 1901. As a result of this marriage Michael was transferred to County Tyrone on 20th July 1882.

Another daughter of James McKillip, Mary, also married a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary in 1882. On 17th October at Castlerock Presbyterian Church, Mary married James Alexander Dugan (40,111) from County Antrim. At the time James was stationed in Coleraine but was then moved to County Mayo. In March 1881 Dugan had been appointed as the Clerk to the Sub Inspector at Coleraine having passed the required examination.⁵ Brislane and Dugan may have known each other from the Depot in Dublin as they joined the police within a month of each other. Both were then posted to Londonderry and both finished their service in County Tyrone.

In 1889 Michael Brislane was stationed at Aughnacloy when he was subsequently promoted to Acting Sergeant on 1st November and then was moved to a temporary protection station at Corryclogher near to Clogher by December. His stay at Corryclogher was not permanent and he returned to Aughnacloy. Michael was then promoted to

⁵ The City Constabulary, *The Derry Journal*, 2 March 1881

Sergeant on 1st October 1890. At the time of the writing of the *Devia Hibernia* in 1893 Michael was the Sergeant at Broughderg County Tyrone. By May 1895 he was stationed at Augher.

Michael remained at Augher and in the 1901 census Sarah was noted as living on Main Street with Michael linked to the RIC barracks. Michael was pensioned from the police on 1st May 1905 aged 55 and immediately claimed his pension at Coleraine.

In 1911 Michael and Sarah were living at Back Street Portstewart along with Michael's sister-in-law, and Sarah's sister, Mary Dugan who was by then a widow. Michael died on 26th March 1932 at 9 Enfield Terrace Portstewart of senile decay and heart failure. Michael was a widower at the time of his death and had been at the house from around 1913. His death was witnessed by Peter Doherty who was a spirit merchant and garage proprietor.

~Sergeant George McDonald 43268~

George McDonald was born in County Armagh around 1857 the son of farmer Alexander McDonald. He joined the RIC on 5th September 1877 attaining the number 43,268 and was sent to County Londonderry on 26th July 1878 following a period of training. George also had a brother Thomas who was also a member of the RIC. Thomas, registered number 53,329, joined 13th September 1888 and eventually was promoted Sergeant. He spent all of his career in County Cork and retired in 1920.

On 28th April 1892 George, then stationed at Londonderry, married Jemima Watson Oliver daughter of farmer Caldwell Oliver of Letterboy, Ederney County Fermanagh. They married at Irvinestown. A witness to the marriage was James McDonald who may have been George's brother.

In 1878 Jemima's sister Fanny had married Robert John Anderson a grocer from Strabane.⁶ In 1901 Anderson had a shop on Main Street Strabane. In 1882 another sister Sarah married Thomas Inch Esq., of Inchanny/Inchenny, Strabane.⁷

As Jemima was not a native of County Londonderry there was no requirement for George to move. George was commended on 11th April 1894, although there is no indication on his record what this was for. On 1st October 1896 George was promoted to Acting Sergeant and he was subsequently promoted to Sergeant by 1st April 1897. By 1899 George was the sergeant at Bellarena County Londonderry. On 1st June 1899 Jemima died aged 28 at the RIC barracks at Bellarena.

On 21st March 1900 George was transferred to County Roscommon. At the time of the 1901 census George was noted as being attending Steeven's Hospital Dublin along with a number of other RIC men for treatment.

⁶ Marriages, *The Derry Journal*, 14 August 1878

⁷ Marriages, *The Derry Journal*, 17 March 1882

George was pensioned from the police on 7th September 1901 aged 44. George initially claimed his pension at Newry before changing to Newtownhamilton on 23rd October 1901. This suggests that McDonald was from this area. He then moved to Newtownards on 9th July 1902. George remained in the Ards area until May 1904 when he moved into Belfast. He then claimed at Londonderry from 14th August 1906.

On 4th February 1908 George married Sarah Ramsay of 56 Abercorn Road Londonderry at St Columb's Cathedral in Londonderry. Sarah was the daughter of Samuel Ramsay a horse trainer and was originally from County Donegal. George's address was 25 Moore Street Londonderry which was where they moved to together. Sarah was approximately seven months pregnant at the time of their marriage as on 9th April 1908 Sarah Elizabeth McDonald was born at Moore Street. The following year on 29th March 1909 James Alexander McDonald was also born to George and Sarah.

In 1909 the Valuation records show that George owned a house at Back Street in Portstewart. He subsequently claimed his pension in Coleraine area from 3rd December 1909. In the 1911 census George and family are all living at Back Street. As previously mentioned this was the property which former RIC man Richard Doud was noted as visiting at the time of the census. Also visiting was Elizabeth Hyndman who had been a witness at their wedding. Elizabeth was Sarah's sister.

George did not settle in Portstewart as he claimed his pension at Londonderry from 14th December 1912, then back to Coleraine from 23rd June 1914. He remained in the Coleraine area until 26th June 1918 when he claimed in Belfast. The final RIC pension record shows that on 21st January 1922 George collected his pension once again at Newtownards. George died at Sloanstown, Newtownards on 14th October 1924, his daughter Lily was present at his death.

~Sergeant Alexander Forbes 43650~

Alexander Forbes was the son of farmer John Forbes and was born in County Cavan around 1859. Alexander was recommended to the RIC by Sub Inspector William Willoughby Bernard Fausett and joined on 8th April 1878. He was given the number 43,650 and sent to County Antrim on 31st January 1879.

It appears that Alexander served in Belfast and in 1887 may have been stationed at Bowers Hill barracks which was between Agnes Street and Crimea Street between the Crumlin and Shankill roads. On St Patrick's Day 1891 Alexander was transferred to County Tyrone. On 6th May while stationed at Donaghmore Alexander married Lizzie Forbes a national school teacher. At this time Lizzie resided at Churchtamlaght Rasharkin. They married at Portglenone 2nd Presbyterian Church. Lizzie was the daughter of farmer James Forbes.

Alexander and Lizzie had three children. The first was James Alexander Forbes who was born at Union Street Cookstown on 30th June 1892. The next was Albert John Forbes who was also born in Cookstown on 19th February 1894 and then Anna Maud Forbes who was born 23rd November 1895.

Lizzie died aged 39 on 23rd December 1897 at Churchtamlaght of pulmonary phthisis. Her brother Robert was present at her death. Robert had also been a witness at her wedding six years previously. Her death came just three months after Alexander had been promoted to the rank of Acting Sergeant. At the time of this promotion Alexander had been stationed at Cookstown.⁸ He was subsequently transferred to County Londonderry where he was promoted to Sergeant on 1st September 1899.

On 25th June 1900 while Alexander was the sergeant at Claudy his son Albert died at his in-law's home at Churchtamlaght. Albert was buried at Clough County Antrim. The children appear to have remained at

⁸ Local Police News, *Tyrone Courier*, 23 September 1897

Churchtamlaght as at the time of the 1901 census they are recorded as living with Lizzie's father James while Alexander was serving at Magherafelt.

On 11th November 1903 Alexander married Margaret Ann Elder, another National School Teacher from Moneyleck, Rasharkin. They married at Killymurrish Presbyterian church Rasharkin. Robert Forbes was again a witness. Margaret was the daughter of farmer William Elder. Alexander and Margaret's first child together Margaret Wallace Forbes was born on 23rd January 1905 at Bellarena where Alexander was now posted.

In April 1907 Alexander was noted as working alongside a future Coleraine pensioner Thomas Heaslip of the Coleraine constabulary,

A tea traveller named Hugh McIntee belonging to County Cavan, and in the employment of Messrs Coyle Ltd., Derry, was arrested in Coleraine on Tuesday evening on a charge of having as alleged assaulted a young girl named Doran, of Magilligan on the previous day. Sergeant Forbes and Constable Kerr of Bellarena arrived in Coleraine and in consequence of information and descriptions given of the accused, the local constabulary were investigating the matter. Constable Heaslip detected McIntee in the vicinity of Doherty's public house in Captain Street at about 7.20 on Tuesday evening. He and Constable Donahue placed the defendant under arrest and having escorted him to the police station handed him over to the Bellarena police.⁹

Further tragedy was to strike Alexander in 1910 when on 1st May his fourteen year old daughter Anna died at Bellarena. Alexander retired seven months later on 1st December 1910 and claimed his pension at Coleraine.

⁹ Serious Charge against a Traveller, *The Irish News and Belfast Morning News*, 18 April 1907

By 1911 Alexander, Margaret, James and young Margaret were living at Glenkeen near Garvagh. At this time Alexander has established himself as a farmer. The following year he signed the Ulster Covenant at Aghadowey. His son James also signed. In his pension record around 1922 his address was noted as Greenhill Garvagh.

Alexander remained at Glenkeen for a number of years with his son James taking over the tenancy around 1929. Alexander died at 57 Old Coach Road, Portstewart on 16th September 1943. His effects went to his daughter Margaret.

~Constable Charles Higgins 60212~

Charles Higgins was born in County Mayo in 1880 the son of farmer Charles Higgins. At the time of the 1901 census he was living at Cloonawillan. Charles was almost 21 when he was recommended to the Royal Irish Constabulary by District Inspector Thomas Monson. Charles joined on 16th May 1901 along with teacher Anthony Egan, also from Mayo and also recommended by Monson. Egan was given the number 60,211 and Charles was 60,212.

After his initial training Charles was sent to County Kildare on 19th November 1901. He remained there for two years before being transferred to Belfast on 17th October 1903. Charles is recorded in the nominal roll of 1910 as stationed at Ligoniel, Belfast. In 1911 Charles was stationed on the Antrim Road in Belfast. He was subsequently transferred to County Monaghan on 1st May 1914 where he served for one year before resigning to join the Irish Guards during the First World War. Charles had been stationed at Clones before resigning.

Charles was readmitted to the RIC on 1st May 1919 after demobilisation. He went through further training and was sent to County Londonderry on 26th June 1919. At the beginning of 1920 Charles was stationed at Garvagh. By Sunday 1st August 1920 Charles was stationed at Coleraine when he arrested Patrick Martin of Upper Stone Row for riotous and disorderly behaviour while drunk. The circumstances were that “as the congregation were leaving divine service in New Row Presbyterian Church, defendant (Martin) kept shouting “Up Rebels.”” Daniel MacLaughlin who represented Martin said that “his client was a quiet man, seldom took drink, and was sorry for what had taken place.”¹⁰

On 9th June 1921 Charles married Emily May Bacon daughter of fisherman John Bacon at Agherton Parish Church Portstewart. At this time Charles was stationed at Portstewart and had been since at least

¹⁰ Scene Outside Coleraine Church, *The Belfast News Letter*, 7 August 1920

October 1920. Emily was classed as being a minor at the time of their marriage. The 1911 census records that at that time Emily was 10 meaning that she was 20 when she was married to Charles. At the time of this census they lived at Back Street Portstewart and may have lived close to former Sergeant George McDonald.

Following the marriage Charles was transferred to County Tyrone on 1st July 1921 where he served for two months retiring at the start of September. Charles only claimed his pension at Coleraine and so he returned to Emily's home area. Charles gained employment with Portstewart Urban Council as the sub sanitary and town officer. However in October 1923 he was suspended from the post following a complaint against him pending an inquiry by Dr Patrick the medical inspector.¹¹ There is no mention of the outcome of this investigation in the local press.

Emily also ran into some trouble in Portstewart. In January 1929 Emily and Annie David of Coleraine Road Portstewart were charged with theft of linen and other items from clothes lines. The property belonged to Robert J Martin, George Turitt and James J Phillips. The women pleaded guilty and were "given the benefit of the Probation of Offenders Act, and bound over to be of good behaviour for two years" as well as costs of 15s. It was likely that the probation officer was former RIC man Archibald Huston (see Coleraine chapter).¹²

Charles died on 19th September 1951. His address was given as 13 Hawthorn Terrace Coleraine although he died at the Bann View Hospital. His son Charles Higgins was present at the death.

¹¹ Portstewart Town Officer Suspended, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 4 October 1923

¹² Thefts from Cloths Lines, *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 19 January 1929

Garvagh

~Constable Robert Andrews 2138~

Robert Andrews was born in County Londonderry around 1812 and was recommended to the Constabulary of Ireland by Andrew Orr JP of Millburn Coleraine. Robert joined on Tuesday 13th December 1836, was given the number 2138, and was initially posted to County Cavan. In Cavan Robert was promoted to 1st class Sub Constable on 1st January 1838 and then Constable on 1st November 1846. The petty sessions records show that Robert was in Stradone parish Cavan in 1851.

The service record for Robert shows that he was transferred to County Donegal on 7th August 1855, however a newspaper article from August 1854 mentions a Constable Robert Andrews in Donegal. There are no other Robert Andrews at this time in the Constabulary which suggests that the 1855 date is incorrect. The article in question details a theft of money and a child's stocking by a woman called Margery Coyle who had been in the employment of Robert Johnston at Cashel near Dunfanaghy. Johnston had received the money from William Olphert, who gave evidence detailing a specific rent note with a mark on it that he could identify as the one given to Robert Johnston. Robert Andrews gave evidence that he had

“Found three notes and a sovereign in a child's stocking in the house of the mother of the prisoner on the 15th of July; is sure that the cut note identified by the last witness was one of them; swears to the child's stocking then in his hand being the same stocking that he found the money in.”

Margery was found guilty and sentenced to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour.¹

The following year, 1855, Robert Andrews was working at Crossroads County Donegal. By 1856 he was on the other side of the county at Carrigans.

¹ Larceny, *The Londonderry Standard*, 3 August 1854

Robert was pensioned on Thursday 1st November 1866 and immediately began collecting his pension at Coleraine. He died on Friday 22nd January 1897 at Ballyrogan, Glenkeen, aged 85 of natural causes. Farmer and grocer Joseph Andrews was present at his death. Joseph may have been a nephew of Robert. His own demise was not to be as gentle as that of Robert. In July 1915 Joseph had committed suicide by shooting himself in the kitchen of his house. His wife had heard the shot and found Joseph on the floor. She gave evidence at the inquest that he had been depressed for the past four years and had not been sleeping. The coroner gave a verdict of suicide while temporarily insane.²

² The Garvagh Tragedy, *The Belfast News Letter*, 16 July 1915

~Constable Francis Cohoon 4100~

Francis Cohoon was born in County Cavan around 1817, the son of William Cohoon/Colhoun. Francis joined the Constabulary on Monday 22nd June 1840, was assigned the number 4100, and served only in County Londonderry. At the beginning of July 1841 he was promoted to 1st class Sub Constable and was promoted to Constable on 1st September 1845. Francis had been recommended by Richard Bell Esq., JP who was from Drumheel House, Rosscarbin in Cavan and was also the County Grand Master of the Orange Order for Cavan.

On 15th November 1853 Francis married Sarah Hunter (nee Smith) of Kilrea at St Columb's Cathedral Londonderry. Sarah was the daughter of James and Anne Owen Smyth of Drumack Fort Co Antrim which is near Rasharkin. At this point Francis' residence was given as Londonderry. His witness was 2nd class Head Constable William Bailey (3015). Sarah had been married to Richard Hunter and had a number of children with him including Richard who was born 21st October 1849 and Bessie born around 1853. Sarah and Francis had three further children Sara Cohoon (later Monticello) born around 1856, Frederick W Cohoon born around 1857 and James S Cohoon born around 1862

It appears that at least at the end of his service Francis served at Kilrea where he may have moved to after marrying Sarah. In April 1854 he is mentioned in a newspaper report as being involved in a manhunt after a stabbing where a man named McIlmougue, who was walking with two men named Bradley along the Maghera road "after escorting thither some emigrants for America," had stabbed the two Bradleys after a quarrel. Unfortunately Francis and his party were unable to locate McIlmougue, however he was arrested by Acting Constable Witherington of Garvagh.³ Francis was discharged from the police on 1st June 1857 and was noted as living at the Diamond Kilrea the following year in Griffith's Valuations.

³ Daring Outrage near Kilrea, *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 28 April 1854

By 1868 Francis was living in the Garvagh area and was the Clerk of Petty Sessions and also the dog license registrar.⁴ He was also by 1885 a member of the vestry for the united parishes of Errigal and Desertoghill.⁵ His interests included raising and showing cage birds which was reflected in an article from August 1896 where Francis won first prize and best in show for one of his birds at the Garvagh Flower Show.⁶ In October 1899 he received £50 for compensation under the Explosives Act for work he had carried out.⁷ The nature of this work is unrecorded.

In 1901 Francis' son James Cohoon was noted in the census return as being the assistant clerk however his brother Fred appears to have taken over this role, or at least was carrying out the job by 1904.⁸ In 1901 Fred had been an unemployed solicitor's managing clerk. Money was not tight within the Cohoon household as in 1900 Fred and James were noted as sailing to New Zealand onboard *Papanni*. Fred was also a member of the Masonic as he was listed as a Worshipful Master of Lodge 754 in 1888. Of note his step-brother Richard Hunter, auctioneer from Coleraine, was also a member of the same Masonic lodge. Other members included former Head Constable John Douglas and father-in-law of Michael Brislane, James McKillip.⁹ Fred Cohoon was also connected to the Bann Rowing Club.

⁴ The Registration of Dogs, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 9 May 1868

⁵ Easter Vestries – Garvagh, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 11 April 1885

⁶ Garvagh Flower Show and Cycling and Athletic Sports, *Northern Whig*, 4 August 1899

⁷ Derry County Council – Committee Meetings, *The Derry Journal*, 27 October 1899

⁸ Petty Sessions, *The Belfast News Letter*, 27 August 1904

⁹ Grand Masonic Ceremony in Coleraine, *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 23 August 1884



Frederick Cohoon/Cahoon Bann Rowing Club 1881. Picture courtesy of Bann Rowing Club

Francis' home was listed as both Glenullin Cottage and Old Glebe House. The valuations show the property belonging originally to Smyth's which may be a relation of Sarah. Francis died on 30th January 1907. The obituary and report of the funeral best explains Francis' story and the impact he had on the community in which he lived and worked;

The funeral of the above much respected gentleman took place on Saturday February 2nd 1907 from his residence, Old Glebe House, Errigal, Garvagh. The assemblage which was very large and representative of all ranks and denominations, clerical and lay, who attended to show tangible evidence of

their respect to the memory of the deceased. The coffin, on which were placed floral tributes of choicest design was first borne a considerable length by stalwart members of the Royal Irish Constabulary (to which force the deceased at one time belonged), next by a mixed community of friends and neighbours, and lastly by members of his own family after which it was reverently placed in the hearse. Typical of the broad and charitable views of the deceased in life with regard to matters of religion and politics, shoulder to shoulder could be seen the Orangemen and the sturdy sons of the Ancient Order of Hibernians laying aside for the time being religious and political differences, and acting in harmony and unison, all actuated by and unanimous in one common purpose, bent to show their universal respect to the memory of the deceased. The chief mourners were – Mr James S Cohoon, and Mr Fred W Cohoon (sons); Mr Richard Hunter, Riversdale, Coleraine (step son); Mr John Arthur R Lloyd and Mr Richard Hunter jun. (grandsons); Mrs Sara O'Montiello (daughter); Mrs R Hunter (daughter-in-law). Following the mourning carriage the cortege extended in a long line of vehicles and pedestrians covering almost a mile of the road. Many of the local gentry who through their prevalence of sickness found unable to attend personally were represented by their carriages. The bell of Garvagh Parish Church tolled as the procession approached the town en route for Moyletra Burying Ground. The coffin was met at the gate of Moyletra Church by the rector of the parish, reciting sentences from the burial service and was carried by relations and kind friends into the church where the rector, the Rev WH Morrison SSD conducted the burial service and touching tribute to the character of the deceased and to the respect and esteem in which he was held by all who knew him. The coffin was then carried to the grave where the coffin being placed reverently in its last resting place which being completed the wreaths and flowers were placed on the top.

Mr Cohoon was a native of county Cavan, and was in some respects father of the present Royal Irish Constabulary. He was one of the oldest, if not the oldest, member of the force being in the original constabulary of Ireland prior to its being incorporated into the Royal Irish Constabulary, and in an article which appeared in the organ of that force, the "RIC Gazette" he was called "the last of the old guard." He was pensioned off the force 50 years ago and from that time up to a few years ago has been the well known and much respected clerk of Garvagh Petty Sessions in which by the strict and unerring discharge of his public duties together with his amiability, courteousness and helpfulness to others he won for himself the esteem, respect and honour of all with whom he came in touch, as he has been referred and testified to by the magistrates and legal profession at the last court held. One remarkable instance in his career worthy of note was that he lived in the reign of four English Sovereigns distinctly remembered three, and faithfully served two namely the late Queen Victoria and King Edward from whom he received a personal letter complimenting him on being one of the oldest civic servants. His life was characterised by broad and charitable views on religion and politics and by his many acts of charity and benevolence and the unswerving accuracy in the discharge of his public duties won for him the respect and honour of all sorts and condition of men."¹⁰

Sarah died aged 87 in 1908 at Old Glebe House, Errigal. Her son Richard Hunter became a JP and an auctioneer. He owned a large property 'Riversdale' which was auctioned off following his death in 1926

¹⁰ Funeral of Mr Francis Cohoon, Garvagh, *The Derry Journal*, 13 February 1907

~Constable Archibald Boyd 6134~

Archibald Boyd was born in County Antrim around 1825 based on his RIC service record. He joined the Irish Constabulary on 6th August 1845 and was given the number 6134. Archibald was recommended to the police by “R Millar JP”, who may have been Rowley Millar of Moneymore County Londonderry.

Initially serving in County Cavan, Archibald was noted in petty sessions records as being at Cootehill in 1859. At the start of April 1860 Archibald was promoted to Acting Constable. On Monday 5th November 1860 Archibald married Mary Matilda Millar of County Fermanagh. On 1st March 1861 he was transferred to County Roscommon. In Roscommon Archibald was noted as being at Castlerea in 1861 and Athlone the following year. Also in 1862 at the beginning of October Archibald was promoted to Constable.

On Monday 16th February 1863 Archibald was transferred to County Tyrone and by 1868 he was working at Aughnacloy. The following article is an example of his work;

Patrick Moran, Terence Reilly and John Daily were brought upon remand, charged with stealing money from the person and receiving and having in their possession money knowing same to have been stolen in Aughnacloy on the 1st inst. Mr Davidson of Dungannon appeared for the prisoners. Alexander Eakin of Tannagh on being sworn said that on the evening of Wednesday, 1st April, while walking down the street of Aughnacloy, he found his vest open and a purse which contained one Bank of Ireland one pound note and two sovereigns taken out of his pockets, he afterwards saw the prisoners at the police barrack and was showed a Bank of Ireland one pound note which he believed to be in the one he lost.

Constable Archibald Boyd on being examined said that on the evening of Wednesday the 1st April while on duty in the town of Aughnacloy his attention was directed to three persons on the footpath who seemed to be disputing about something, he arrested two of the persons who gave their names as Patrick Moran and Terence Reilly, Moran on being arrested attempted to put a one pound Bank of Ireland note into his mouth, but was prevented by the police who took it from him, the note was wet and had a hole in the centre as it had been torn by the teeth. On being brought to the barracks the prisoners were searched and a sovereign and 18s 3d in change got with Patrick Moran in addition to the pound which he attempted to destroy. The witness also proved to having arrested John Daily who was pointed out to him as one of the same party.

William McKee keeper of Dungannon Bridewell, on being examined said that on Friday 3rd April he asked the prisoners while Bridewell had they any money about the. Terence Reilly said that he had a sovereign but he wanted it to pay an attorney for his defence. A woman calling herself Mary Ann Richardson was produced to prove having brought the sovereign from the prisoner's mother and given it to him to pay an attorney to defend him, but as this woman had stated before the police that she was Reilly's wife her evidence was inadmissible.

The cases against Moran and Reilly was sent for trial to Dungannon Quarter Sessions, the other prisoner was discharged. Patrick Moran was also charged with an assault with intent to rob, in this case Constable Boyd asked for a remand till Saturday in order that he might be able to produce the person upon whom the assault was committed.¹¹

¹¹ Aughnacloy Petty Sessions, *The Tyrone Constitution*, 10 April 1868

From the 1901 census it appears that around 1870 Archibald and Mary had a daughter Mary M Boyd. In 1872 Archibald and Mary had a son James Anderson Boyd born in the Strabane area, possibly within County Donegal.

Archibald retired from the police on 22nd October 1875 and initially claimed his pension at Ballymena until January 1876 when he moved to the Cookstown area. This move lasted only a short time as by 11th April 1876 Archibald was claiming at Ballymoney County Antrim. Again this was short lived as he changed to Ballymena by November 1876 where he remained until May 1883 when he claimed at Coleraine. Between this move and April 1888 Archibald moved back and forth between Coleraine and Ballymoney.

Finally claiming at Coleraine Archibald and family settled in the Ballymenagh area south east of Garvagh. His son William Gamble Boyd was born on 11th October 1888 at this address. A further son Samuel Henderson Boyd was born prior to June 1892, when he was mentioned in Archibald's will.

Archibald wrote his will on 16th June 1892 and then died 8 days later at home. In his will he left his money to Mary and states that his boys should receive an education "for their station in life" which will "enable them to earn an honest livelihood." Archibald also had a life insurance policy with Prudential Insurance. He appointed Samuel Lecky, relieving officer at Coleraine to be the sole executor of his will. In 1901 Samuel was living on Abbey Street with his family and was the "Clerk of the union." He held this position for many years, right into the 1930's.

In 1901 James Boyd appears to have been working as a mason and living at Boyd's Square Dungannon, by 1911 he was a farmer and mason. In 1911 Samuel was living as a boarder at the home of Mrs Mary Eyre at Church Street Coleraine, his occupation was listed as an "apprentice." Mary M Boyd by 1911 was still living at the family home at

The Grove, Ballymenagh. She had been there in 1901 and was at that stage widowed.

~Constable William Forgrave 7625~

William Forgrave was born in County Londonderry around 1825 and joined the Constabulary on 13th October 1846. William was recommended by Head Constable Andrew Cochrane who was serving in County Londonderry around 1846. Cochrane eventually reached the rank of Head Constable Major which was the highest non-commissioned rank in the constabulary and served at the Depot at Phoenix Park Dublin.

William was given the number 7625 and was sent to County Tipperary for a short time before being transferred to County Down on 1st February 1847. William was noted as working in Belfast between 1858 and 1860 with the next reference in the press coming in 1868 in the Laurencetown/Newry area. This period saw promotion for William and by 1st May 1869 he was promoted to Constable.

The last reference in the press to William working was in 1874 at Crossgar County Down. He retired on 1st April 1877 aged 51 and received a pension of £67 per annum. He initially collected his pension at Banbridge which changed to Coleraine on 15th January 1880. William died on Saturday 21st October 1899 at Culcrow in a house occupied by an Annie Hunter. From the 1901 census Annie was a servant and a farmer's daughter. Annie Hunter was mentioned in William's will as being his landlady's daughter to which he left six pounds and whatever furniture he left in the two rooms which he occupied. On William's pension record the remaining pension was to be paid to a person also named William Forgrave. His will shows this to be William Forgrave of Greenlaw, Caw, Garvagh and he was a County Schoolmaster. William later moved to Belfast and was listed as a "science organiser" and then Monaghan as a teacher. He had been national school teacher in Garvagh in 1901.

In his will William Forgrave left his nieces Elizabeth and Jane, daughters of his late brother John, ten pounds each. He left his brothers James and Alexander twenty pounds each. Alexander was a

pub owner on the main street in Garvagh. His late brother David's son William received a gold watch and chain and another nephew also called William, his sister Elizabeth's son, a double barrelled gun.

Based on the 1901 and 1911 census it would be fair to assume that Constable William came from the Cam area near Garvagh (or Cah as recorded in 1901) given the links that are revealed in his will.

Aghadowey graveyard has a record of a William Forgrave who died in 1870 aged 86 father of David who died in 1892. This William came from the same area and was on the balance of probabilities Constable William's father. What is interesting is that even though William had a reasonable amount of family in his home area he chose to live some distance away at Culcrow.

~Constable Alexander McClean 14173~

Alexander McClean was born in County Londonderry around 1826 and probably in the Garvagh area. Alexander was recommended to the Constabulary by Head Constable Edward Guthrie who was stationed in Garvagh in 1848. Alexander joined up on 12th October 1850 and was given the number 14,173. He initially served with the Reserve from February 1851 until 10th November 1854 when he was transferred to County Meath.

At some stage Alexander was transferred to County Donegal and was noted as being at Letterkenny in 1871 and 1873 from petty sessions records. Either in Meath or Donegal he was promoted to Acting Constable on 20th January 1865 and then Constable on 1st October in the same year. It is likely that this was when he was transferred although his service record does not show this.

On Tuesday 5th December 1876 he married Frances (Fanny) Ward a native of County Donegal. This ultimately led to his transfer to County Antrim on 10th July 1878. Alexander was then pensioned from the police on 1st February 1881.

Fanny and Alexander moved to Carrowreagh, Desertoghill, Garvagh and built a new house in 1882. The valuation records give the dimensions as $11 \frac{1}{2} \times 6 \frac{2}{3} \times 1 \frac{1}{2}$. The land was owned by the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers however the property had been occupied by "Sam McClane", who was probably a relation.

They had at least four children, Fanny born around 1882 (possibly in County Donegal), Charles born on 17th January 1883 at home, Elizabeth born 9th August 1884 and Alexander McClean born 4th April 1886 at Carrowreagh. The family moved from the area after Alexander's death as reflected in the valuation records. They moved back to Donegal and by 1901 Fanny and family were living at Main Street Letterkenny. Fanny was running a drapery shop, her daughter Fanny was a shopkeeper and Charles was a post office clerk. By 1905 Fanny junior

was the Honorary Secretary of the Home Industries Department of Letterkenny Agricultural and Industrial Society.

~Constable David Kearney 34846~

David Kearney was a native of County Waterford and was born around 1847, son of Patrick Kearney, who was a farmer. David joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Wednesday 23rd September 1868 and was given the number 34,846. He was recommended to the constabulary by Sub Inspector Samuel Trant McCarthy who was responsible for the Portlaw district at that time. David was sent to Tipperary South Riding after his training on 30th December 1868.

He was later transferred to Belfast where he was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st April 1882 and Constable on 7th June 1883. On Thursday 3rd January 1884 he married Annie Kearney, a native of County Londonderry and daughter of farmer Bernard Kearney. At the time of their marriage David was stationed on the Falls Road and Annie was residing at 39 Canning Street Belfast, which is north of the city centre. David had been serving in this area from at least the beginning of 1882 as he was noted in the *Belfast News Letter* as charging a 13 year old lad for stealing rope at the York Road railway terminus for which he was sentenced to 21 days imprisonment and five years at the Phillipstown Roman Catholic Reformatory.¹² This institution was St Conleth's Reformatory School then at Philipstown, Kings County which is now Daingean County Offaly.

Following their marriage David was transferred to County Donegal on 15th September 1884. In November David was stationed at Annagry in West Donegal. In the petty sessions records David was next recorded in Rathmullan in 1888. During this period of service David was twice commended in 1889, on 30th July and then 21st October.

David received his pension from 8th December 1893 and his departure was noted in the newspaper;

“After a lengthened service of twenty-five years, Sergeant Kearney, of Mountcharles station, has retired on a well

¹² Police Intelligence, *The Belfast News Letter*, 2 February 1882

earned pension. He received his full pension. During his stay in Mountcharles, a correspondent says, he was highly respected by the people, and they regret his departure very much.”¹³

While in County Donegal David and Annie had two children, Henry John Kearney, born around 1887 and Norah Kearney born around 1891. Following retirement David immediately claimed his pension at Coleraine. The following year Catherine Kearney was born at Ballintemple, Garvagh on 27th October 1894.

The Kearney's were at Ballintemple until around 1898 when they moved to Farrantemple Glebe near fellow ex-RIC man Francis Cohoon. David was working as a farmer as recorded in the 1901 census. They remained at this address until 1909 when they moved to Castle Street Ballymoney. In 1911 David was noted as just being a pensioner however his son Henry was now a “flesher and cattle dealer.” His daughter Norah was a fitter's helper.

David died of senile decay on 6th March 1927 at Main Street Ballymoney aged 81. Henry John was present at the death. Henry had been having his own problems in the previous few years. In 1924 Henry John appeared in court and was fined for “exposing for sale in a Belfast saleyard a sheep which was suffering from sheep scab.”¹⁴ In November 1926 Henry was in the High Court in Dublin for a case relating to two promissory notes for £1,500 in connection with the manager of the Belfast Bank in Ballymoney.¹⁵

¹³ Constabulary Intelligence, *The Derry Journal*, 8 December 1893

¹⁴ Ballymoney Sheepowners fined, *The Northern Whig*, 7 October 1924

¹⁵ Two Promissory Notes, *The Larne Times*, 13 November 1926

~Constable James Robert Martin 44009~

James Robert Martin was born in County Westmeath around 1859 although he also had family connections in counties Roscommon and Dublin. James was recommended to the RIC by Head Constable Mark Sears who at the time of James' joining, 10th September 1878, was stationed at Connaught Street station, Athlone in County Roscommon. This would suggest that James was living in, or near, Athlone at his time of joining.

James received the registered number 44,009 and was sent to County Donegal on Tuesday 29th July 1879. While in Donegal, petty sessions records show James serving at Kerrykeel in 1883 and Raphoe in 1897. On Tuesday 6th February 1900 James married Mary Jane Lee from Donegal. This marriage meant that they had to move and so James was transferred to Londonderry City. His record shows that this occurred on 5th May 1900, however their first born, David Albert Martin, was born at 55 Bishop Street Londonderry on 21st April 1900 which clearly pre-dates this record. In addition it is quite apparent that when James and Mary married Mary was heavily pregnant.

The Martins did not remain in Londonderry for long as by the time of the 1901 census they were living in Swatragh County Londonderry. At Swatragh two further children were born, Mary C Martin on 15th October 1901 and Martha Martin on 26th November 1902. Between the birth of Martha and 15th August 1904 when the next daughter Georgina was born the family moved to Garvagh.

James' service with the RIC ended on 5th January 1905, however by 7th January James had secured employment with the courts as "an Officer for the service of Civil Bill Processes for the Division of Coleraine."¹⁶ At this time James remained in Garvagh where on 19th February 1908 his son William J Martin was born and the following year on 25th May 1909 Robert Martin was born. The family by this stage were living at

¹⁶ Appointment of Process Server, *The Derry Journal*, 11 January 1905

Meeting House Lane/Street in the town where they remained. James died the following month on 13th June 1909 of mouth cancer.

~Constable Matthew Craig 46297~

Matthew Craig was born around 1859 at Garvagh County Londonderry, either at Tirkeeran or Cuilbane, son of John Craig. He joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on 11th January 1881 having been recommended by District Inspector Charles Denham Hoden Jeremy Jephson of Coleraine. Matthew was given the number 46,297 and first served in County Cavan from 15th May 1881 and was noted in the petty sessions records as been at Belturbet between 1883 and 1885. On 16th October 1885 Matthew was transferred to County Tyrone.

On Tuesday 6th April 1897 Matthew acted as groomsman for the wedding of his colleague William N Dunwoody (52,953) of Londonderry RIC and Miss Mary M Watters daughter of Robert Watters of Dungannon. The wedding took place at St Anne's Episcopal Church in Dungannon. Mary was given away by her brother-in-law Sergeant George Acheson (39,972). Matthew gave the couple a clock, however presents were also noted from a number of other RIC members.¹⁷ Matthew was stationed at Dungannon and appears to have remained there until the end of his service in March 1906.

Matthew returned to Garvagh after retiring. In September 1908 the Garvagh Unionist Association elected Matthew Craig as the registration agent for the polling district in the place of Mr TC Laughlin of Grove View who had died. It was reported that "a large number of applications were received, and the delegates unanimously appointed Mr Matthew Craig, Garvagh, to the position."¹⁸ In 1909 Matthew was noted as representing the Unionists at the revision of the voters lists at Garvagh. In 1911 he was recorded in the census as living at Main Street, Garvagh along with his sister Susan Little.

Susan had married John Johnston Little on 19th October 1910 at Agherton Parish Church Portstewart. John Little was also a RIC man

¹⁷ Marriage of Miss Mary M Watters, Dungannon, *The Tyrone Courier*, 8 April 1897

¹⁸ Garvagh Unionist Association, *The Belfast News Letter*, 24 September 1908

(number 52,258) and was the son of Sergeant Naason Little (5213). At the time of their wedding John was a sergeant and had been previously the Acting Sergeant at Coleraine in 1908. In 1911 John was serving at Teeling Street, Tobercurry County Sligo. He was pensioned from the police on 15h March 1912. The two witnesses at the wedding were Eva Hewitt, daughter of former RIC man Robert Hewitt (47,301), and James Craig. James Craig may have been a relation and possibly RIC (see James Craig entry).

Matthew Craig was, unsurprisingly, noted signing the Ulster Covenant in September 1912 (as was John J Little). Matthew became closely involved in the local organisation of the Ulster Volunteer Force at Garvagh and became a commander. In 1913 he was noted as being the secretary of the Garvagh branch of the Unionist Association and the following year was present when Edward Carson visited the town and inspected the branch. John Little was also a member of the Garvagh branch of the Unionist Association and was noted in 1913 attending a meeting along with Matthew Craig where John read a letter of support for the Carson Defence Fund. This was a fund to raise money for the Ulster Volunteer Force for resistance to Home Rule. In 1915 Matthew's experience of drill in the RIC was linked to UVF organisation as outlined in the following article;

On Tuesday evening the Garvagh unit of the Ulster Volunteer Force was inspected by Mr CE Stronge, DL, commander of South Derry Regiment and commander of No 1 Battalion. On the arrival of Mr Stronge, the men were drawn up in line at the Clinton Memorial Orange Hall, under the command of Mr Matthew Craig, instructor, and the inspecting officer was received with the general salute. The company was put through a series of evolutions in drill and of rifle exercises, and acquitted themselves creditably. Subsequently they were addressed by Mr Stronge, who complimented them on their efficiency, stating that he had inspected the several South Derry companies and none of them had given a better display than that which he had just

witnessed. The Garvagh Company was a credit, both to itself and to Mr Craig whose efforts as instructor had not been wasted. Arrangements were afterwards made for entertaining to dinner the recruiting party from 10th Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers when it visits Garvagh on the 29th.¹⁹

His involvement with the Unionist Association continued throughout the First World War. By 1922 Matthew found employment as the rates collector for Garvagh. He continued this job until his death on 9th September 1926. Matthew's brother-in-law John Little was present at his death.

¹⁹ Ulster Volunteer Force – Inspection at Garvagh, *The Belfast News Letter*, 28 January 1915

~Constable James Gilmore 50942~

James Gilmore was the son of David Gilmore of Inshaleen, Garvagh. James was born around 1856 and joined the RIC on Friday 1st December 1882 and was given the number 50,942. James was recommended to the force by District Inspector Charles Denham Hoden Jeremy Jephson like Matthew Craig.

James was posted to Donegal on 14th June 1883 (although his record shows 1885, this would be too long a period in training). He was transferred to Belfast on 17th December 1886 and then Armagh on 31st March 1887. His service ended on 17th December 1907 when he was aged 51.

On 11th August 1909 James married Sarah Margaret Gilmore from Ballyagan at Ballywillan Presbyterian Church, just outside Portrush. Sarah was the daughter of farmer James Gilmore, and was 23 years younger than her husband. A witness at the wedding was former constable Matthew Craig as previously mentioned. In 1911 Sarah and James were living at Inshaleen and James was employed as a farmer. Like his witness Matthew, James signed the Ulster Covenant in 1912 at Garvagh First Presbyterian Church.

~Head Constable George Patton 55680~

George Patton was born in County Donegal around 1870. George was recommended to the RIC by District Inspector Charles Cumming and joined on 1st December 1892. Cumming left the RIC two years after this largely due to being caught up with money lenders. Cumming may have been in Letterkenny at the time George signed up.

Patton received the number 55,680 and was sent to serve in Tipperary North Riding on 15th July 1893. On 1st February 1894 George was promoted to Acting Sergeant, he was then transferred to County Cavan where he was noted in petty sessions records as being stationed at Killeshandra. In 1897 he was again in the petty sessions records this time at Arvagh County Cavan which was where James Bethel had been posted between 1893 and 1895 (see Coleraine chapter). While in Cavan George married Margaret Lowe on 5th June 1900. Margaret was a native of County Leitrim.

Following his marriage to Margaret, George was sent to County Londonderry on 5th October 1900. In the 1901 census George and Margaret were recorded as living in Draperstown. George and Margaret had two children while in Draperstown, Margaret Elizabeth born 20th October 1902 and Mary Eileen Patton born 12th May 1904. The next child was George Harold Patton who was born at Garvagh on 31st August 1906. George was then promoted to Sergeant on 1st January 1907 and remained in Garvagh. Two further children were born in the town, Adela Kathleen Patton born 11th October 1907 and Richard John Patton born 17th December 1908.

In 1910 George sat the exam for Head Constable, however he was not successful. George continued on at Garvagh and by 1918 his role included Inspector of Weights and Measures. In 1920 George successfully passed his promotion exam for Head Constable and was promoted on 1st August and sent to County Roscommon. George's term in Roscommon as Head Constable lasted eight months as he was pensioned on 24th April 1921, he then returned to Garvagh. Prior to his

retirement George was stationed at Ballaghdereen. In November 1923 George was appointed Inspector of Weights and Measures for Coleraine and Magherafelt districts.²⁰

In November 1925 George was injured in a motor accident at Portglenone, however it was to be the second accident he had been in that day;

The dangerous corner at Portglenone, known as the Bellaghy Road end, which has been the scene of frequent accidents, more or less serious, was again on Saturday evening the scene of an alarming motor smash. It appears that Alexander Jackson Keith, a young motor driver in the employment of Mr Dan McKee Ahoghill, was proceeding to Garvagh, driving two passengers in a "Ford" car, and when approaching the Bellaghy corner failed to observe, and was in turn failed to be observed by the driver of a small motor lorry coming from Bellaghy, with the result that the two came into collision, both cars being completely smashed, the drivers fortunately escaping unhurt, notwithstanding the fact that the wheels of each car were torn off and the bodies of the vehicles bent and twisted out of recognition. The driver and owner of the small lorry is Mr John McIntyre, Linenhall Street Ballymena. The two passengers were badly hurt, both of them being thrown clean out of the car by the impact, one of them alighting on his head, sustaining an ugly scalp wound. Their names are Mr George Patton, ex-Head Constable RIC, now acting as a weights and measures inspector for County Derry, and Mr Hugh Knox bank manager, both residing in Garvagh. Mr Patton's injuries were more serious than were those of Mr Knox. In addition to a scalp wound he received two deep gashes on the forehead and a cut to the cheek, near to the right eye, which severed an artery. Both gentlemen were attended to at the surgery of Dr Stewart, Portglenone, and

²⁰ EX RIC Men's Appointments, *The Weekly Irish Times*, 17 February 1923

were afterwards conveyed home. Strange to say, it was the second accident Mr Patton had that day, the other being in Ahoghill where he had to leave his own car with a smashed wheel owing to the tyre blowing off, and he had engaged Mr McKee's car to take his friend and himself home.

The road at the scene of the accident was completely blocked for some time, but the police from Innisrush and Portglenone were early on the scene and had the damaged vehicles removed and also giving the necessary attention to the injured passengers.

The inhabitants of the district are highly indignant at the delay of the authorities in making this corner safer for traffic.²¹

²¹ Portglenone – Another Motor Smash, *The Ballymena Observer*, 13 November 1925

~Constable James Craig 58493~

James Craig was born at Coolbane/Cuilbane, Desertoghill, Garvagh on 24th June 1876 the son of farmer William John Craig and Martha Craig (nee McNerrie). By 1901 William and Martha were living at Tirkeeran.

James joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on 15th October 1898 receiving the registered number 58,493. He was recommended by District Inspector Francis William Lyttleton Rogers of Coleraine. Initially James was sent to County Meath on Saturday 15th April 1899 and was noted in the petty sessions records as serving at Old Castle in May 1900. At the beginning of November 1900 James was transferred to County Donegal and had his first detection within two days of his arrival date. The petty sessions records indicate that James was in Carrigans in 1902 and 1903, however the 1901 census places him at Killea near to the Londonderry/Donegal county border.

On 1st September 1903 James was transferred to Belfast and was noted as serving at Henry Street (listed there in January 1910) and Ballynafeigh (listed there the following year). On 15th October 1906 James' service record notes that he received a head injury, although no further details are recorded as to how he came about this injury. James was to spend a further eight years in Belfast and in the RIC as he was pensioned on 15th November 1914 aged only 38.

James presumably returned to the Garvagh area as he claimed his pension at Coleraine. His pension records show that the end of his service was due to unfitness resulting partially from his injury.

Kilrea

~Acting Constable Daniel McCallion 1535~

Daniel McCallion was born in County Londonderry between 1810 and 1813, depending on whether his age is taken from his Constabulary service record or from his death certificate. Daniel joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 1st February 1833 and was given the number 1535. He was sent to serve in County Antrim.

On 1st January 1836 Daniel was transferred to County Donegal. On 20th October 1838 he married Margaret a native of County Londonderry. Daniel remained in Donegal for the rest of his service and was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st January 1853 and then Constable on 1st June 1855. His service was chequered given that he was commended for an “intrepid arrest” in 1858 but then was reduced in rank to Sub Constable for six months from 17th March 1861 and was ultimately reduced to Acting Constable from 1st May 1862. Daniel was fined twice, once for “slight intoxication.”

Daniel was pensioned from the Constabulary on Wednesday 1st October 1862 and received a pension of £30 per annum. The following year on 6th June Daniel was assaulted by four men named as William Paul, Hunter Stewart, Allen McElfatrick and Robert Lennox at Moneysallin near Kilrea. The indictment against the men stated that “they did, then and there, beat, wound and ill-treat him, so that his life was greatly despaired of.”¹ In March 1865 his fortunes improved when he was appointed as a bailiff in Kilrea by Robert Holbeche Dolling the High Sheriff under the Civil Bill Courts Procedure Amendment Act 1864.² By 1873 Daniel had become a process server in Kilrea which is a position he still held in 1880.

Daniel died on 20th June 1884 at Kilrea. His cause of death was recorded as “paralysis.” A woman named Mary Jennings was present at his death. It is unclear if this is the same Mary Jennings who married RIC man Thomas Hughes (see Coleraine chapter).

¹ Coleraine Quarter Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 4 July 1863

² Notice of Appointment of Bailiffs, *The Londonderry Journal*, 15 March 1865

~Sub Constable James Fletcher 3273~

James Fletcher was born around 1827 in County Fermanagh. Prior to joining the Constabulary of Ireland James worked as a shoemaker. James was recommended to the force by the Earl of Enniskillen and joined on Friday 1st June 1838 receiving the service number 3273. The following year at the beginning of June James was made a 1st class Sub Constable until August 1844 when he was reduced in rank. James was returned to 1st class Sub Constable in August 1845. In July 1845 James married Isabella from Queen's County which may have seen him move counties.

Fletcher served in Queens County, County Tipperary, and County Cavan. In 1854 he was stationed at Ballyjamesduff County Cavan and then Cloughballybeg in 1861. James' service with the constabulary ended the following year on 1st April 1862. He initially claimed his pension at Greenock, Scotland until April 1878 when he claimed at Ballymena. He remained in this area until the early 1880's when he collected his money at Magherafelt. This changed to the Coleraine office by 18th February 1890.

James died at Killymuck Glebe which straddles the Drumagarner Road a few miles out of Kilrea. He died of senile decay on 20th February 1900. In 1901 Isabella was 66 and living on Maghera Street Kilrea. Her employment was listed as a nurse and companion presumably for the 77 year old Anne Smith she was living with.

~Constable Paul Blair 5802~

Paul Blair was born in County Londonderry around 1823, the son of Joseph Blair and may have been from Drumlane. Drumlane is near to Tamlaght not far from where James Fletcher ended his days. Prior to joining the Irish Constabulary Paul worked as a shoemaker like James Fletcher.

Paul was recommended to the constabulary by the Reverend Maiben Cunningham Motherwell, Curate of Tamlaght O'Crilly, of Hervey Cottage Kilrea. Paul was given the registered number 5802 when he joined on Saturday 15th June 1844. Paul served in County Wexford for three months before going to County Longford. Paul was noted as still being in Longford in July 1855 however he was subsequently moved to the Reserve and Curragh Camp. Paul had been promoted to Acting Constable at the beginning of 1854 and made full Constable by December 1855. He was reduced again to Acting Constable on 1st December 1861 but was reinstated to Constable by February 1864. On Thursday 5th September 1872 Paul was posted to a "Special Station" in County Mayo.

On 1st July 1873 Paul was pensioned from the RIC after 29 years service receiving an annual pension of £35. His pension was paid from the start from the Coleraine office indicating that he went back home. The valuation records shows Paul at Killygullib Glebe in 1878 taking over the tenancy from an Adam Blair. On Wednesday 4th June 1879 Paul married Eliza Pollock at Boveedy Presbyterian Church. Eliza was from Drumoolish which was a neighbouring townland to Drumlane. The witnesses at the wedding were Eliza's brother Smyth Pollock and his wife Nancy Pollock (nee Campbell). On 31st March 1880 Paul and Eliza had a baby boy named William. A second child Isabella was born on 15th March 1885.

In November 1882 Paul was noted as being one of a number of tenant farmers who attended an election meeting organised by the Conservative candidate Sir Samuel Wilson held at Kilrea Courthouse.³

Paul died on 15th October 1892 at Killygullib of apoplexy aged 69. His brother-in-law Smyth Pollock from Drumoolish was present at death. Eliza and William remained at the address and were noted in both the 1901 and 1911 census returns.

³ County Derry Election, *The Belfast News Letter*, 24 November 1882

~Sub Constable John Dennin 10707~

John Dennin (or elsewhere Dinnen) was born in County Cavan around 1828, and was the son of farmer Hugh Dennin. John joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 15th July 1848 and was recommended by Henry Theophilus Kilbee Esq., JP of Drumkeen County Cavan. John was given the number 10,707 and was sent to County Antrim where he spent his entire service according to his existing service record, however other information suggests that he also served in County Londonderry

On Sunday 1st July 1849 John became a 1st class Sub Constable. At this time or subsequently after John was stationed at Crumlin County Antrim and in June 1851 he was involved in tackling a fire at a shop,

A fire broke out in the shop of Mr Palmer, at Crumlin, on Tuesday morning, between two and three o'clock, and had made considerable progress before the alarm was given. The inmates escaped with difficulty and notwithstanding the exertions of the constables and inhabitants, to subdue the flames, it was not till all the haberdashery goods on the premises were destroyed, that the fire was got under. Sub Constable Dinnen, while throwing water from the room over the shop, on the burning mass, narrowly escaped suffocation by the dense volumes of smoke. The property was uninsured.⁴

By March 1859 John was a constable at Kilrea.⁵ He was noted in February 1863 as working in Kilrea engaged in the usual duties of still seizing along with colleagues from Rasharkin at Portreagy "on the Antrim side of the Bann."⁶ John made deeper connections with the town on 24th October 1865 when he married Mary Lanigan a native of

⁴ Fire at Crumlin, *The Northern Whig*, 12 June 1851

⁵ Kilrea Petty Sessions, *The Coleraine Chronicle*, 12 March 1859

⁶ Extensive Seizure, *The Belfast Morning News*, 16 February 1863

Kilkenny at Drumagarner church Kilrea. At the time of their marriage Mary was a servant living at Kilrea.

John's service with the RIC ended on 10th June 1879 for which he received £30 per year. John initially claimed his pension from the Ballymena office, however from 15th February 1880 he collected his money at Coleraine. John died on Friday 4th January 1895 of influenza. Sergeant James Gracey, another Kilrea pensioner, was present at his death. Gracey will be examined later.

~Constable Daniel Crilly 10732~

Daniel Crilly was from the townland of Gortead near Upperlands. He was born around 1827 and was the son of John Crilly. Daniel was the first of three brothers to join the Constabulary of Ireland, the other two John and William will be discussed in their own right. The family were from an area known as Crilly's Hill. Daniel was recommended by Sub Inspector Thomas Thornley who was, as previously mentioned in the Coleraine chapter, the sub inspector at Coleraine at the time of Daniel's joining on 7th August 1848. This was a month after John Dennin and it was likely that they may have come across each other at the Depot in Dublin.

Daniel was first sent to County Carlow after training in December 1848. He made 1st class Sub Constable by March 1848, Acting Constable on 1st August 1861, and Constable on 10th May 1865. It was at Carlow that Daniel married Ellen Kelly the daughter of Johannes Kelly on 19th September 1865. Daniel was then transferred to County Tipperary on 1st December 1865. He was noted in the petty sessions records the following year at Greenane.

Ellen and Daniel remained in Tipperary until he received his pension on 1st November 1874. Two sons were born in Tipperary, Daniel and Michael with the latter being older. A daughter Mary Anne Crilly was also born between the two. Michael went on to join the RIC on 15th December 1891 with service number 55,231. This was shortly after his mother's death at 65 on 3rd December. Daniel junior ended up a farmer at Gortead living with his sister Mary.

Daniel senior claimed his pension at Maghera until 31st March 1875 when he changed it to Coleraine. He died on 29th March 1897. Daniel junior witnessed the death. Michael was at Castlebridge County Wexford at time of Daniel's death. He later served in Antrim and Tyrone.

~Head Constable John Crilly 17926~

John Crilly, brother of Daniel and William Crilly was born around 1831. John joined the police on 14th January 1854 and had been recommended by the Reverend Maiben Cunningham Motherwell, Curate of Tamlaght O'Crilly. John received the registered number 17,926 and was sent to County Kildare after finishing his training.

Like Daniel, John served next in County Carlow from 1st September 1854. John went there after making 1st class Sub Constable. While in Carlow John was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st September 1863, Constable in 1st May 1866 and Head Constable on 16th December 1877. He was then transferred to Boyle County Roscommon from 1st January 1878.

John's service as Head Constable was only for fourteen months as he was pensioned at the start of May 1879. John was to only receive a small number of payments as he died on Tuesday 1st July 1879 at Gorteade. Daniel Crilly was present at his death.

~Constable Adam Pickett 19870~

Adam Pickett was born in County Londonderry around 1835 and may have been from the Limavady area. Adam joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 18th June 1855 having been recommended by Andrew Orr JP of Millburn Coleraine. Adam's registered number was 19,870. Prior to his service Adam had been a weaver.

On 10th October 1855 Adam was sent to East Galway and was promoted to 1st class Sub Constable at the beginning of the following June. On 6th April 1863 Adam married a woman from East Galway and was transferred to County Meath on 11th June. Adam was then moved to Belfast from the start of September 1865. In April 1869 Adam was stationed at North Queen Street in Belfast⁷. The next mention of a barracks was in January 1872 when Adam was linked to Donegall Street RIC barracks.⁸ Adam was promoted to Acting Constable in July 1872 and Constable on 1st June 1875.

In January 1877 Adam was still at Donegall Street, however at this time he found himself the subject of a Constabulary Investigation in regards to a complaint made against him by a colleague Constable John Eastwood "for being drunk on the night of the 10th inst., at 1145 in the barracks." Eastwood was also under investigation for not reporting to the Head Constable that Adam was drunk and for directing another constable not to make any entry in the barrack journal that Adam was drunk. Under examination it transpired that Adam had not been drunk and was acquitted, Eastwood was reduced in rank and transferred to County Londonderry.⁹

Adam remained at Donegall Street until he retired on 16th July 1885. He claimed his pension from the Coleraine office from the beginning of his retirement. In June 1887 Adam attended a meeting of Liberal Unionists at the Diamond Kilrea which was addressed by the MP

⁷ Charge of Highway Robbery, *Belfast Weekly News*, 24 April 1869

⁸ An Amateur Nigger In Trouble, *The Northern Whig*, 9 January 1872

⁹ Constabulary Investigation, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 3 February 1877

Thomas Lea.¹⁰ Adam took land in the Moneysallin area around 1896 and farmed it until his death on 16th October 1912. His wife died before 1901. Moneysallin is near to both the Drumlane and Killygullib townlands both of which had ex-RIC residents. Adam's death was witnessed by Thomas Vance who had previously been visiting Adam at the time of the 1911 census. Thomas Vance died in 1915 at Drumagarner Kilrea and had been a labourer at the time of his death, however he was previously a Harbour Constable in Belfast.

¹⁰ Unionist Meeting in Kilrea, *The Northern Whig*, 2 June 1887

~Constable Thomas Stewart 20171~

Thomas Stewart was born at Killymuck between 1835 and 1839 depending on whether his police service record or his death certificate is used for this information. He joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 10th October 1855 and was given the registered number 20,171.

After completion of his training Thomas was sent to King's County on 8th February 1856. While in King's County Thomas was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st April 1871. At the beginning of October in the same year he was transferred to County Westmeath where six months later he was promoted to Constable. From petty sessions records Thomas was serving at Reynella in 1874 and Archerstown in 1875.

Thomas was pensioned from the RIC on 1st February 1877 and claimed the money from Coleraine. He died on Thursday 17th August 1893 at Killymuck. His sister-in-law Sarah Stewart also of Killymuck was present at his death.

~Head Constable William Crilly 22131~

William was the third of the three Crilly brothers who joined the Constabulary of Ireland. He was born in approximately 1829 and initially joined the Irish Revenue Police on 20th February 1847 serving at Strade County Mayo and then following promotion to Sergeant in 1855 at Boyle County Roscommon. His service with the Revenue Police ended on their disbandment on 1st October 1857.

It was at this stage that William joined the Constabulary of Ireland and was granted the registered number 22,131. He only spent a short time in training given his prior experience and was sent to County Donegal on 13th December 1857. William was noted in the following posts while in Donegal, Killybegs 1859; Duchary 1863 (on revenue duty) and Knockbrack 1871. It was while stationed in Knockbrack that William was promoted to 2nd class Head Constable on 1st October 1871. At the start of the next month he was transferred to Fermanagh.

William was promoted to 1st class Head Constable on 1st October 1876 and remained at this rank until the end of his service. William was pensioned on 20th January 1880 after 32 years service. He finished his service at Lisnaskea County Fermanagh.¹¹ William returned home to Gortead and on 3rd January 1882 he married Bridget Henry at Maghera. Bridget was a farmer's daughter from Ampertane (Upperlands).

Between 1882 and 1898 William and Bridget had nine children, John Crilly born 8th December 1882; Susanna Crilly born 9th March 1884; Margaret Crilly born 1st January 1886; Mary Crilly born 9th December 1886; William Crilly born 19th April 1889; Michael Crilly born 10th June 1891; Dominic Crilly born 23rd September 1893; Bridget Crilly born 13th January 1896 and Matthew Crilly born 6th October 1898.

¹¹ The Fermanagh Royal Irish Constabulary, *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 22 January 1880

William died on 20th December 1899 at Gorteade. Bridget was left to run the farm and to look after the children. It was perhaps fortunate that they had so many relatives living in the local area.

~Sub Constable John O'Kane 22268~

John O'Kane was born in the Kilrea area around 1833 and was the son of Patrick O'Kane farmer. Like William Crilly John had been a member of the Irish Revenue Police and had joined on 21st November 1854 aged 21. Following training he was assigned to No 46 party then No 11 party and then No 66 party in 1856 which was in Connemara. In 1857 he was moved to No 43 party in Galway.

Also like William Crilly at the beginning of October 1857 John transferred his service to the Constabulary of Ireland and was given the registered number 22,268. Following his training John was transferred to County Donegal from 15th January 1858. While in Donegal John married Sarah Bradley at Clonmany on 13th June 1865. John was moved to County Mayo in May 1866.

In Mayo John was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st July 1872 and then Constable in January 1874 however he was reduced back to Sub Constable on 28th October 1875. His service record does not indicate any reason for this sudden reduction of two ranks. John was pensioned from the RIC on 1st November 1877. Unlike William, John did not return directly home as he first claimed his pension at Buncrana County Donegal until 9th April 1879 when he claimed at Coleraine.

John and Sarah then moved to Killygullib and started farming. Sarah died in 1908 and the following year on 18th November 1909 John remarried. His new bride was Catherine O'Kane from The Grove, Crossland Swatragh. Sarah was the daughter of Patrick O'Kane who was also a farmer. In 1901 Catherine had been a general servant at Tamneymartin Maghera. John was around 40 years Catherine's senior. John and Catherine had a daughter on 27th November 1910 whom they named Anne Jane O'Kane.

John died on 4th February 1917 at Killygullib aged 84 of senile decay.
James O'Kane of Crossland was present at his death. The remainder of
John's pension was paid to Catherine.

~Constable Thomas Fitzpatrick 36040~

Thomas Fitzpatrick was born in County Longford around 1847 and was the son of farmer Bernard Fitzpatrick. Thomas joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on 6th October 1869 and was given the number 36,040. Thomas had been recommended to the force by Sub Inspector Thomas Hogben who was stationed at Newtown Stewart County Tyrone at the time. This suggests that Thomas may have been living or working in this area at the time of joining.

Following the completion of his training Thomas was sent to County Cavan on 15th March 1870. He was noted in petty sessions records in Cavan town in 1871, Virginia in 1872 and Kilnaleck in 1875. Thomas was transferred to County Monaghan on 28th October 1881 and was noted as serving at Scotshouse at the time of his marriage on Wednesday 10th August 1887.

Thomas married Catherine Fitzpatrick a native of Keelaghy County Fermanagh and daughter of farmer Daniel Fitzpatrick. Keelaghy is a townland northwest of Scotshouse just within the Fermanagh border. The priest was another Fitzpatrick named Matthew. One of the witnesses was Michael McCaughey (46,473) a Tyrone man who had joined in 1881. Owing to their marriage Thomas was moved to County Londonderry on 27th October 1887.

This move resulted in Thomas working in Coleraine and on 13th June 1888 a son Bernard was born at Preaching House Street, Coleraine. By the birth of their second child Kate (Cassie) Ann Fitzpatrick on 2nd April 1892 Thomas and family were living at Castlerock. Their third child Thomas Daniel was born on 26th June 1897 also at Castlerock. In September 1896 Thomas gave evidence at an inquest of the death of Belfast lamplighter John McAuley who had fallen from the cliffs at Castlerock and was found near Downhill in a battered condition. John had been on an excursion with the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds. During the inquest it was revealed that John had gone after a hat that had blown towards the cliffs and as a result he had fallen trying to

retrieve it. It was decreed that a sign was to be erected warning of the dangers.¹²

By at least April 1901 Thomas had been moved to Kilrea where he ended his service on 17th July 1906. By November 1911 Thomas had found employment as a process server, a position which he held in common with Coleraine pensioner James Hewitt by 1913 and was noted in 1918 as still holding the position. Thomas and family lived in a property at Bridge Street Kilrea.

Thomas died on 29th November 1927 aged 80 at Killygullib. His daughter Cassie was present at his death. A newspaper report stated the following circumstances;

“The death took place suddenly of Mr Thomas Fitzpatrick, Bridge Street, yesterday, in the avenue leading to Churchtown Manse, near Kilrea. He was found by Rev HC Mulholland lying on the road with his bicycle beside him. Medical aid was requisitioned, but life could only be pronounced extinct.”¹³

¹² The Fatality at Castlerock, *The Belfast News Letter*, 7 September 1896

¹³ Sudden Death at Kilrea, *The Belfast News Letter*, 30 November 1927

~Sergeant Mark Reilly 36598~

Mark Reilly (later referred to as O'Reilly) was born in County Mayo around 1851. Mark was recommended to the Royal Irish Constabulary by Sub Inspector Frederick Augustus White who was living in the Foxford area of Mayo at the time. His service commenced on 6th May 1870 when he was assigned the number 36,598.

Initially Mark was sent to County Roscommon on 10th November 1870 where he remained until 10th March 1884 when he was moved to West Galway. While in Roscommon Mark was noted at the following stations, Roscommon town 1878; Castlerea 1880; a temporary hut at Ballagh 1882; Killinca 1883 and Castlerea again in 1884. He was also promoted to Acting Constable on 1st May 1873 and then Constable on 1st February 1879. On 27th November 1882, around the time Mark was at Ballagh, he married Mary (Minnie) Devlin from County Armagh.

Mark's stay in Galway was curtailed after less than two months with a move to Belfast on 1st May 1884. While in Belfast Mark was fined 40s for some indiscretion on 30th May 1885. He was then moved to County Londonderry on 10th June. This fine may have been the reason for his reduction in rank on 2nd July 1885 from the new rank of sergeant back to constable. Just two months after the reduction Mark was again fined 40s on 8th August 1885.

Minnie and Mark's first child Mary was born on Wednesday 23rd December 1885. Of note the family address was given as Woodhouse Street Portadown. Their second daughter Anna was also born at the same address on Friday 23rd March 1888, however by this time Mark's address was given as Moneymore County Londonderry. Mark's first son, Mark Joseph O'Byrne Reilly, was born at Moneymore on 24th December 1889. Mark and family remained in Moneymore until 1892 when he was noted as living at King Street Magherafelt at the time of the birth of his daughter Margaret M Reilly on 4th November.

Mark was then promoted to Acting Sergeant on 1st May 1893 and then Sergeant by 1st September 1895. His next daughter Josephine was born in the Lurgan area shortly after this second promotion. Mark was pensioned on 1st September 1896 and immediately claimed his pension at Coleraine. It is possible that the family continued to live in County Londonderry despite Josephine being born in County Armagh. It was around this time that Mark took up employment with the Mercer's Company at Kilrea as the estate overseer. Annie Elizabeth Reilly was next to be born on 28th June 1897 which occurred in Kilrea, followed two years later by another daughter Catherine Reilly born 2nd April 1899.

In the 1901 census Mark was recorded as being a clerk and estate overseer and Minnie was a housekeeper. The home they lived in was tied to the job with the Mercer's Company and was later named 'Dulce Donum' (from Latin meaning sweetly at home). The Mercer's were one of the plantation companies from London who were resented by many tenants in the county. As a catholic Mark's employment may have caused some issues socially within Kilrea, however he continued his employment with the company until 1908 when they withdrew and he purchased the house.

In January 1911 Mark had been taking legal action against Charles Rogers JP, William Craig and James Hunter merchants, as trustees of the Kilrea markets and John Boyle blacksmith for the erection of the blacksmiths shop at the Market Yard which adjoined Reilly's residence "and the chimney of which sent forth volumes of black, dirty smoke which cause nuisance to plaintiff's premises." The article went on to describe the Reilly's home;

Mr Reilly was the owner on fee of this house, which was a substantial commodious, and in many ways an ornamental dwelling house. The house, which was built by the Mercers' Company, had been formerly used as the offices of the company. When the company were selling their estate this house was sold to Mr Reilly for consideration of £466 13 s 9d.

Mr Reilly had been a sub-agent of the company for a number of years and on this consideration had got this house at practically half of its market value.¹⁴

The case was dismissed, however it showed that there was some ill feeling towards Mark and his associations with the Mercer's. Another interesting development in this period was that in 1907 and 1909 Mark's next two children John Gerard born 3rd January 1907 and Veronica born 17th April 1909 were both recorded as being *O'Reilly* rather than Reilly on their birth certificates. Indeed by the 1911 census Mark was signing his name as *O'Reilly*. It is unclear what the driving force behind this change was.

In February 1911 Mark was appointed as a JP for County Londonderry, by this time he had begun a linen business in Kilrea.¹⁵ His business was to be successful and by May 1916 he was appointed to the Irish Board of Trade (linen and cotton) for Ulster "representing employers in the trade who are habitually engaged in subcontracting." His legal career also continued as by February 1918 he was appointed to the Commission of the Peace for County Antrim as well as Londonderry and sat as a JP at Rasharkin.

His role as a JP did not always run smoothly. In April 1911, not long after his initial appointment, Mark sat on the Bench at the monthly court of petty sessions when a case was heard relating to Kilrea election riots from December 1910. The case involved an allegation of drunkenness and disorderly conduct taken by Sergeant Nevin against William Sloan a labourer from Church Street Kilrea. The case had been adjourned from earlier in the year and Samuel Brown, solicitor for Sloan, had asked for the case to be dismissed. Mark said "the case must be heard. There was no use in dismissing cases of that kind." Brown took exception to Mark's involvement,

¹⁴ The Village Smithy – Is it a Nuisance, *The Derry Journal*, 11 January 1911

¹⁵ New Magistrate For Co Derry, *The Derry Journal*, 1 February 1911

Mr Brown said he objected to Mr Reilly interfering in that case at all. In the first place he did not take part in the original proceedings and secondly he had engaged in an extensive newspaper warfare in connection with it.

Mr Reilly- Certain allegations were made against the police.

Mr Brown – You have no right to interfere here. It is pure prejudice and bad feeling and you are showing very bad taste.¹⁶

No ruling was made on the case at that time, however the exchange between Mark and Samuel Brown revealed two things. First it showed that Mark's experience as a RIC sergeant had some influence on his decision making in relation to the necessity of the case to be heard. Secondly and more significantly the reference to the "extensive newspaper warfare" is probably a reference to the fact that Mark's son Mark was at that time, and had been for a number of years, a journalist.

Mark junior in 1904 was noted as being on the staff of the Coleraine Constitution as the Kilrea reporter. In that year he was being sued for libel by Charles McNamee a linen weaver of Movinagher. Mark was caught up in further rioting in Kilrea in July 1912 and was shot in the ankle by revolver bullets along with another man Patrick Henry, a shoemaker from Bridge Street. The matter was mentioned in the House of Commons and Mark and Patrick were described as "nationalists." The RIC County Inspector's report to in relation to the trouble made to the government was read as follows;

Serious party disturbance took place at Kilrea on night of 13th inst., on return of Excursionists from Portrush. Two persons named Mark Reilly and Patrick Henry, wounded by revolver bullets. Several windows broken, disturbance lasted

¹⁶ The Kilrea Election Riots – Echo at Petty Sessions, *The Belfast Weekly News*, 6 April 1911

from 10.30 p.m. to 11.0 p.m. Stones, bottles and other missiles being thrown and revolver shots fired. The town is now quiet. Reports follow by post.¹⁷

The District Inspector's report was also read;

No outrage was committed by Nationalists at Kilrea on 13th July last on women and children. The affair in question did not commence by an attack on a child of fourteen years, nor was any child severely hurt. The perpetrators did not then attack a party of excursionists, young women, nor pelt them with stones or other missiles. The facts are: A party riot provoked by a private dispute occurred in Kilrea on night of 13th inst., on the arrival of the last train from Portrush, between the Orangemen and a party of Ancient Order of Hibernians. Each side threw stones, bottles, and other missiles, Revolvers were discharged on both sides. Mark Reilly, jun., and Patrick Henry, Nationalists, were struck by revolver bullets. They have been medically treated, and are now doing well. Several shop windows, the property of traders on both sides, were broken. No arrests yet. The town is now quiet.¹⁸

Mark was interviewed in hospital and gave his own account of what had happened;

Interviewed at the hospital he said he was in Kilrea and hearing the disturbances was on the spot to make inquiries. While walking alongside a police officer in front of the Nationalists he heard a report and felt himself struck. A fusillade of firing followed and he went into a house and tied

¹⁷ http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1912/jul/16/disturbances-at-kilrea#S5CV0041P0_19120716_HOC_312

¹⁸ http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1912/jul/19/disturbance-at-kilrea#S5CV0041P0_19120719_HOC_259

up his foot, being subsequently conveyed to Belfast where the bullet was extracted.¹⁹

Mark senior was a JP during the magisterial investigation into these disturbances which was, unsurprisingly, objected to by solicitor Samuel Brown. Mark junior went on to have a career as a Dublin based freelance journalist writing for the *Derry Journal*, *An Poblacht* and the *Limerick Leader*. He died in July 1947²⁰

Mark senior's own career continued with the development of his hand embroidery business into the Kilrea Manufacturing Company. Mark ran this company until 1930 when due to his advancing years he sold the property to the Old Bleach Linen Company. He also became a senior magistrate in the county.

Other than Mark junior, the other children had their own lives and careers. John Gerard married Bride McManus daughter of RA McManus a merchant of the Diamond Kilrea in 1934. At this time John was a member of staff at the Northern Bank HQ in Belfast having passed the Northern Bank exam in 1924. Margaret had graduated from Hugh's Civil Service Academy in Londonderry in July 1915 and presumably pursued a clerical career. Josephine had married (Kennedy) and had moved to Belfast, another daughter had married (Mullan) and had moved to New York and another had by the time of Mark's death in January 1935 joined a religious order and was in China.²¹

As stated Mark died on Monday 21st January 1935 at 'Dulce Donum.' Nan (Annie Elizabeth) who remained at Kilrea received her father's effects totalling £141 10s 3d. Mark was noted as being buried at Drumagarner burying ground Drumagarner Road Kilrea

¹⁹ A Pressman's Experience, *The Dublin Daily Express*, 16 July 1912

²⁰ News in Brief – Kilrea-born Dublin Journalist dies, *The Northern Whig*, 19 July 1947

²¹ Obituary – County Derry Magistrate, *The Belfast News Letter*, 23 January 1935

~Constable James Gracey 37376~

James Gracey was born in County Armagh around 1852, son of baker Abraham Gracey. Abraham was a member of Sandy's Street Presbyterian congregation in Newry indicating that the family lived in or near Newry. The family may also have had connections to Forkhill County Armagh. James joined the Royal Irish Constabulary on Friday 4th March 1870 attaining the service number 37,376. James was recommended to the RIC by Sub Inspector George Black who had been stationed at Coleraine until 1866 before being moved to Newry in County Down (although his record states County Armagh). Prior to his service with the RIC James was a weaver.

His first posting from the Depot was to Drumquin County Tyrone on Thursday 11th August 1870.²² On 13th March 1871 James was admonished for drinking alcohol. James moved station by September 1877 when on the 14th he married Hessie Young, the daughter of farmer Robert Young, at Dungannon 1st Presbyterian Church. At the time of their marriage both gave Cavanakeeran, Pomeroy as their address. This is the townland that Pomeroy town is located in, it is therefore likely that James was stationed at Pomeroy barracks.

Following his marriage James was transferred to County Londonderry on 15th October 1877. James and Hessie's first child was born at Pomeroy on 1st July 1878, however James was working at Kilrea. Her name was not recorded on the birth certificate. A second daughter Maud Elise Gracey was then born at Pomeroy on 14th April 1880. James was promoted to Acting Constable on 1st December 1881. By early January 1882 James was transferred from Kilrea to the Waterside barracks in Londonderry.²³ A third daughter, whose name was again not recorded, was born at Cavanakeeran on 13th January 1882 while James was in Londonderry. By the start of June 1882 James was promoted to Constable, he may have been moved to a station on the

²² Royal Irish Constabulary, County Tyrone, *The Londonderry Standard*, 27 August 1870

²³ Constabulary Changes, *The Derry Journal*, 6 January 1882

city side of Londonderry as newspaper reports from October 1882 to August 1883 place him in the city centre, Foyle Street, Magazine Street, Bishop Street and Fahan Street. It is probable that he was stationed at Bishop Street.

By the birth of their next child Walter Hanna Gracey on 9th February 1884 the family were living in Kilrea and James was the Sergeant in charge. Walter was to go on to have a distinguished career as a civil engineer as outlined in his obituary,

Mr Walter Gracey, Bridge St., Kilrea, Co. Derry, who has died suddenly at his home was one of South Derry's best-known professional men. He was aged 68. He was a civil engineer and in addition to his private practice, he had served the Coleraine Rural Council for many years in a similar capacity in the Kilrea area. He was the only son of the late Mr James Gracey, an ex-sergeant of the RIC who following his retirement, was Clerk of Markets in Kilrea.

Deceased served his apprenticeship with Messrs W and M Given, Coleraine and was in the service of Harland and Wolff, Belfast, during the 1914-18 war. After the war he began business in Kilrea. He had a wide knowledge of local history and affairs and in former years was well-known as a skilful angler on the River Bann.²⁴

In 1901 Walter was a solicitor's clerk, but 1911 had become a draughtsman. By at least 1925 he was a civil engineer at Kilrea and by 1930 Walter had established a business as an architect and surveyor. As well as fishing Walter was noted as being a capable golfer playing at competition level in 1924.

James and Hester had three more children prior to James retiring on 1st February 1896. Hester Gracey was born 27th March 1886 and went on to work for the post office. In the 1911 census return she was noted as

²⁴ Death of Kilrea Engineer, *The Derry Journal*, 30 January 1953

living with ex-RIC man Hector Glass at Claremont Street in Belfast (see Portstewart chapter for more information on the Glass family). Ethel Clarke Gracey was born on 25th January 1888. Ethel remained in Kilrea at Bridge Street and was there in 1953 when Walter died and became the beneficiary of Walter's estate receiving £5,459 as well as property in England and Northern Ireland. The final child to be born was Robert William Gracey on 23rd May 1890, however Robert only lived a short while as he passed away on 29th November 1891.

As mentioned in Walter's obituary his father became the clerk of the market and the family lived at the Bridge Street address from after James' retirement. James' appointment gave "general satisfaction amongst the people of the town and neighbourhood of all shades of religious and political feeling," and his service in Kilrea for around nineteen years "won golden opinions as being an upright, courteous, and efficient public officer."²⁵ As well as being the clerk of markets James took on further work as being the fishing licence distributor for the area. A previous clerk of markets was Head Constable John Wilson (3392) who had died on 14th November 1888 at 14 Clonavon Road Ballymena. John was originally from King's County and joined the Constabulary of Ireland on 1st September 1839. He served in counties Clare, Antrim, and Londonderry and was promoted to Head Constable. He was buried at Innisrush at the family burial plot. James signed the Ulster Covenant at Kilrea in September 1912.

In 1928 the Cookstown Poor Law Guardians pursued James' wife Hester for £220 for the "maintenance and medical and surgical treatment in Dungannon Infirmary of William Young," her brother, who had died. The matter was taken to the High Court and it was argued that the amount was now £190 but that the Guardians had become aware that Hester had bought William's small farm at Cavanakeeran and as such they sought this as compensation. Hester's counsel argued that she had "bought the farm on a mortgage sale" and as such did not own it outright.

²⁵ Echoes from Kilrea, *The Coleraine Constitution*, 8 February 1896

The Lord Chief Justice said the market value of the farm was not more than £200. Mrs Gracey therefore as the first mortgagee on the farm for £210 had come into possession of no assets worth a farthing on the death of her brother. The action must be dismissed.²⁶

James was noted in 1931 as being a member of the Archaeological Committee of the Belfast Natural History Society. He became part of a plan to create a national Museum which was to become the Ulster Museum. He died on 26th February 1936 at Kilrea and his effects were listed as £30. It is probable that the house was already signed over to Walter. James was buried at Kilrea Presbyterian church. Hester died on 31st July 1939 also at Bridge Street and buried with James.

²⁶ Cookstown Guardians' Claim for Maintenance of Pomeroy Smallholder, *The Northern Whig*, 28 January 1928

~Sergeant Richardson Alexander Long 45255~

Richardson Alexander Long was born in approximately 1861 in County Armagh son of farmer William Long. He was recommended to the Royal Irish Constabulary by District Inspector Louis Lanyon who was serving in County Tyrone at the time. Richardson's service record reflects that he was living in Tyrone at the time he was recommended. He joined on 6th March 1880 and received the number 45,255. His first posting was to County Antrim on 8th January 1881 after a long period in training. While in County Antrim (possibly in Belfast) Richardson was promoted to Acting Sergeant on 1st August 1891. An Acting Sergeant Long was noted in the north Antrim area in September 1891, possibly in Cloughmills. However Richardson was named by his full name for an incident at Glenarm the following month.²⁷ He was then transferred to the Reserve in November 1891 for two months before being sent to County Down on 28th January 1892.

In Down Richardson was promoted to Sergeant on 1st February 1894. He may have been serving at Waringstown just prior to his promotion. Richardson married Elizabeth Crawford McKnight on Wednesday 2nd March 1898 at St John the Evangelist Church of Ireland at Killyleagh County Down. At this time both Richardson and Elizabeth were resident in Killyleagh. Elizabeth was the daughter of builder John McKnight. Newspaper reports link Richardson to Killyleagh barracks from at least Christmas Day 1895. On 8th June 1898 Richardson was posted to County Cavan however he only remained there a short time as according to his service record he returned to County Antrim by 3rd January 1899.

Once again the RIC service record does not reflect what seems to have occurred as on 18th December 1898 Elizabeth gave birth to a son, also named Richardson Alexander Long, in Belfast. Her address at the time was 25 Earl Street, but Richardson's was listed as Ballymena. Earl Street no longer exists however it was in the Sailor Town area of

²⁷ Special Court of Petty Sessions Glenarm, *The Ballymena Observer*, 9 October 1891

Belfast. In 1897 52 Earl Street was the home of William Chalmers and he was still at this address in 1901. William was a riveter presumably at the shipyards or docks. It is not clear why Elizabeth was at this address, however on Richardson's service record it stated that Elizabeth had connections in Londonderry and Belfast.

The next child born was William Henry Long on 10th May 1900 at Moneyleck, Rasharkin. By this stage Richardson had become the Sergeant at Rasharkin barracks. The following June Richardson sat the Head Constable exam in Dublin.²⁸ He was, however, unsuccessful.

Questions in the House of Commons in July 1903 and March 1905 regarding Rasharkin barracks showed that Richardson had been at Rasharkin from approximately 1899, they also suggested an issue of sectarianism.

Applications for Transfer from Constables stationed at
Rasharkin, Co. Antrim (July 1903)

MR. MACVEAGH

To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of constables who during the time Sergeant Long has been principal officer at Rasharkin, County Antrim, applied for transfer to other districts; to what religious denominations these constables belong; and the number who obtained such transfers.

(Answered by Mr. Wyndham.) Six constables applied for transfers from this station during the period referred to (four years four months). They were all Roman Catholics.²⁹

Rasharkin (Antrim) Police Force (March 1905)

²⁸ Observations, *The Ballymena Observer*, 14 June 1901

²⁹ http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1903/jul/29/applications-for-transfer-from#S4V0126P0_19030729_HOC_33

MR. KILBRIDE

I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many police constables have been stationed in Rasharkin, county Antrim, since Sergeant Long's appointment to that station; how many applied for transfers; and how many of those who applied for transfers were Catholics.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. WYNDHAM)

Sergeant Long has been six years at this station. Sixteen constables have been at the station in that period. Of these seven, all of whom were Catholics, applied for transfers to other stations. Three of them wished to be near their native places, one was transferred for the benefit of his health, and two wished to go to better stations.

MR. KILDBRIDE

Can the right hon. Gentleman say what particular disease this constable was suffering from that made him wish to be transferred?

MR. ATKINSON

No.³⁰

Unusually the official Hansard record, as above, did not include a further significant question asked by MacVeagh which was reported in the *Belfast News Letter* as follows,

Was not this sergeant such a religious bigot that no Roman Catholic constable could serve under him?³¹

³⁰ http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1905/mar/02/rasharkin-antrim-police-force#S4V0142P0_19050302_HOC_154

This question does not seem to have received a reply and the speaker called for order. Clearly this indicates a major problem if it was being raised in Westminster. By the time the second question had been asked Richardson was about to retire from the police. He was pensioned on 19th March 1905. It is not apparent if this date was brought forward due to the adverse attention Long was receiving.

In the period he was in Rasharkin Richardson was recognised on three occasions for good work 13th March 1900, 1st September 1902 and 7th October 1903, for the first he received £5 and the third £2. The third occasion was a result of Richardson and colleagues constables Patrick Crowley and George Ferguson breaking up a cock fight near Rasharkin.³² Indeed Richardson had been severely beaten in his attempts to break up the cock fight which had resulted in the prosecution of a number of local men. In April 1904 Richardson was awarded a silver medal by the Society for Protection of Cruelty to Animals and Crowley and Ferguson were awarded bronze medals.³³ The initial nominations had come in August 1903 which probably relates to the cockfighting incident.

During his time at Rasharkin two further children were born, Elizabeth Constance Long born on 22nd July 1902 and Robert Long born 6th June 1904. The next child, George, was born on 8th June 1908 at Kilrea. By this stage Richardson had set himself up as a stationer in the town and Elizabeth as an organist and music teacher.³⁴ At the time of the census in 1911 the family were living in a house on Bridge Street Kilrea.

Although this was not reflected in the census return by 1910 Richardson was also the Deputy Registrar of Births, Death and Marriages at Kilrea a position which he held until at least 1918. In the same records a "RA Long" at Kilrea was also noted as being a

³¹ House of Common, *Belfast News Letter*, 3 March 1905

³² The Royal Irish Constabulary, *The Weekly Irish News*, 17 October 1903

³³ Ulster SPCA, *The Northern Whig*, 8 April 1904

³⁴ <http://www.lennonwylie.co.uk/PT19078.htm#KILREA>

“stationer and emigration agent.” It is unlikely that this is anyone other than Richardson.³⁵ Also a Mrs Long was recorded as being the postmistress however this may have been another Elizabeth Long of Church Street in Kilrea. By 1918 Richardson held a number of positions within Kilrea society. He is recorded as well as being the Deputy Registrar as being; the secretary of the Orange and Protestant Friendly Society; secretary of the Kilrea Unionist Club; an emigration agent; newsagent and embroidery agent.

Therefore by 1918 in Kilrea former RIC men held a number of positions in the town. Other than Richardson there were, Thomas Fitzpatrick the Civil Bill Officer, Mark Reilly/O'Reilly the JP, linen merchant and insurance agent and James Gracey the Clerk of Markets and issuer of fishing licences.³⁶

Elizabeth died on 9th March 1914 at Bridge Street aged only 41. Elizabeth had been ill with pulmonary TB for five months. Newspaper reports from 1924 and 1928 show that Richardson was a rate collector in Kilrea although his date of appointment is not apparent. He died on 16th December 1931 at Bridge Street Kilrea. His son William Long was witness to his death. William lived at 3 Cabin Hill Gardens Belfast. Richardson was noted on his will record as being a rate collector and William was a civil servant. Richardson was buried at Kilrea Church of Ireland. Robert Long died in 1981 and was also buried at the same place as his parents.

³⁵ <http://www.libraryireland.com/UlsterDirectory1910/Kilrea.php>

³⁶ <http://www.lennonwylie.co.uk/PT19188.htm#KILREA>

~Sergeant John Thomas Neely 50263~

John Thomas Neely was born around the beginning of 1862 in County Londonderry the son of George Neely and may have been from the Timaconway area just east of Swatragh. John was recommended by Sub Inspector Charles Denham Hoden Jeremy Jephson of Coleraine and joined on 18th September 1882. Prior to joining John was a grocer's assistant. John was given the service number 50,263 and was sent to County Donegal on 6th July 1883. While in Donegal John was fined 5s on 3rd January 1887, the reason was not recorded.

John was subsequently sent to County Monaghan on 5th June 1888, where he was fined 10s on 2nd July 1890 and received a commendation on 24th October 1890. He then went to County Dublin on 12th March 1892. He was transferred from County Dublin to Belfast from 14th June 1896 and three months later he married Agnes Malone from Clintagh, Aghadowey, at Killaig Presbyterian Aghadowey on 17th September. John's brother William James Neely was a witness.

Agnes and John had a son James George Neely who was born in Belfast on 30th December 1900. At the time of the 1901 census the small Neely family were living at Ashbourne Street in south Belfast. Unfortunately the family were not destined to remain together for long as Agnes died of TB on 31st October 1905 at Clintagh Aghadowey aged 28. Her brother Joseph witnessed her death. Prior to this John had been enjoying a successful career receiving two favourable records, the first on 29th August 1905 and the next a short time later on 8th September.

The following year on 1st September 1906 John was promoted to Acting Sergeant and then became a full Sergeant on 1st October 1907. John received a further favourable record on 13th February 1908. Just over two weeks later John married another Agnes, Agnes Hart of 146 Sandy Row, Belfast on 28th February 1908. John's address at this time was 21 Brassey Street, Belfast which were close to the Roden Street RIC barracks and not far from Sandy Row. John and his new wife remained at this address until after John was pensioned on 1st January 1910. On

27th February 1910 John and Agnes had a daughter Sydney Agnes Neely born at Brassey Street. By the following year when the census was recorded John and family were living at Killygullib Glebe Kilrea. This would have been at the same time as former RIC man John O'Kane. John Neely signed the Ulster Covenant at Kilrea in September 1912.

John Neely died at Killygullib on 15th March 1913, his brother William was present whose address was at Moyagoney. John left £151 3s 3d to Agnes his widow.

Conclusion

An analysis of the stories of the men mentioned in this work reveals some interesting points. There was a great variety in the careers and post-service lives of the men, but there are a number of statistical outcomes that help paint a picture of how their backgrounds and employment shaped the pensioners, and their family's destinies.

In terms of religion in the five areas as a whole there were three main groups, Catholic, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland (COI). Of the sample group of pensioners the proportions were 26%, 25% and 48.5% approximately respectively. In Coleraine and Garvagh the largest group was COI followed by Presbyterian and then Catholic church. The Kilrea area was 46% Catholic, a third COI and the rest Presbyterian. Portstewart had an even split between the three and Castlerock had 50% COI with an even split between Presbyterian and Catholic. Each area therefore did not reflect the overall area figures showing that each area was unique and could not be analysed by the standards of others.

Prior to joining the police there were a variety of occupations ranging from physical labour to retail with some artisanal occupations along the way. The two largest pre-service occupation groups were farming (35.82%) and labouring (31.34%). Indeed it is probable that there was some crossover between these two groups. This reflects the generally held assumption that most RIC men were the sons of farmers and in many cases they found that a career with the police, after the strains of the 1845-1848 famine period, may have been the only viable option. This can be seen in the examples of the three Crilly brothers who all joined and then returned to farming. What was interesting was that there were shoemakers (5.97%) and weavers (4.47%) which were occupations that were not expected.

Of the post-service occupations on an area basis over a quarter went into government or local government jobs, with many getting employment with the courts. The next largest post-service

employment group was, as probably expected, farming with around 16%. The next largest groups would be land administration and retail at around 6% each. On an areas basis around 42% did not take further employment. In Coleraine and Garvagh government/local government jobs held the highest proportion which is probably due to the greater chance of there being such jobs available. In Kilrea farming was over 46% of the post-service employment which reflects the area and that a reasonable number of the sample group returned to work on their farms. In Portstewart the majority did not appear to find or seek further employment and in Castlerock there was a 50/50 split with those who did find employment all found it at Castlerock golf club.

As mentioned a number of men “came home” whether to their actual home places or to the county which they were from. Of the whole study only around 24% actually seem to have done so. The greatest proportion was in the Kilrea area with Garvagh coming second. Both Coleraine and Portstewart had around 6% returning and Castlerock had zero. From this data it suggests that many men once they left their home area did not see any need to come home or any advantage in doing so. Many men married women from areas in which they served which provided some determining factors in their post-service decision making on how they were going to spend the rest of their lives. There are many examples as shown of men from outside the area settling due to their wives coming from the Coleraine district. Indeed men such as James Hewitt positively gained from such associations.

Politically the only real factor that can be examined is the signing of the Ulster Covenant in 1912. This demonstrated the support for the anti-Home Rule movement and a readiness to oppose the constitutional change by means of force through the developing Ulster Volunteer movement. Of those from a post-partition Northern Ireland county over 64% signed and those from a county outside of the six counties over 41% signed. Breaking this down by each area the proportions show some variance. In Coleraine of those from inside the six counties over 85% signed, of those outside 60% signed. At Garvagh all those from inside signed and 40% of those outside signed, whereas

in Kilrea 25% inside signed and all those from outside did not sign. In Portstewart 100% of those from counties inside the post-1922 state did not sign and half of those from outside signed. Castlerock had no people from inside the six counties sign and again 50% of those from outside. Unsurprisingly no Catholics signed. This analysis is somewhat limited however as many of those within the sample were not alive at the time of the Covenant, but it does give some reflection of the mood at the time. Indeed the stories of men like Matthew Craig show a deeper involvement in the Unionist movement compared to other signatories.

As outlined in the introduction not every man could have a heroic story or have great social, economic or political influence in their post-service lives. Yet what this study has shown is that it is difficult to predict how a man would conduct himself or what opportunities would present themselves. In addition the study has shown that each area has numerous connections to the RIC. Even small towns like Kilrea or Garvagh had former constables and sergeants at the hearts of their communities some providing public service for many years, such as Francis Cohoon. It is important that such stories are not forgotten, ignored or exploited to satisfy any particular social or political narrative.

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