

Appendix 2

Blue Plaques for approval by Development Committee December 2009

BRYCE, JAMES 1838-1922

James Bryce was born in Belfast and became Viscount Bryce of Dechmont. He was educated in Glasgow and at Trinity College, Oxford, and was elected to a fellowship in Oriel College. He began publishing in 1864 with his book *The Holy Roman Empire* and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. He was appointed Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford and British Ambassador to the USA and published many travel books: *Transcaucasia and Ararat*; *South Africa*; *South America as well as Modern Democracies*; *Studies in History and Jurisprudence* and *Studies in Contemporary Biography*. He resigned his professorship and entered parliament as a Liberal. When he died in 1922 he had been President of the Board of Trade, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Chief Secretary for Ireland, had received honorary degrees from thirty-three universities and belonged to thirty-five learned societies. His travels were world-wide, and the British Museum Catalogue contains ninety-two entries under his name. He was awarded the Order of Merit. The latter years of his life were spent in helping to establish the League of Nations.

LARMOR, JOSEPH 1857-1942

Joseph Larmor was born at Magheragall, County Antrim, and was educated at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, Queen's College, Belfast, and St John's College, Cambridge. 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. He was appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in Cambridge in 1903, the chair once occupied by Sir Isaac Newton. He published a book, *Aether and Matter* in 1900, and it is for this that he is remembered, as well as for the formula for radiation of energy from an accelerated electron, and for an explanation of the effect of a magnetic field in splitting the lines of the spectrum into multiple lines. 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 became Unionist Member of Parliament for the University of Cambridge for eleven years from 1911. He was given the freedom of the city of Belfast and many honorary degrees. He died in Holywood, County Down.

RUSSELL, THOMAS 1767-1803

Thomas Russell was born in Betsborough, Kilshanick, County Cork. He served in the Army and was posted to Belfast. From 1794 to 1796 he was Librarian of the Linen Hall Library and contributed to the *Northern Star*. He took an active part in the organisation of the United Irish Society, and in 1796 he was arrested and deported, but was liberated in 1802. He met Robert Emmet in Paris and went to Ulster hoping to provoke a rising, but failed. He was arrested in Dublin and hanged in Downpatrick. He was known as 'the man from God knows where', the title of a ballad written about him by [Florence Wilson](#) of Bangor, County Down in 1918.

BIGGER, FRANCIS JOSEPH 1863-1926

Francis Joseph Bigger was born in Belfast and was educated at Royal Belfast Academical Institution, of which his grandfather was a founder. Though he began to practise as a solicitor in 1888, he was devoted to the study of Irish archaeology and Ulster history. He revived the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* and restored many ruined castles and churches. A member of the Royal Irish Academy, he believed in the worth of Irish culture, especially folk music and song, and he advocated learning the Irish language. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and produced a series of pamphlets: *Irish Penal Crosses*; *The Ulster Land*

War of 1770; and *The Northern Leaders of 98*. In 1924 he edited *Ulster Dialect Words and Phrases*. His private library of three thousand volumes was given to the Belfast Public Library. A selection of his work, *Articles and Sketches*, was published a year after his death.

HUNTER, MERCY 1910-1989

Mercy Hunter was born in Belfast. When she was four years old, she travelled on the Trans-Siberian Railway, to China, where she spent her childhood in Manchuria. She was educated in Toronto and the Belfast Royal Academy. From 1927 to 1929 she studies art at the Belfast College of Art, and at the Royal College of Art, London from 1930 to 1933. Her special interest was calligraphy. She returned to Belfast in 1937. She taught art in Dungannon High School for Girls, Banbridge Academy, Armagh High School and Victoria College, Belfast, where she was head of the art department from 1947 until her retirement in 1970. As well as illuminated addresses and other calligraphic commissions, she lectured and broadcast extensively on art. She also designed costumes for the theatre, opera and ballet, and illustrated books. She was a member of the Royal Ulster Academy, and served as its president, and was founder member of the Ulster Society of Women Artists. She was awarded the MBE in 1970. Her work is in the Ulster Museum collection.

JOY, FRANCIS 1697-1790

Francis Joy was born in Belfast and in 1737, founded the *Belfast Newsletter* which is now the oldest newspaper in Ireland. In 1745 he resigned the newspaper to his sons and started a mill at Randalstown, County Antrim. He was the first paper-maker in Ulster.

RODGERS, WILLIAM ROBERT 1909-1969

W. R. Rodgers was born in Belfast and was educated at Queen's University, Belfast. He served in Loughgall, County Armagh, as Presbyterian minister from 1934 to 1946. *Awake and Other Poems* appeared in 1941. He joined the BBC in 1946 as a scriptwriter and producer for the Third Programme. He collaborated with [Louis MacNeice](#) in the unpublished *The Character of Ireland*. In 1951 he was elected to the Irish Academy of Letters, and in 1952 produced his second collection of poetry, *Europa and the Bull*. From 1967 to 1969 he was Poet - in - Residence at Pitzer College, Clairmont, California, where he died.

NEILL, PATRICK AND BLOW, JAMES

The Blow family were a Dynasty of printers, paper makers, book sellers and stationers. James Blow (1676-1759) with his brother-in-law Patrick Neill came from Scotland and started Belfast's first printing business in 1694. When Neill died in 1705, Blow carried on the business with his son **Daniel Blow**. He became established as Belfast's foremost stationer, printer and publisher, issuing mostly theological works.

MARITIME CLUB

The Maritime Hotel Rhythm and Blues Club was opened in April 1964 by Van Morrison. The Maritime Club was a classic dimly lit club and was the ideal breeding ground for the tough uncompromising R&B and blues played by Them and their contemporaries. It was the first Blues club in Belfast and is an important part of Belfast's musical history.