ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE®

ANNUAL REPORT 2009 - 2010

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Cover photograph: George Farquhar plaque 25 August 2009

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Heritage
LOTTERY FUNDED

Introduction

The Ulster History Circle is a small, voluntary, not for profit organisation that places commemorative plaques in public places, in towns and villages all over Ulster, in honour of men and women who have contributed to the Province's history. The Circle is recognised as a Charity by HM Revenue and Customs.

The Circle was formed in the 1980s to fill what was believed to be a gap in the celebration of our history - the commemoration of people of achievement. The Constitution is set out in Appendix 4. The work is entirely voluntary and we have no earning capacity or trust funds of any kind so we depend on District Councils, individuals and businesses to contribute to the cost of erecting individual plaques.

The Circle encourages nominations for plaques from the public and many of our projects are selected from such nominations. The eligibility criteria and information about how to make a nomination are set out on our website. The general rule is that a proposal to put up a plaque is not considered unless the person to be commemorated has been deceased for at least 20 years - less if the deceased person was born more than 100 years ago.

In 2007 the Heritage Lottery Fund provided a grant for a five-year project to erect 50 plaques, develop an on-line Dictionary of Ulster Biography and undertake a number of activities designed to extend the reach of the Circle's activities to the wider community including schools. We are now half way through this *Celebrating Achievers* project. Progress is reported in Appendix 1.

This report of the Circle's operations draws together the main strands of its activities in the year to March 2010.

Plaques

After a relatively quiet 2008-2009 year (6 plaques were unveiled), the past year has been extremely busy with 18 plaques being erected in different parts of the province.

The plaques (in alphabetical order) unveiled during the year were for the following -

Sam Hanna Bell - Writer and Broadcaster	- Belfast
Francis Rawdon Chesney - Soldier and Explorer	- Ballymartin, Co Down
James Humbert Craig - Artist	- Cushendun
George Farquhar - Playwright	- Londonderry
Sir Samuel Ferguson - Poet and Antiquarian	- Belfast
Joe Gilmore - Pioneer Aviator	- Ardglass
Robert Mitchell Henry - First Secretary to Academic Council QUB	- Belfast
Sir Samuel Kelly - Coal Importer & Philanthropist	- Belfast
Sir Joseph Larmor - Mathematical Physicist	- Belfast
John Mitchel & John Martin - Patriots and Writers	- Newry
Professor James MacCullagh - Mathematician and Physicist	- Upper Badoney, Co Tyrone
John McKay - GAA Founding Member 1884	- Belfast
Stewart Parker - Playwright	- Belfast
Thomas Russell - United Irishman	- Belfast
William Scott - Artist	- Enniskillen
Sam Thompson - Playwright	- Belfast
Sir Richard Wallace - Philanthropist and Art Collector	- Lisburn
Robert John Welch – Photographer	- Strabane

Short biographies of the recipients, and photographs of the events, are published on the Circle's website, and in Appendix 3.

Future Programme

As the year ended, planning for 16 new plaques was well advanced, with funding secured. Another 19 plaques are at earlier planning stages.

Missing Plaque
Agreement has now been reached with the owners of the property to reinstate the missing plaque for George Dickson, Rose Grower, which had disappeared from the Strangford Arms Hotel in Newtownards.

Fred Daly (1911-1990)
In 2005 Portrush Golf Club suggested a blue plaque for British Open Championship winner Fred Daly. As at the time he did not meet the Circle's eligibility (deceased for 20 years) the Circle was unable to include him in its plans. However, as the Club wished to proceed immediately the Circle provided advice on design etc. Through a misunderstanding the Club arranged for a plaque carrying the Circle's name to be erected on Daly's former home in Causeway Street, Portrush. As the 20th anniversary of his death has now been reached the Circle had decided to include the plaque in it's list of plaques on the website and in all future Guides.

Publicity
Publicity for the Plaque Events is generated by targeted Press Releases to Regional and local news media, TV, radio and regional and local newspapers. Some of the events have attracted considerable media interest e.g. Stewart Parker, Sam Hanna Bell, Joe Gilmore, John McKay. As well as news coverage, some events were featured on BBC's Arts Extra and Your Place and Mine.

Where possible the Circle seeks to identify and involve any members of the families or descendants of the person being commemorated and any that are available are involved in the planning and the unveiling ceremonies. As a consequence the events are happy occasions and much appreciated by the families. For some of the events this year family members have travelled from as far afield as New Zealand, Canada, USA, Germany and many from Great Britain and Ireland.

Membership Attendance
The Circle met 12 times, including the Annual General Meeting. Three new members joined during the year; Richard Froggatt, Hugh Odling-Smee and Linda Greenwood. The record of individual attendance is shown below. Mere attendance (travel and work requirements permitting) is not an indication of input (some members are unable to travel to the meetings) and members' contributions in research and support are counted in other ways – see page 6.

At the AGM in May 2009, Wesley McCann replaced Doreen Corcoran as Chair of the Circle. The members registered their thanks to Doreen for her leadership of the Circle for so many years.

Name	Possible attendance	Actual attendance
Wesley McCann - *Chairman*	12	12
Sean Nolan – *Secretary*	12	10
Pat Devlin – *Treasurer*	12	11
Doreen Corcoran	12	8
Hugh Odling-Smee	12	4
Richard Froggatt	12	6
Annesley Malley	0	0
Jim Crawford	12	1
Trevor Parkhill	12	5
Victor Price	12	9
Chris Ryder	0	0
Chris Spurr	12	11
John Dooher	12	5
Peter Cavan	12	9
Linda Greenwood	6	6

Heritage Lottery Fund
The 'Celebrating Achievers' project covers a number of different but related strands. The agreed aims and outcomes, with progress to date, are set out in Appendix 1.

Dictionary of Ulster Biography

On 17 November 2009 the new Dictionary of Ulster Biography www.ulsterbiography.co.uk went live, replacing the one in existence since 2006. The new Dictionary's enhanced functionality includes search by name and/or pseudonym, occupation, location, dates of birth or death. The advanced search feature allows for combinations of factors to return sub-sets of entries. Until the end of March 2010 the Dictionary has had over one thousand visitors, averaging 14 pages per visit.

The current contents of the Dictionary consist mainly of the entries contained in the printed edition of the Dictionary published in 1993, some amended and updated and a limited number of additional entries. The overall number of individual biographies at launch was just under 1,800. The Circle commissioned research to identify individuals who had died after 1993 and whose details might be added to the Dictionary. The research identified almost 500 such persons and, as a first step, the names of some 100 people who had died up to the year 2000 have been selected for additional research for possible inclusion. This aspect of the Dictionary is an on-going one and will require work in perpetuity if the Dictionary is to be maintained up to date; a major undertaking for a voluntary organisation.

Blue Plaque Guide

The compilation of a traditional Guide, in the form of a book, has proved to be a problematic one, as the costs in terms of preparation, design and printing are substantial. The limited funds available would allow for a low print run and limited geographical reach. As an alternative it was decided to explore a different approach that focuses on a booklet design with short (50 word) sketches of all of those plaques erected to date. Additional funding sources are being sought to augment existing resources and provide a substantial print run. As the year ended, tenders for design and print had been received and were being processed.

Leaflets

In the light of the revised approach to the Guide, the need for additional leaflets is currently under review.

Outreach Programme

The Circle decided that, where possible, local historical societies should be involved in the planning of unveiling events and has engaged with them in local arrangements and publicity. The Circle is working with the Federation for Ulster Local Studies to provide speakers to local societies to-

a. increase awareness of what we are seeking to do;
b. demonstrate how our objective of preserving and widening knowledge of historical personalities, local as well as national and international, is fully in tune with the thrust of their own work; and
c. encourage Societies to greater co-operation with and participation in the Circle's activities.

In addition, the Circle continues to give talks to a number of organisations including Rotary Clubs, Business and Professional Women's Association, University of the Third Age groups, Probus Clubs and Mother's Union.

For schools, We have initiated discussions with two teacher training colleges to explore the scope for developing mechanisms for involving students in the processes of identifying, documenting and selecting nominations for blue plaques. It is intended by the lessons learned from this process to develop a more comprehensive approach to the eventual involvement of primary schools. This is a major long-term process that will extend beyond the period of the Celebrating Achievers Project.

English Heritage Conference

The Circle was represented at an English Heritage Conference in London on 18-19 February "Commemorative Plaques: Celebrating people and place". Over 100 people representing organisations such as metropolitan and other local authorities, civic trusts, museums, libraries and plaque manufacturers attended the Conference. The Circle's plaque design, funding and annual reporting arrangements were favourably commented on and will be included in the Guidance document being prepared following the conference.

Society Website

The Society's web site www.ulsterhistory.co.uk was updated continuously. In the year the biography pages were visited 9,800 times and 2,400 of the events reports were viewed.

Financial Report
The Circle's Accounts are in Appendix 2.

Conclusion
On behalf of the Circle I would like to say how much we appreciate the generosity of our sponsors, the Heritage Lottery Fund, City and District Councils, individuals and organisations without whose help and support the Circle could not have continued the work of honouring the many distinguished people from the Province who are exemplified by those remembered this year.

Wesley McCann – Chairman **May 2010**

APPENDIX 1
CELEBRATING ACHIEVERS PROJECT

AGREED AIMS AND OUTCOMES

Aims	Measure of Success	Progress to Date
We will research and erect 50 Commemorative Plaques in honour of men and women who have made significant contributions to the advancement of ideas and the benefit of society, particularly in such fields as the arts and sciences, industry, religion, sport and public and community service.	By the end of the project 50 plaques will have been erected	Forty four Plaques erected at 31 March 2010
We will research, compile, document and maintain on its own website an up-to-date Dictionary of Ulster Biography.	A revised edition of the Dictionary will be available on the internet	Dictionary went live on 17 November 2009
We will develop a comprehensive Outreach Programme connecting with schools, universities and other educational institutions, local history societies, community development organisations, tourism interests and museum and arts organisations to create wider involvement, interest and direct, co-operative participation in our work.	A comprehensive Outreach programme will have been successfully implemented	Broad strategy agreed and discussions initiated with two teacher training collages to plan implementation. Local history societies involved in some planned events and talks delivered to a range of organisations
We will research, compile and publish a Blue Plaques Guide containing information about each plaque and a range of leaflets about the Circle and about individuals which would include details about the sources of further and more comprehensive material about the subject.	Three editions of the Booklet will have been published. A range of appropriate leaflets will be available in a wide range of outlets throughout the province.	General leaflet printed and distributed. Major booklet development incorporating all the plaques at tender stage. CD of existing plaques available.
We will work pro-actively with the Tourist Board and other organisations to promote the plaques and our associated resources as a social and cultural tourism asset for the entire community and visitors and to stimulate interest in the individuals commemorated by means of associated publications, tours, visits, lectures and seminars.	Extensive and effective liaison and co-operative arrangements with the Tourist Board and other appropriate organisations will be operating effectively	Not yet begun
We will exploit ongoing trends and developments in multi-media technology to maintain and further develop the Ulster History Circle Website as an easily accessible resource for the entire Northern Ireland community and a stimulus for tourists and others interested in exploring our history and heritage.	The Circles websites will provide an enhanced range of information of use to tourism, further and continuing education and to those interested in exploring our heritage and history.	New on-line Dictionary launched on 17 November 2009. Website to be enhanced in next period.

APPENDIX 2

FINANCIAL REPORT 2009- 2010

Accounts

The Income and Expenditure account, for the year is attached.

Grants Received

The Society is grateful to the following for sponsoring blue plaques during the year.

From	Amount
Belfast City Council	£4,900
Newry & Mourne District Council	£ 800
Larne District Council	£ 400
Down District Council	£ 400
Irish News	£ 800
Wallace Trust	£ 400
Friends of Stewart Parker	£ 50
Heritage Lottery Fund *	£19,680

* Second grant instalment. Also covers expenditure other than plaques.

Financial Code of Practice

The Code of Practice, adopted by the Circle at its meeting on 5 November 2004, sets out officers' roles and responsibilities and the processes of record maintenance, budgetary control, financial reporting, account preparation and audit.

ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE
INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2009-2010

		2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
Opening Balance at Bank		**£11,907.30**	**£22,859.81**	**£3,296.21**
	Petty Cash		-£24.07	
INCOME				
	Grants Received [1]	£27,380.00	£1,100.00	£36,694.25
	Other income [2]	£160.00	£262.03	£10.00
	TOTAL INCOME	**£27,540.00**	**£1,362.03**	**£36,704.25**
EXPENDITURE				
	Plaque Manufacture and fitting	£10,006.63	£4,848.20	£11,773.61
	Plaque replacement and repair	£0.00	£164.51	£41.13
	Bank Charges	£41.18	£35.31	£32.68
	Postage	£111.66	£47.01	£38.46
	Printing and Stationery [3]	£668.25	£1,161.41	£110.12
	Meeting Expanses [4]	£640.87	£675.45	£548.45
	Travel [5]	£738.20	£546.00	£18.00
	Audit Fees	£600.00	£600.00	£0.00
	Internet Charges [6]	£111.31	£149.68	£163.06
	Insurance [7]	£28.00	£42.00	£32.00
	Equipment [8]	£98.49	£1,648.35	£735.57
	Membership Fees [7]	£30.00	£30.00	£30.00
	Events [9]	£1,618.30	£357.45	£0.00
	IT Contract [10]	£3,287.00	£1,900.00	£0.00
	Other expenses	£272.14	£85.10	£3,067.06
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**£18,252.03**	**£12,290.47**	£16,566.07
	Petty Cash	£50.76		
	Uncleared Cheques	£87.80		
Closing Balance at Bank		**£21,232.31**	**£11,907.30**	**£22,859.81**
	Payments due [11]	£2,000.00		
	Bills outstanding [12]	£1,200.00		

Notes:

(1) Includes second instalment of HLF grant

(2) Various donations and talks

(3) Includes Annual Report

(4) Accommodation and refreshment costs at monthly meetings

(5) Visits to service suppliers, potential sites and some launch events

(6) Service charges for two websites plus email

(7) Membership of FULS and PL Insurance Costs

(8) Extended warranty for digital camera, printer

(9) Refreshments at unveiling events

(10) For design, augmentation and hosting of the Dictionary. Compiling potential biographies since 1993

(11) Outstanding invoices for approved grants

(12) For plaque manufacture and fitting

VOLUNTARY INPUT

The Circle is required by the arrangements with the Heritage Lottery Fund to collect data on the extent and cost of the voluntary input of the Circle members in delivering the programme. No account is taken of the voluntary help made available by other organisations and individuals. Obtaining this information is far from easy since members do not routinely collect it. Each month most members provide a rough estimate of their input under different headings. Some members do not record their activity so not account can be taken of their contribution in financial terms. The figure is therefore an understatement of the overall value of voluntary activity.

Based on these returns the following table sets out the estimated cost of the voluntary activity involved in the year. It is an underestimate but does give an indication of the value of such effort. The cost of travel is additional to that paid in respect of Lottery funded activity. The increase in activity reflects the greater than average output over the previous year and the increased membership of the Circle.

SUMMARY				
	2009-2010		2008-2009	
Hours	2304	£57,600.00	1962	£49,050.00
Miles	2771	£1,108.00	1919	£768.00
Calls	1420	£2,954.00	936	£93.00
Letters	67	£168.00	264	£660.00
TOTAL		**£61,830.00**		**£50,571.00**

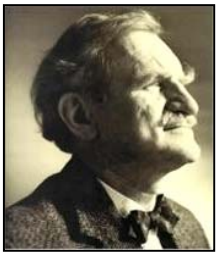
APPENDIX 3

THE YEARS EVENTS

The following pages contain short biographies of the people honoured with a blue plaque in the year under review. Photographs from the events are included.

	Page
Sam Hanna Bell	11
Francis Rawdon Chesney	12
James Humbert Craig	13
George Farquhar	14
Sir Samuel Ferguson	15
Joe Gilmore	16
Robert Mitchell Henry	17
Sir Samuel Kelly	18
Sir Joseph Larmor	19
John Mitchel & John Martin	20
Professor James MacCullagh	22
John McKay	23
Stewart Parker	24
Thomas Russell	25
William Scott	26
Sam Thompson	27
Sir Richard Wallace	28
Robert John Welch	29

BELL, SAM HANNA (1909 – 1990) | Writer and Broadcaster



Sam Hanna Bell was born in Glasgow on 16 October 1909, eldest son of James Hanna Bell, journalist on the *Glasgow Herald* and his wife, Jane Ferris McCarey (McIlveen) who was Ulster-born. He came to live at Raffrey in County Down when he was nine years old after the death of his father. Although the family moved to Belfast in 1921, he continued to visit Raffrey and its surroundings and the country and its people stimulated his imagination and featured in three of his four novels. He had a variety of jobs in the potato and clothing trade and a spell in the Canadian Pacific Steamship and Railway Company.

Bell joined the Left Book Club and helped to edit the socialist newspaper *Labour Progress*. He wrote some stories for radio and his story 'Summer loanen' was published in Sean O'Faolain's Dublin journal *The Bell* in 1941. In 1943 his *Summer loanin' and other stories* was published.

Culture Minister Nelson McCausland addresses the gathering

In August 1945 he began to work for Northern Ireland Radio as a features producer, retiring in 1969. Perhaps his most popular and successful radio programme was *This is Northern Ireland*, a complex portrait which he wrote and produced in 1949 for the BBC silver jubilee. He wrote and produced *The Orangemen*, a carefully researched history of the Orange order, which was broadcast in July 1967. Some of his best work was for series e.g. *Within our Province, Country Magazine, It's a Brave Step*, and *The Fairy Faith* which reported on traditions and folk ways in different parts of Northern Ireland.

With Michael J. Murphy he collected folklore, and with Sean O'Boyle, traditional music, now held in the BBC Archive in the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, and much of which was used in radio programmes. He also wrote a great deal about the theatre, and several novels: *The Hollow Ball* 1961, *A Man Flourishing* 1973 and *Across the Narrow Sea* 1987. His first and best novel, *December Bride*, was published in 1951, adapted as a stage play in 1955, reprinted in 1982, and filmed in 1990.

Bell served for many years on the Northern Ireland Arts Council. In 1970 he was awarded an honorary MA from the Queen's University of Belfast and in 1977 was honoured with an MBE in recognition for his contribution to the cultural live of the Province. He died at 190 Knock Road in Belfast on 9 February 1990.

Minister McCausland with Fergus Hanna Bell and Doreen Corcoran

Location of plaque: 2 Crescent Gardens, Belfast

Date Unveiled: 15 October 2009

CHESNEY, FRANCIS RAWDON (1789 – 1872) | Soldier and Explorer

Francis Chesney was born at Sabbath Hill Road, near Annalong, County Down, the son of a revenue officer, Captain Alexander Chesney, who had served with distinction in America under Hastings and Cornwallis during the American War of Independence. Francis was named after his godfather, Francis Rawdon, Earl of Moira.

At the age of nine Chesney is said to have held a commission in the yeomanry and later attended the Military Academy at Woolwich. He made a personal tour of Napoleon's battlefields after the Penninsular War and walked over three thousand miles in order to study battle strategy, an obsession that preoccupied him all his life. In 1814 when he returned to County Down he was able to rescue the crew of a French ship which had grounded, and was presented with the Medal of the Societe des Naufrages.

In 1829, as lieutenant of artillery he went to Egypt to explore the possibilities of Egyptian and Syrian routes to India. During this trip, which lasted for three years, he visited Damascus, Tiberius, and Djerash, until he reached El Werdi and the Euphrates, which he sailed on a raft. He was able to report the feasibility of a Suez Canal. The British Government failed to exploit the idea and it was left to the French engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps to undertake the project. At the opening of the Suez Canal on 17 November 1869, de Lesseps referred to Chesney as `the Father of the Suez Canal'; hence his epithet. Because of the success of this venture, a second exploration was instigated in 1835 under Chesney's command. The party landed in Syria and transported across the desert two small steamboats that they assembled on the banks of the Euphrates. Despite one of the boats sinking with the loss of twenty people, Chesney managed, with the remaining boat, to explore the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Karum, and to chart these waters. This venture took him to India, and he did not return to London until 1837. This feat won him the admiration of geographers.

Guests at the unveiling

Victor Price (UHC), Ken Abraham (Newry Museum) with owner Laura Ruatsala and family

By 1843 Chesney had risen in rank and was appointed Commandant of Hong Kong, and returned in 1851 to Packolet near Kilkeel, County Down. He was sent on two missions to Constantinople in order to assess the possibilities of a railway system. During this period he rose from the rank of colonel, through major general, to general in 1868.

During his lifetime Chesney published many works, including those on the exploration of the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates, a book on firearms and artillery, and another on the Russo-Turkish campaigns. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Fellow of the Royal Geographic Society and had conferred on him a Doctorate of Civil Law by Oxford University.

Location of plaque: 6 Sabbath Road, Ballyvea, Kilkeel, County Down

Date of unveiling: 23 June 2009

CRAIG, JAMES HUMBERT (1877 - 1944) | Artist

James Humbert Craig was born in Belfast on 12 July 1877 but grew in Ballyholme, County Down. His father, Alexander Craig, was a tea merchant and his Swiss mother, Marie Metzenen, came from a family with a painting tradition. He was educated privately. In his boyhood he had always drawn and painted. He spent some time in his fathers wholesale merchant tea business, but left and briefly attended Belfast College of Art. He was a largely self-taught painter of landscapes.

Watching the ceremony on a blustery day

He lived in Tornamona Cottage, Cushendun, County Antrim, and devoted himself to painting. As an artist he did not look abroad to the radical ideas of Modernism, but aimed instead to develop a suitable voice for his specifically Irish subject matter. He visited the continent on several occasions, and painted in Switzerland, the south of France and northern Spain. In 1928 he was elected to the Royal Hibernian Academy and exhibited there. He was also a member of the Royal Ulster Academy. In 1928 he exhibited along with Paul Henry at the Fine Arts Society in London and he illustrated Richard Hayward's *In Praise of Ulster* in 1938. Among his principal works is 'The Road To Maam Cross, Connemara'. His work is in many collections, including the National Gallery of Ireland and the Ulster Museum. His widow Annie bequeathed a dozen paintings to Bangor Borough Council.

Craig worked right up to his time of death on 12th June 1944. The following year a memorial exhibition was held at the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery.

Elizabeth Foy, neice of the artist, unveils the plaque

Location of plaque: Tornamona Cottage, Castle Park, Cushendun, Co Antrim

Date of Unveiling: 6 April 2009

FARQUHAR, GEORGE (C. 1677 – 1707) | Playwright

The precise place and date of George Farquhar's birth is unclear, though he is known to have been one of seven children of a Church of Ireland clergyman from the Londonderry area. He attended the Free School in Derry and in 1694 was enrolled as a sizar in Trinity College, Dublin. Nothing is known about his whereabouts at the time of the siege (1689), but legend has it that he was present at the battle of the Boyne the following year (though this is unlikely as he was no more than thirteen years old at the time.

The first of many mishaps in his short life occurred in 1696. He had thrown up his sizarship to become an actor in Dublin's Smock Alley, and in Dryden's play *The Indian Emperor* had the misfortune to run through a fellow actor, having forgotten to exchange his sword for a foil. That put an end to his stage career; he left for London, presumably with his first play, Love and a Bottle, in his luggage.

As a writer he had success from the start, though his improvidence meant that he was usually in debt. *Love and a Bottle* was followed by *The Constant Couple, Sir Harry Wildair, The Inconstant* and *The Twin Rivals* - all characterized by what Thackeray was later to call "a grand drunken diabolical fire."

Maire Gallagher, HLF, Mayor Paul Fleming, Mark Durkan MP and Doreen Corcoran

Actors from Blue Eagle Productions, performing 'Love and a bottle' in the Centre, with other performers

In 1703 Farquhar married a widow ten years older than himself who had reputedly tricked him into matrimony by pretending to be an heiress. He apparently did not hold that against her, but then he was a serial womanizer himself.

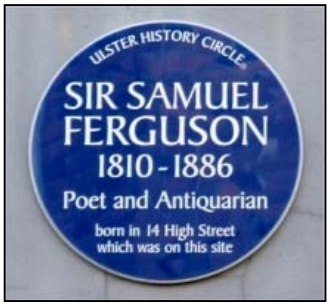
In his mid-twenties Farquhar received a commission in the regiment of the Earl of Orrery and for three years was mainly engaged in recruiting, an experience he put to good use in the first of his two classic comedies, The Recruiting Officer. Unfortunately the play's success did not cure his financial embarrassment; he had to sell his commission to pay his debts.

By 1706 he was in low water, penniless and ill with tuberculosis into the bargain. His friend, the actor Robert Wilks (who had originally accompanied him from Dublin), paid his bills and urged him to write another comedy, which turned out to be his masterpiece, *The Beaux' Stratagem*. This was premiered, with great success, on 8th March 1707. Six weeks later, on 29th April, Farquhar was dead.

Location of plaque: Verbal Arts Centre, Stable Lane, Bishop Street Within, Londonderry

Date of unveiling: 25 August 2009

FERGUSON, SIR SAMUEL (1810 – 886) | Poet and Antiquarian



Samuel Ferguson was born on 10 March 1810 in Belfast and was educated at Belfast Academy, the Royal Belfast Academical Institution and Trinity College, Dublin, where he was called to the Bar in 1838. Between 1845 and 1846 he went to Europe where he made many sketches, especially of cathedrals and churches dedicated to Irish saints and he studied painting and sculpture in Italy. Some of his sketches are in the Linen Hall Library, Belfast. He became Queen's Counsel in 1859 and Doctor of Laws in 1864. He was published in Blackwood's Magazine and in the Dublin University Magazine.

Guests at the unveiling

In collaboration with the Young Ireland movement he founded the Protestant Repeal Association. He kept an open house for the literati of Dublin at his home in North Great George's Street. In 1867 he became Deputy Keeper of Public Records in Ireland and published many volumes of verse, some of the poems based on Gaelic legends. His collected poems, Lays of the Western Gael, appeared in 1865, and Congal, an epic poem in five books, in 1872. He was knighted in 1878 for his work in reorganising the Public Records.

He was President of the Royal Irish Academy and wrote many essays on Irish antiquities. He is renowned for his work Ogham Inscriptions in Ireland, Wales and Scotland that was edited by his widow. His Poems of Sir Samuel Ferguson were published in Dublin in 1963 with an introduction by Padraic Colum. He died at Howth on 9 August 1886 and is buried at Donegore, County Antrim.

Lord Mayor Naomi Long and Dr Bob Brown, Heritage Lottery Fund

Location of plaque: 23 High Street, Belfast

Date of unveiling: 10 March 2010

GILMORE, JOHN JOSEPH (1900 – 1945) | Pioneer Aviator

Joseph (Joe) Gilmore, son of Patrick and Elizabeth (Crangle) Gilmore was born on 22 June 1900 in 31 Lowry Street in east Belfast. In 1929 he joined the Irish Free State Army Air Force in Dublin as a civil engineer. In 1929 he joined the Irish Free State Army Air Force in Dublin as a civil engineer. On 17 April 1933 at Baldonnell Airport, from a height of 2,500 feet, he became the first Irishman to parachute from an aircraft and land on Irish soil. In all he made a total of 15 parachute descents.

Before the ceremony, High Street, Ardglass

In 1935 Gilmore joined Imperial Airways. In 1938 he was sent to Quebec to help set up North Atlantic flights. In 1940 he transferred to Gander in Newfoundland where he was in charge of the preparation of the bomber aircraft that RAF Transport Command were ferrying across the Atlantic to assist the war effort, and personally flew with many of the 9,000 aircraft involved.

Gilmore also flew about half of the over 500 rescue missions made from Gander. On 1 May 1945 he and a passenger were killed on a flight near Prince Edward Island.

Gilmore's children unveil the plaque.

Gilmore has an impressive record of inventions to his credit. He designed air intake shutters, de-icing and fuel pump systems that were taken up more widely. As he was unable to afford the cost of patenting these he lost a potential fortune.

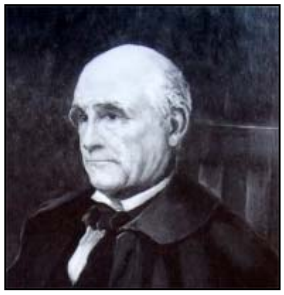
Gilmore had a colourful career. In July 1923 he was arrested in the course of helping a wounded IRA prisoner to escape to the Irish Free State and spent some time in custody. In 1933 he purchased an aircraft in England and crashed it on the way home. He later rebuild it, using spare parts and making his own where none were available. There are many tales told of his exploits in the plane, which he also used to take aerial photographs. The plane was eventually written off after several more crashes.

For his part in the war effort Gilmore was posthumously awarded an MBE in 1946. He is the only civilian buried in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Gander

Location of plaque: 20 High Street, Ardglass

Date of unveiling: 29 August 2009

HENRY, ROBERT MITCHELL (1873 – 1950) | First Secretary to Academic Council QUB



Robert Mitchell Henry was born on 11 February 1873 in Belfast, the eldest of the four sons of the Revd Robert Mitchell and Kate Anne Henry.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Peter Gregson and guests for the unveiling event

Henry was educated at the Methodist College, Belfast, and read classics at Queen's College, Belfast where he was awarded a first in 1893. He was appointed to a junior fellowship in 1900, a readership in 1906 and as Professor of Latin in 1907. He was senior classics master at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution from 1899 to 1905. When Queen's College became Queen's University in 1908, he occupied the chair of Latin.

Henry was an Irish nationalist, in sympathy with the aims of the Gaelic League, with its emphasis on Irish language and culture. He supported Home Rule for Ireland although in The Evolution of Sinn Féin (1920), he argued that full independence would be impossible in the foreseeable future. He was the first President of the Society for Irish Historical Studies when it was founded at Queen's in 1936 and in 1938, with the Irish Historical Society in Dublin, he helped to found the journal Irish Historical Studies.

Prof. Patrick Murphy, Heritage Lottery Fund, Prof. Gregson, Doreen Corcoran, Ulster History Circle and Jim Edgar, Belfast City Council

At Queen's University Henry was elected secretary of the academic council at its first meeting in November 1909, and remained in this post until his resignation in 1936, making it one of the most important offices in the university. He was appointed to the first professorial vacancy on the senate in January 1911, and played an important part in determining the policy of the new university. In 1933, due to his political views he was passed over for the appointment of Vice Chancellor. In 1929 he donated over 1000 volumes of Irish history and civilization from his own to the library of Queen's University forming the nucleus of the R. M. Henry collection. He retired in 1938 and was appointed to an honorary chair of classical literature at Trinity College, Dublin. From 1939 to 1947 held the chair of humanity at the University of St Andrews. From 1947 until his death at his home in Dublin on 21 December 1950 he lectured and taught in Dublin.

Henry was president of the Classical Association of Ireland in 1920, and of the Classical Association of Northern Ireland from 1929 to 1938. He was president of the Classical Association of England and Wales in 1936. He believed in the importance of adult education, and from 1919 to 1938 served as chairman of the Belfast (later Northern Ireland) branch of the Workers' Educational Association. As a result of his efforts the senate of Queen's University created the new post of lecturer and director of extramural studies in 1928.

Location of plaque: Lanyon Building, Queen's University of Belfast

Date unveiled: 18 June 2009

KELLY, SIR SAMUEL (1873 – 1950) | Coal Importer and Philanthropist

Samuel Kelly, son of John Kelly (founder of the John Kelly Coal company) was born in 94 Castlereagh Street, Belfast in 1867. When his father died suddenly in 1904 Samuel took control and continued to expand the Kelly fleet. In 1911 the firm became `John Kelly Ltd.' with a capital of £50,000.

In 1921 Samuel bought the Annagher Colliery near Coalisland and began production in 1924. He brought two hundred miners from Cumberland and Scotland and built a housing estate, Newtownkelly, to accommodate them. He also bought two spinning and weaving companies to provide work for the miners' wives. However, the venture was a failure and he was forced to close the mine in 1926 at a cost to him in the region of £300,000. During the General Strike he was able to ensure the supply of coal to the province; by charting foreign vessels where necessary, from the USA and Europe.

In 1922 he was knighted. He was described as `A leading merchant, a public benefactor, a consistent and generous supporter of charitable objects' His many donations included the building of two churches in Holywood.
Sir Samuel was Deputy Lieutenant of County Tyrone, Vice-President of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and an active member of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. His extensive business interests included chairmanship of the Ulster Fireclay Company, the Tyrone Brickworks and the Coalisland Weaving Company. He also owned the Cumberland Mine Company and the St Helen's Colliery.

Doreen Corcoran, Ulster History Circle, Kelly Wilson, Grand nephew of Sir Samuel and Cllr. Michael Browne, Belfast City Council

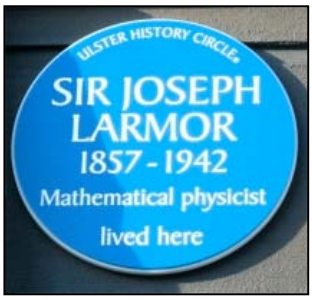
Kelly Wilson talks about his grand uncle

Sir Samuel died on 9 February 1937 from a long-standing heart condition. After his death his wife made bequests to many causes. In 1950 this included the cost of the Donaghadee lifeboat, which was named the Sir Samuel Kelly. The boat played a major part in the rescue of survivors from the Princess Victoria in January 1953. The family home at Holywood is now the Salvation Army's `Sir Samuel Kelly Memorial Eventide Home'.

Location of plaque: 94 Castlereagh Street, Belfast

Date of unveiling: 29 April 2009

LARMOR, SIR JOSEPH (1857 – 1942) | Mathematical Physicist



Born at Magheragall, County Antrim on 11 July 1857, Larmor was educated at the Royal Academical Institution and gained his BA and MA from Queen's University, Belfast. He entered Cambridge University in 1877, gaining a fellowship in 1880. He was appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy at Queen's College, Galway, in 1880, but returned to St John's five years later as a lecturer in Mathematics and in 1903 became Lucasian Professor of Mathematics. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1892 and became its Secretary, having earlier received the Society's Royal Medal and the Copley Medal. In 1909 he was knighted and was Unionist Member of Parliament for the University of Cambridge from 1911 to 1922. He was given the freedom of the city of Belfast and many honorary degrees. On retirement in 1932 he moved to Holywood, County Down where he died on 19 May 1942. A lunar crater, on the far side of the moon, has been named after him.

Jim Edgar, Belfast City Council, Jane Crilly, Prof. Jim Boyd Essex University and Catriona Rooney

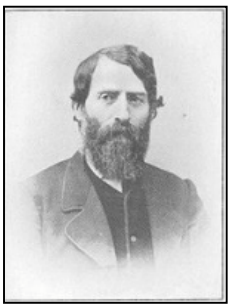
Larmor was a great mathematical physicist, and a great Irishman after the manner of MacCullagh, Rowan Hamilton and FitzGerald, the "three Irish giants" in whose steps he walked and whom he worshipped 'this side of idolatry'. His central interests were in applied mathematics and physics, specifically in electromagnetic theory, optics, mechanics, and the dynamics of the Earth. Like the work of his contemporary, Hendrik Lorentz, Larmor's work belongs to the final phase of classical physics that paved the way for the revolutions of relativity and quantum theory. An example of Larmor's basic scientific conservatism was his support of the concept of the ether as the wave-bearing medium thought to pervade all space and his work, published in 1900 as *Aether and Matter*, on the motion of matter through the ether. He believed that matter could only interact with the ether through the effects of electrically charged particles that formed part of the ether.

Larmor made two particularly important contributions to electrodynamics. He was the first to predict in 1897 the *Larmor precession*. This is the wobbling motion of the orbital plane of an electron moving in an atom when subjected to a magnetic field. The axis at right angles to the plane of the orbit sweeps out a conical area. Larmor also derived a non-relativistic formula that expresses the power radiated by an accelerated electron as being proportional to the square of the product of charge and acceleration.

Location of plaque: 24 Antrim Road, Belfast

Date of unveiling: 26 November 2009

MITCHEL, JOHN (1815 – 1875) and MARTIN, JOHN (1812 - 1875) | Patriots and Writers



John Mitchel

John Martin

John Mitchel was born on 3 November 1815 at the manse, Camnish, near Dungiven, County Londonderry, son of the Presbyterian Minister, John Mitchel and Mary (Haslett). In 1823, when his father became minister of Newry Presbyterian Church, the family settled in Dromalane House. At school in Newry he met his lifelong friend John Martin. He graduated at Trinity College, Dublin in 1834. In 1840 he became a lawyer and became a partner of Samuel Livingstone Frazer, settling in Banbridge where he ran the branch office. There he met Thomas Davis, who inspired him and whose place he took on the journal *The Nation*, owned and edited by Sir Charles Gavin Duffy, when Davis died in 1845.

In 1843 Mitchell and Martin joined Daniel O'Connell's Repeal Association but seceded from it in 1846 with the rest of the Young Ireland party and, under the influence of James Finton Lawlor, Mitchel began to encourage

Some of the guests at the unveiling ceremony in Newry

peasants to withhold rents to survive the famine. Having left *The Nation* in disagreement with its moderate stance he founded the *United Irishman* in 1848. He felt that a complete break with England was necessary for the survival of Ireland. In May 1848 Mitchel was arrested under the new Treason Felony Act, convicted and sentenced to transportation for fourteen years. In Van Dieman's Land, which he reached after spells in the hulks in Bermuda and the Cape of Good Hope, he shared a cottage with John Martin who had been sentenced to ten years transportation. His wife and family joined him in 1851. In 1853 he escaped to America where he started a newspaper, *The Citizen* which serialised his *Jail Journal*, a detailed account of his transportation, published as *Five Years in British Prisons* in 1854.

In surprising contradiction to his revolutionary past he was advocate of slavery, which he regarded as better than the wage slavery of industrialisation and supported the southern states in the American Civil War. When the war started he moved to Richmond and edited *The Enquirer*, the semi-official organ of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy. The war cost him dearly as his sons John and William were killed and James severely wounded. After the war, his continued advocacy of the southern cause earned Mitchell a five-month spell of confinement in Fortress Monroe, which undermined his health. After a spell in Paris as financial agent for the Irish Republican Brotherhood, he returned to New York where in 1867 he founded the *Irish Citizen*. When he returned to Ireland in 1874 he was elected Member of Parliament for Tipperary, but he was declared ineligible as an undischarged felon, even when subsequently re-elected in 1875. He died in Dromalane House on 20 March 1875. Mitchel edited the poems of Mangan and Davis as well as publishing a *History of Ireland from the Treaty of Limerick* and the *Life of Hugh O'Neill, Prince of Ulster*.

John Martin was born in Loughorne, near Newry on 8 December 1812, son of Samuel Martin, a gentleman farmer and linen manufacturer and Jane (Harshaw). He was educated in Newry, where he met his lifelong friend and later brother-in-law John Mitchel; and at Trinity College, Dublin, graduating in 1834. He began to study medicine but gave it up when he inherited property in Loughorne. In 1839 he travelled America and in 1841 Europe.

In 1844 he joined Daniel O'Connell's Repeal Association and in 1846 joined the secession of the Young Irelanders party and was expelled from the Association. With Mitchel he tried to convince Irish protestants of the benefits of an Irish parliament and when Mitchel established *The United Irishman* in 1848 he contributed to it. When Mitchel was arrested for treason felony Martin used Mitchel's offices to produce *Irish Felon*, 'a successor to the United Irishmen.' whose sole purpose was to carry on the same policy for which Mitchel had been arraigned. For this he was tried and sentenced to transportation for ten years, arriving in Van Dieman's Land in November 1849, where subsequently he was to share a cottage with Mitchel.

Mairead McAlinden, Southern Health & Social Care Trust, Anthony Russell, Old Newry Society, Marjory Harshaw Roby, Mayor Feenan, Doreen Corcoran, Prof. Murphy and Adrian Murdock

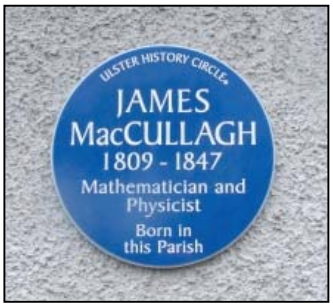
In 1854 Martin was pardoned on condition that he did not return to Ireland. After a spell in Paris he received a full pardon and returned to County Down in 1858 to care for his orphaned nephews and nieces. In 1864 he established the National League, which lasted only to 1867, whose aim was to gain the legislative independence of Ireland. In 1868 he married Henrietta Mitchel, sister of John. They had no children.

In 1870 Martin joined the Home Government Association for Ireland and in 1871 was elected Member of Parliament for Meath, holding the seat until his death. He was involved in the creation of the Irish Home Rule League, being elected its Secretary in 1874. Following the funeral of John Mitchell, at which he caught bronchitis, his health rapidly deteriorated. As he neared his end he was taken to Dromalane House where he died, on 29 March 1975, in the same room and the same bed in which his friend Mitchel had breathed his last. He is buried in the family plot at Donaghmore. He was affectionately known as 'Honest John' Martin.

Location of plaque: Ivy Brook Lodge, Drumalane Road, Newry

Date of unveiling: 5 September 2009

MacCULLAGH, JAMES (1809 – 1847) | Mathematician and Physicist



James MacCullagh, the eldest of twelve children, was born in the townland of Landahussy in the parish of Upper Badoney, Co. Tyrone in 1809. He was to become one of Ireland and Europe's most significant mathematicians and physicists. He entered Trinity College, Dublin aged just 15 years and became a fellow in 1832. He was accepted as a member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1833 before attaining the position of Professor of Mathematics in 1834. He was an inspiring teacher who influenced a generation of students, some of whom were to make their own contributions to the subjects. He held the position of Chair of Mathematics from 1835 to 1843 and later Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy from 1843 to 1847.

Part of the large group who gathered in Upper Badoney to honour James MacCullagh, including academics from TCD and RIA and distant relatives from abroad.

In 1838 James MacCullagh was awarded the Royal Irish Academy's Cunningham Medal for his work 'On the laws of crystalline reflexion'. In 1842, a year prior to his becoming a fellow of the Royal Society, London, he was awarded their Copley Medal for his work 'On surfaces of the second order'. He devoted much of the remainder of his life to the work of the Royal Irish Academy. James MacCullagh's interests went beyond mathematical physics. He played a key role in building up the Academy's collection of Irish antiquities, now housed in the National Museum of Ireland. Although not a wealthy man, he purchased the early 12th century Cross of Cong, using what was at that time, his life savings. In August 1847 he stood unsuccessfully as a parliamentary candidate for one of the Dublin University seats. He was devoted to his country but was profoundly critical of the lack of national self-respect that he saw about him.

Alan McFarlane, Glenelly Historical Society, Doreen Corcoran, Ulster History Circle, Jim Nevin, G-grandnephew of James McCullagh, Prof. David Spearman, Trinity College Dublin, Mary Rose Murphy, Glenelly Historical Society and Maire Gallagher, Heritage Lottery Fund

His failure to win the Dublin University seat for the Liberals, combined with overwork on his researches, contributed to his death by suicide on 24 October 1847. His body lies buried in the family vault at St Patrick's Church, Upper Badoney, Co. Tyrone.

Location of plaque: St. Patrick's Church, Upper Badoney, Plumbridge, Co Tyrone

Date of unveiling: 15 May 2009

McKAY, JOHN (1852 – 1993)| GAA Founding Member 1884

John McKay was born in October 1852 in the townland of Cargagh, near Downpatrick, son of Joseph and Mary McKay. He began work as a journalist with the *Belfast Morning News* in the mid-1870s. He moved to Cork and in April 1878 he became the main political correspondent to the *Cork Examiner*, concentrating on the affairs of the Irish National League. He was a strong supporter of the Land League. In April 1883 he married Ellen Browne, from Cork.

The meeting that founded the 'Gaelic Athletic Association for the preservation and cultivation of national pastimes' was held on 1 November 1884 in Hayes Hotel, Thurles, Co. Tipperary. The names of the seven men present were, Michael Cusack, Michael Davin, John Wyse Power, John McKay, Joseph P. Ryan, Thomas St George McCarthy and J.K. Bracken. John McKay was appointed one on the three Secretaries, with Michael Cusack and John Wyse Power. He served in that post until 1886. The report of the inaugural meeting was written by McKay and appeared in the *Cork Examiner* on 8 November 1884.

Guests after the unveiling

Philomena McConvey, Grand Neice of John McKay, unveils the plaque

In the course of the first two years of the new Association the volatile and combative nature of Michael Cusack's approach led the Executive Committee to conclude that he had to be removed. McKay made his personal opposition to Cusack public in the *Cork Examiner*. On 4 July 1886, in Hayes' Hotel he was among those who criticised Cusack who was forced to resign. Whether this had anything to do with McKay's resignation that year is not known.

McKay continued working on the *Cork Examiner* until the early 1890s. About 1896 he moved back to Belfast and began working as a journalist with the *Irish News*, which had succeeded the *Belfast Morning News* at the start of the decade. It is not certain how long he stayed in Belfast but at some point he went to work for the *Freemans Journal* in Dublin. By 1911 McKay was back in Cork, as Chief Reporter with the *Cork Free Press*, a radical paper published by William O'Brien MP and the All For Ireland League, a moderate nationalist party that sought conciliation with the unionist community. In 1916 McKay moved to London where he worked as a freelance until his death on 2 December 1923.

Location of plaque: Irish News Building, 113-117 Donegall Street, belfast
Date of unveiling: 24 February 2010

PARKER, STEWART (1941 – 1988) | Playwright

Stewart Parker was born on 20th October 1941 at 86 Larkfield Road, Sydenham, Belfast, into a working class Protestant family. He was educated at Strand Primary, Ashfield Secondary (where he came under the influence of the great educator John Malone), Sullivan Upper and Queen's University, Belfast. While still at Queen's he contracted bone cancer and had to have a leg amputated, but in spite of that took an active part in university life. He was a member of the group of young poets set up by Philip Hobsbaum (along with people like Seamus Heaney and Derek Mahon).

Doreen Corcoran, Ulster History Circle, addresses the guests as the ceremony begins

Having completed his MA in Poetic Drama he moved to the USA in 1964, where he taught in Hamilton College and at Cornell University at a pivotal time in US politics. Returning to Belfast in 1969 and moving later to Edinburgh and London, he lived by his pen, contributing a column on pop music to the Irish Times and devoting his creative energies to the broad field of drama, for stage, radio and television.

His first stage play, *Spokesong* (1975) depicts Belfast life through the eyes of the proprietor of a bicycle shop. It was the hit of the Dublin Theatre Festival and went on to gain success in London, New York and beyond. Many other works followed. Among his television plays the best known is perhaps *Catchpenny Twist*, a freewheeling work about the Eurovision Song Contest with a tragic sting in the tail. His radio and television work was published in recent months by the University of Prague as *Dramatis Personae and Other Writings* - these include his 1986 John Malone Memorial Lecture.

Parker's neice, Lynn Parker, unveils the plaque

Stewart Parker's plays are marked by virtuosity and experiment. He excelled in handling philosophy and politics within the format of popular culture, for example in *Heavenly Bodies*, his play about the Victorian playwright and entrepreneur, Dion Boucicault. Joyce In June (James Joyce was a writer he greatly admired) interweaves scenes from the novelist's life with the hilarious visit of a concert party - which includes several figures from Ulysses - to Belfast. Perhaps the most original of his works is *Northern Star,* which depicts Henry Joy McCracken's final hours of freedom after the failure of the 1798 rising. McCracken muses on his intellectual pilgrimage from revolutionary idealism to a more chastened realism, in a series of virtuoso scenes written in the styles of Sheridan, Boucicault, Wilde, Shaw, Synge, O'Casey, Behan and Beckett.

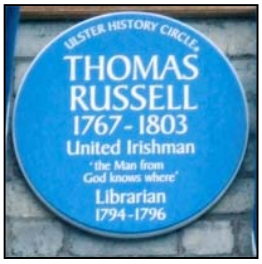
Stewart Parker's final stage play *Pentecost* (1987), which won the Harvey's Irish Theatre Award is more naturalistic. It centres on four misfits, making up a cross-section of the classes and cultures of Northern Ireland; who find themselves trapped in an empty East Belfast parlour house at the time of the 1974 Ulster Workers' Council Strike (which brought down the Sunningdale Agreement). Of these the central character, Marion, is aware of an unseen fifth inhabitant of the house; namely the ghost of Lily Mathews, a devout Loyalist who had formerly lived there. In spite of its grim setting, the play comes to a cautiously hopeful conclusion - something that seemed improbable at the time but may well turn out to have been prophetic.

A year later, in 1988, Stewart Parker was dead, from cancer. Twenty years after that event the Lagan Press of Belfast brought out *High Pop*, a selection of his Irish Times articles; this was launched, along with *Dramatis Personae*, during a festival and conference commemorating the work of this major writer held at Queens in November 2008.

He is commemorated by the Stewart Parker Trust Awards, which presents an annual award for best new play by an Irish writer.

Location of plaque: 86 Larkfield Terrace, Sydenham, Belfast **Date of Unveiling**: 29 April 2009

RUSSELL, THOMAS (1767 – 1803) | United Irishman



Thomas Russell was born in Drumahane, County Cork on 21 November 1767. He joined the army in 1973 and was posted to India. He returned to Ireland in 1776 on half pay and continued his studies in science, philosophy and politics. In July 1790 he met Theobald Wolfe and they became firm friends.

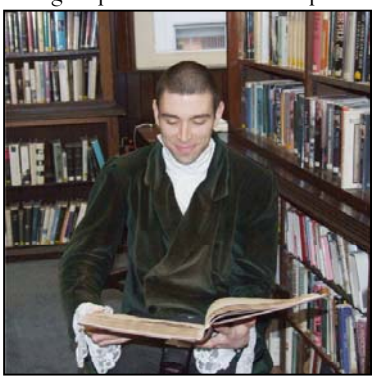
In 1790 Russell resumed his military career and was posted to Belfast. As an officer of the garrison, Russell entered socially into the circles of the emerging professionals and businessmen. Their politics were radical; being Presbyterians, they were excluded from the Ascendancy. Many were active in the anti-slavery movement. Russell was soon drawn to the McCrackens, Simms, Templetons, Nielsons and other families who were to play a prominent role in the United Irish movement. With them he developed ideas of parliamentary reform, to include the bulk of the people, and Catholic emancipation.

On 18 October 1791 the inaugural meeting of the Society of United Irishmen took place. The society's three main aims were - constitutional reform, union among the Irish people and the removal of all religious disqualification. On 9 November the Dublin Society of United Irishmen was formed.

The aim of Irish independence from Great Britain was a later development, when it became clear, through the Irish government's brutal repressive measures, that reform was not possible. That decision was taken in June 1795 on Cave Hill above Belfast by Wolfe Tone, Henry Joy McCracken, Thomas Russell, Samuel Neilsen and a number of other United Irishmen.

From his position as librarian to the Society for the Promotion of Knowledge (later to become the Linen Hall Library), to which he was appointed in February 1794, Russell took an active part in organising the United Irishmen and by 1796 he was their commander in County Down. He was arrested in that year and lodged in Dublin's Newgate prison and as a consequence he took no part in the Rising of 1798. In March 1799 he and the other state prisoners were transferred to Fort George in Scotland. During his imprisonment he was never charged with any crime, being, in effect, a political prisoner. He was released in June 1802 and transported to Hamburg.

John Killen, Librarian, unveils the plaque



Chris Fleming as Thomas Russell

From Hamburg Russell made his way to Paris where he met Robert Emmet who was planning another insurrection. Russell returned to Ireland in March 1803 to organise the North. He soon realised the hopelessness of the cause when he failed to raise forces in the subdued County Down. When Emmet was arrested in Dublin, Russell went to his rescue but was captured and arrested.

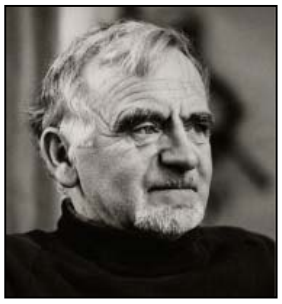
Russell was brought to Downpatrick Gaol and tried for high treason. Found guilty on the evidence of many local witnesses, he was hanged and then beheaded at the gate of the gaol on 21 October 1803, one month short of his 37th birthday.

Following his execution he was buried in Down Parish Churchyard where Mary Ann McCracken, sister of Henry Joy McCracken (executed in 1798) and friend of Russell, arranged for a simple memorial that still remains. All it says is *The Grave of Russell.*

Location of plaque: Linen Hall Library, Belfast

Date of Unveiling: 29 October 2009

SCOTT, WILLIAM (1913 – 1989) | Artist



William Scott was born on 15 February 1913 in Greenock, Scotland. His family moved to Enniskillen when he was eleven. He was educated at the Model School and attended night classes in art at the Technical School, under Kathleen Bridle. He studied at the Belfast College of Art in Belfast in 1928. He won a scholarship to the Royal Academy School, London where he won a silver medal and in 1934 became a Landseer scholar in painting. He was awarded a Leverhulme scholarship in 1935.

Queen Street Enniskillen, before the ceremony

During the early years of the Second World War Scott helped to run an art school in France and from there went to live in Dublin and then London. From 1942 to 1946 he served with the Royal Engineers, and learned lithography in the map-making section. From 1946 to 1956 he taught art at Bath Acadamy of Art and from there went to Canada and America as a guest instructor.

Scott exhibited in London, America, Italy, Switzerland, West Germany, France, Canada and Australia, as well as Belfast and Dublin. In 1961, he executed a mural for the Altnagelvin Hospital, Londonderry. He is represented in many collections at home and abroad including the Tate collection, the Ulster Museum, the Scottish National Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum.

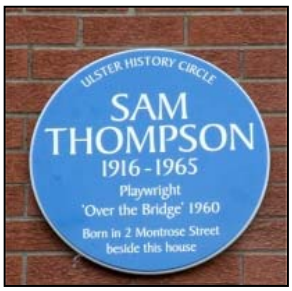
Scott was an internationally recognised artist, representing Britain abroad. He was appointed CBE in 1966 and received honorary doctorates from the RCA, QUB and TCD. He was elected RA in 1984. He died in Coleford, Somerset on 28 December 1989.

Terry Flannigan with James and Robert Scott, Gerry Burns, Heritage Lottery Fund, Cllr Robert Irvine, Lord Belmore and Doreen Corcoran

Location of plaque: 2 Queen Street, Enniskillen

Date of unveiling: 15 February 2010

THOMPSON, SAM (1916 – 1965) | Playwright



Sam Thompson was born on 21 May 1916 in 2 Montrose Street, Ballymacarrett in East Belfast. The house was demolished in redevelopment and the site is now vacant. He worked in the nearby shipyard as a painter from age 14. After the war he worked for a while for Belfast Corporation. He was an active trade unionist and member of the Northern Ireland Labour Party. He actively opposed the practice of religious discrimination he witnessed in the Corporation and was dismissed for his pains, subsequently setting up his own business.

Jane Williams, Heritage Lottery Fund, addressing the guests as the ceremony begins

Thompson was a keen observer of the community in which he grew up. In the mid-1950s Sam Hanna Bell, the writer and broadcaster, then a producer in the BBC, heard him telling tales of the shipyard and its characters and encouraged him to write for radio. Over the following three years the BBC broadcast *Brush in Hand* (1956), *Tommy Baxter, Shop Steward* (1957), *The Long Back Street* (1958) and *The General Foreman* (1958) as well as the serial *The Fairmans* (1958).

In 1955 he began work on a stage play, *Over The Bridge*, about the dilemmas of trade union officials faced with an eruption of sectarian conflict in the shipyards. James Ellis, Head of Productions of the Ulster Group Theatre, accepted it for production. However in May 1959, a fortnight before it was due to be opened, the Board of the Theatre withdrew it on the grounds that it was 'full of grossly vicious phrases and situations that would undoubtedly offend and affront every section of the public. It is the policy of the Ulster Group Theatre to keep political and religious controversies off our stage'. There was uproar; James Ellis and many others resigned from the Theatre and set up new company, Over The Bridge Productions, that on 26 January 1960, staged the play in the Empire Theatre. It was a resounding success, and far from creating conflict was widely praised for its realism and originality. The play toured Dublin, Scotland and England was was received with acclaim.

James Ellis, original Producer of 'Over The Bridge'

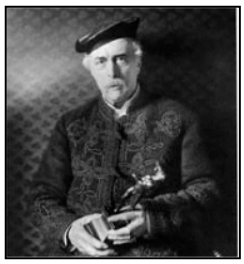
Thompson wrote three more plays; *The Evangelist* staged in the Grand Opera House in 1963, *Cemented with Love* a TV play screened in 1965 after his death and *The Masquerade*, which was discovered after he died.

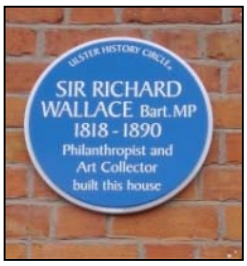
Thompson stood unsuccessfully for the NI Labour Party for the Constituency of South Down in the 1964 General Election. He died, of a heart attack, on 15 February 1965.

Location of plaque: Rear of gable wall of 1 Vicarage Street (best viewed from Montrose Street South)

Date of unveiling: 26 January 2010

WALLACE, SIR RICHARD (1818 – 1890) | Philanthropist and Art Collector





Richard Wallace was born in London on 21 June 1818, the illegitimate son of Richard Seymour Conway, Viscount Beauchamp, later fourth marquess of Hertford and was given the surname Jackson. He spent his first six years in London after which his mother left him with in Paris his father and grandmother Maria Seymour-Conway, marchioness of Hertford and Lady Hertford's illegitimate, son, Lord Henry Seymour. His grandmother brought up Richard with the eccentric Lord Henry as a companion. In April 1842, a month after his father's succession as fourth marquess of Hertford, Richard had himself baptized in the Anglican church, taking the surname Wallace (his mother's maiden name).

When Lord Hertford began his collection of works of art, Wallace was employed as his secretary with an annual allowance. Following the death of the dowager marchioness in 1856, Lord Hertford, withdrew from society.

A fine summer's evening for the ceremony

When Lord Hertford died in August 1870, Wallace succeeded to his father's collections and to his properties in Paris (2 rue Laffitte and the chateau of Bagatelle in the Bois-de-Boulogne), London and Ireland (the Lisburn estates). During the Prussian siege of Paris in 1870/71 he gave £12,000 towards the cost of a field ambulance, he chaired a British charitable fund, and he donated £4000 to start a subscription for victims of the shelling. On 15 February Wallace married Amelie-Julie. From March to May of 1871, during the uprising of the Paris commune Wallace kept his Paris collections boarded up in the rue Laffitte. When peace returned he was rewarded for his philanthropy; he was made a member of the Legion d'honneur and, in August 1871, received a baronetcy from Queen Victoria.

Brian Walker, Richard Wallace Trust, Doreen Corcoran, Ulster History Circle, Anthea McWilliams, Wallace Trust and Ronnie Crawford, mayor of Lisburn

Wallace bought a country residence, Sudbourne Hall in Suffolk, from the fifth marquess of Hertford, and, after some litigation, established his right to the Hertford Irish estates in Lisburn. He was a conscientious Conservative MP for that constituency from 1873 to 1885; he gave the town a public park, known as Wallace Park, and built Castle House as his Lisburn residence.

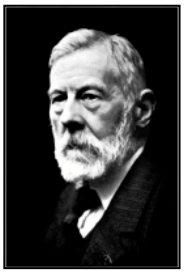
He was a commissioner for the Paris Exhibition of 1878, and was made KCB the same year; he was a trustee of both the National Portrait Gallery and the National Gallery and a generous lender to special exhibitions.

Wallace spent an increasing amount of time alone at Bagatelle, where he died on 20 July 1890. He was buried in the Hertford family vault in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise, beneath the body of his great friend Lord Henry Seymour. Wallace left all his estate to Lady Wallace. On her death in 1897 she bequeathed the contents to the nation as the Wallace Collection and, in the event, Hertford House itself became the museum.

Location of plaque: Castle House, Castle Street, Lisburn

Date of unveiling: 3 June 2009

WELCH, ROBERT JOHN (1859 – 1936) | Photographer



Robert Welch was born in Strabane on 22 July 1859 and lived for a time in Enniskillen. He developed an early interest in photography from his father who operated as a professional photographer from 1862 until his untimely death in 1875. In that year Robert went to Belfast to train as a professional photographer under E. T. Church. He established his own business in 1883 in Lonsdale Street. Much of his time was spent taking pictures that reflected the life of the people and the contemporary landscape. The Ulster Museum, Belfast, houses the majority of these. Many of his "Irish views" were used in railway carriages, hotels, transatlantic liners, and as illustrations in tourist guides and travel books. Over the period from the 1880's to the 1930's Welch built up a fine collection of negatives of Belfast street scenes, which today provides a valuable record of the changes over the period of 50 years.

Gatherina in the rain

In 1900, he was awarded a Royal warrant for his work from Queen Victoria, one of only 10 photographers to receive this honour. He was commissioned by the Royal Commission of Enquiry in 1886 to record the damage caused in Belfast after the anti-Home Rule riots of that year. He was appointed official photographer to the firm of Harland & Wolff, and the Belfast Ropeworks Co. He lectured and contributed many papers and illustrations to a variety of natural history publications throughout his life. He was a member of the Royal Irish Academy, President of the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club, and President of the Conchological Society of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1923 he had an honorary doctorate conferred upon him by Queen's University, Belfast. In 1927 the Northern Ireland Parliament granted him a civil pension of £100 a year. He died on 28 September 1936.

Kieran Maguire, Chair of Strabane District Council, left, with guests

Location of plaque: 19-21 Main Street, Strabane

Date of unveiling: 26 March 2010

CONSTITUTION

(As amended by AGM 11 May 2007)

1. Title

The name of the Circle is "The Ulster History Circle" (hereinafter called "the Circle").

2. Aims

The aims of the Circle are

i. to erect commemorative plaques in public places in honour of men and women who have made significant contributions to the advancement of ideas and particularly in such fields as the arts and sciences, industry, religion or sport;

ii. to expand public knowledge of oft-neglected aspects of our history and to increase, through visible and permanent plaques, public awareness of cultural and historical strengths; and

iii. to co-operate with other historical and architectural groups with a view to promoting interest in the study of our history.

3. Membership

The Circle is non-political and non-sectarian. Membership shall be open to all who subscribe to its aims, are admitted to membership by the Circle, and who pay the membership fee.

4. Meetings

i. The Circle will meet at least eight times a year.

ii. Notification of meetings of the Circle, specifying the business to be transacted, shall be transmitted by post, or email, to all members seven clear days before the said meeting.

iii. All meetings of the Circle shall be called by the Secretary or Chairman or by such other of its members as the Circle may decide.

iv. The meeting in May will be deemed the Annual Meeting. The business of the Annual Meeting shall include presentation of the minutes of the previous annual meeting, reception of the report for the previous year and the audited accounts of the Circle; agreeing the annual subscription; election of Officers and the appointment of the honorary auditor.

v. In the absence of the chairman, the Annual meeting shall be chaired by such other member as may be temporarily elected by those present.

vi. At any meeting each member shall have one vote, except that in the event of a tie, the chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

vii. The quorum for any meeting shall be five.

viii. In any matter of the interpretation of the constitution the decision of the Chairman shall be final.

ix. If any member fails to attend three consecutive meetings without apology, or alternatively at least six meetings in a twelve-month period, it will be open to the Circle, entirely at its discretion, to terminate that individual's membership without further explanation.

5. Officers

The Officers of the Circle shall be the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. With the exception of the Chairman, one person may undertake both of the other Offices.

6. Finance

i. The Treasurer shall keep a full record of the income and expenditure, and the assets of the Circle. The accounts of the Circle shall be audited annually and presented to the members at the Annual Meeting.

ii. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Circle there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, including the repayment of any unspent grants or donations given for the erection of specific plaques or other Circle activities, any property or assets whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Circle, but shall be given to or transferred to some other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Circle, and which similarly prohibits the distribution of its or their income or property among its or their members, such institution or institutions to be determined by the Circle members within three months of the resolution passed initiating the winding-up, failing which, and if and so far as effect cannot be given to such provision, then to such other charitable objects as the Circle shall decide

7. Amendment to the Constitution

i. Amendments to the constitution may only be made at an Annual Meeting, provided that notice of motion to propose any such amendment has been given in writing to the Secretary at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting.

ii. No amendment shall be made to the constitution of the Circle unless approved by two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote.

APPENDIX 5

COMPLETE LIST OF PLAQUES

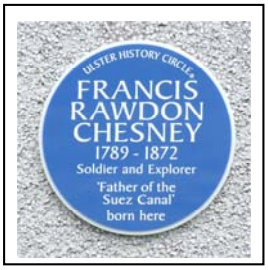
Alexander, Cecil Frances- Londonderry
Andrews, Thomas - Belfast
Annesley, Lady Mabel - Castlewellan
Bambrick, Joe - Belfast
Beckett, Samuel - Enniskillen
Bell, Sam Hanna - Belfast
Black, Dr Samuel - Newry
Bland, Lilian - Carnmoney
Bunting, Edward - Belfast
Byers, Margaret - Belfast
Cambridge VC, Daniel - Carrickfergus
Campbell, Joseph - Belfast
Carey, Joseph William - Belfast
Carmichael, Amy - Belfast & Millisle
Cary, Joyce - Londonderry
Chesney, Francis, Rawdon - Ballymartin, Co. Down
Clarke (nee Crilley), Margaret - Newry
Coey, Sir Edward - Newtownabbey
Conor, William - Belfast
Coyle, Kathleen - Londonderry
Craig, James Humbert - Cushendun
Crichton VC, James Bell - Carrickfergus
Crolly, William - Downpatrick
De Wind VC, Edmund - Comber
Dickson, George - Newtownards
Dickson, William Steele - Portaferry
Dill, Field Marshall Sir John - Lurgan
Dillon, Gerard - Belfast
Drennan, William - Belfast
Dunlop, John Boyd - Belfast
Eaton, Timothy - Ballymena
English VC, Lt. Col. William John - Belfast
Evans, E Estyn - Belfast
Ewald, Clara - Belfast
Farquhar, George - Londonderry
Ferguson, Henry George (Harry) - Belfast
Foster, Vere Henry Lewis - Belfast
Gibson, William - Dromore, Co Down
Gilmore, Joseph (Joe) - Ardglass
Grand, Sarah - Donaghadee
Green, William Alfred - Belfast
Henry, Paul - Belfast
Henry, Robert Mitchell - Belfast
Hewitt, John Harold - Belfast
Herzog, Chaim - Belfast
Hugenot Community - Lisburn
Hughes, Barney - Belfast
Hucheson, Francis - Saintfield
Johnston, James - Belfast
Irvine, Alexander - Antrim
Kelly, Sir Samuel - Belfast
Kelvin (Lord), of Largs - Belfast
King, John - Moy, Co Tyrone
Lanyon, Sir Charles - Belfast
Larmor, Sir Joseph - Belfast
Larkin, Philip - Belfast
Lavery, Sir John - Belfast
Lever, Charles - Portstewart
Lewis, Clive Staples - Belfast
Lucas VC, Charles Davis - Poyntzpass
Luke, John - Belfast
Lynd, Robert - Belfast
McAdam, Robert Shipboy - Belfast
Mac Aingil, Aodh - Downpatrick
McCabe, Thomas & William Putnam - Belfast
Macassey, Luke L. - Belfast
McCaughey, Samuel - Ballymena
Macoun, John - Magheralin
McCracken, Henry Joy - Belfast
McCracken, Mary Ann - Belfast
MacCullagh, Prof. James - Plumbridge
McLaverty, Michael - Killard, Co Down
McKay, John - Belfast
McKimm, Charles - Belfast
MacNeice, Louis - Belfast
Magee, Martha - Londonderry
Magennis VC, James Joseph - Belfast
Marconi, Gugliamo - Ballycastle
Marshall, W.F - Sixmilecross, Co. Tyrone
Middleton, Colin - Bangor
Mitchel, John & Martin, John - Newry
Monaghan, John 'Rinty' - Belfast
Murray, Sir James - Belfast
Nichol, Andrew - Belfast
Noble, Margaret - Dungannon
O'Byrne, Cathal - Belfast
Parker. Stewart - Belfast
Phillips, H.B. - Londonderry
Pottinger, Sir Henry - Belfast
Praeger, Robert Lloyd - Holywood
Praeger, Rosamond - Holywood
Rowley, Richard - Belfast
Russell, Thomas - Belfast
Staples, Sir Richard P. Bt. - Cookstown
Ritchie, William - Belfast
Robert the Bruce - Rathlin Island
Rodgers, Paul - Carrickfergus
Russell, George William - Lurgan
Scott, William - Enniskillen
Sheils, George - Carnlough
Society of United Irishmen - Belfast
Stewart, George Vesey - Martray, Co Tyrone
Sullivan, Robert - Holywood
Swift, Jonathan - Ballynure
Thompson, Hugh - Belfast
Thompson, Sam - Belfast
Trollope, Anthony - Belfast
Waddell, Helen - Banbridge
Wallace, Sir Richard - Lisburn
Walton, Ernest - Belfast
Welch, Robert John - Strabane
White, Sir George - Portstewart
Whitlaw, Sir William - Belfast
Wilde, Oscar - Enniskillen
Wilson, Guy - Broughshane
Yeats, John B. - Banbridge
Young, James - Belfast

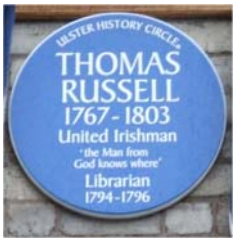
ULSTER HISTORY CIRCLE®

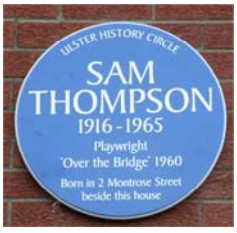
The blue plaques draw attention to the association of buildings with individuals who have distinguished themselves in some way. This encourages local communities to identify with the people concerned, encourages local pride and often stimulates local activity such as summer schools, festivals, lectures, commemorative events and general tourism.

By actively involving local communities and schools in the plaque research and siting process, we are creating new opportunities to explore and learn about heritage issues.

Plaques erected in 2009 - 2010







Ulster History Circle **May 2010**