

# Ulster New Zealand

*Migration, Interaction & Legacy*



**Ulster-Scots  
Community  
Network**

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## Introduction

*Blow winds blow, and speed us on to Auckland,  
Bright land that lures us so far away from home,  
Blow ye winds and soon we'll reach New Zealand,  
Where peace and plenty awaits us, each and every one.*

Written by Thomas Ritchie, aboard the *William Watson*, Christmas 1859

New Zealand is an island country in the south-western Pacific Ocean. The distance between Belfast and Auckland, the largest and most populous urban area in New Zealand, is 11,192 miles. Thus the title of Donald Harman Akenson's ground-breaking book on the Irish diaspora in New Zealand – *Half the world from home: perspectives on the Irish in New Zealand 1860-1950* (Wellington, 1990) – is very appropriate.

The first European explorer to visit New Zealand was Abel Tasman, the Dutch seafarer and explorer, in December 1642. Captain James Cook, who reached New Zealand in October 1769 on the first of his three voyages, was the first European explorer to circumnavigate and map the territory.

From the late eighteenth century, the country was regularly visited by explorers and other sailors, missionaries, traders and adventurers. In 1840 the Treaty of Waitangi was signed between the Crown and the Maori chiefs, bringing New Zealand within the Empire and giving the Maori equal rights with British citizens.

Although the *Dublin University Magazine* in 1845 described New Zealand as 'the most recent, remotest, and least civilised of our colonies' and the most expensive to reach (over four times the cost of crossing the Atlantic to America), there was extensive British settlement throughout the rest of the century.

While a great many people know that the name of Dunedin, New Zealand's largest city in the nineteenth century, was inspired by the Scots Gaelic name for Edinburgh, comparatively few appreciate that between 1841 and 1846 all of New Zealand's North Island north of the Patea River was referred to as New Ulster. South Island was known as New Munster. Furthermore, Stewart Island, the small island just south of South Island, was briefly called New Leinster.

Over 80% of all Irish migrants to New Zealand either originated from Ulster or Munster. From the early 1850s Ulster accounted for over 40% of annual Irish migration to New Zealand but by the 1890s Ulster accounted for over 50% of migrants from Ireland. After the outbreak of the Great War in August 1914 Irish migration to New Zealand dropped markedly. Of the estimated 450,000 New Zealanders who today claim Irish descent, somewhere over 200,000 can claim Irish (usually Ulster) Protestant ancestry.

In 1990 D. H. Akenson, the Professor of History at Kingston, Ontario, noted that the Ulster Protestant experience in New Zealand and their contribution to their new homeland's development had attracted hitherto little scholarly attention. However this, in Akenson's view, did not mean that they made less impact than the more visible impact of Irish Roman Catholics.

Akenson offers a tentative (and very plausible) explanation of why the Ulster Protestant impact was less obvious. Neither the religious or political views of Ulster Protestant settlers constituted barriers to 'a ready cultural merger with the bulk of their fellow settlers'. Ulster Protestants were, from the perspective of the colonial authorities, 'the perfect colonists of the nineteenth and early twentieth century' because they were Protestant in religion and imperial enthusiasts by conviction. They 'merged with the general Protestant majority in their ... new land so successfully' that they in large part forgot who they were. They were 'designed to disappear' and fated to become 'New Zealand's hidden Irish'.

The Mulgan family, which settled in George Vesey Stewart's remarkable Ulster/Orange settlement of Katikati (which Akenson has described as 'the purest Irish Protestant community ever to exist in New Zealand') in 1875, illustrates the point. W. E. Mulgan was a Church of Ireland clergyman; his grandson Alan Mulgan was born in Katikati. Alan's mother was the daughter

of another Ulster cleric. Yet when Alan was growing up, he regarded Ulster as 'a shadowy place'. By contrast, 'England and English things were always before my eyes'; so when he went 'home' in 1926 it was to England, not to the newly created Northern Ireland state that he journeyed.

Alan Mulgan became a very influential journalist, author and supervisor of talks for the New Zealand Broadcasting Board. Although he retained an enthusiasm for all things English until his death in 1962, he nevertheless became convinced of the need to create an indigenous New Zealand culture, building on and yet differentiated from English traditions. His seminal work, *The making of a New Zealander* (1958) traces the gradual synthesis of Mulgan's feelings for England with his growing love of New Zealand's landscape, history and society. Thus, Mulgan remains an extremely important figure in the emergence of distinctive New Zealand culture and identity.

Close examination reveals that Ulster men and women played a significant part in the making of New Zealand and their role is by no means confined to Katikati. The figures noted here can only convey a modest flavour of Ulster's contribution to many aspects of New Zealand life, including politics, industry and commerce, education, journalism, trade unionism and sport. Some receive more extended treatment. Others receive only perfunctory consideration. A publication on this scale cannot have serious pretensions to being either comprehensive or exhaustive. For many years to come the Ulster contribution to New Zealand will remain a subject requiring further and more detailed research.

## John Ballance

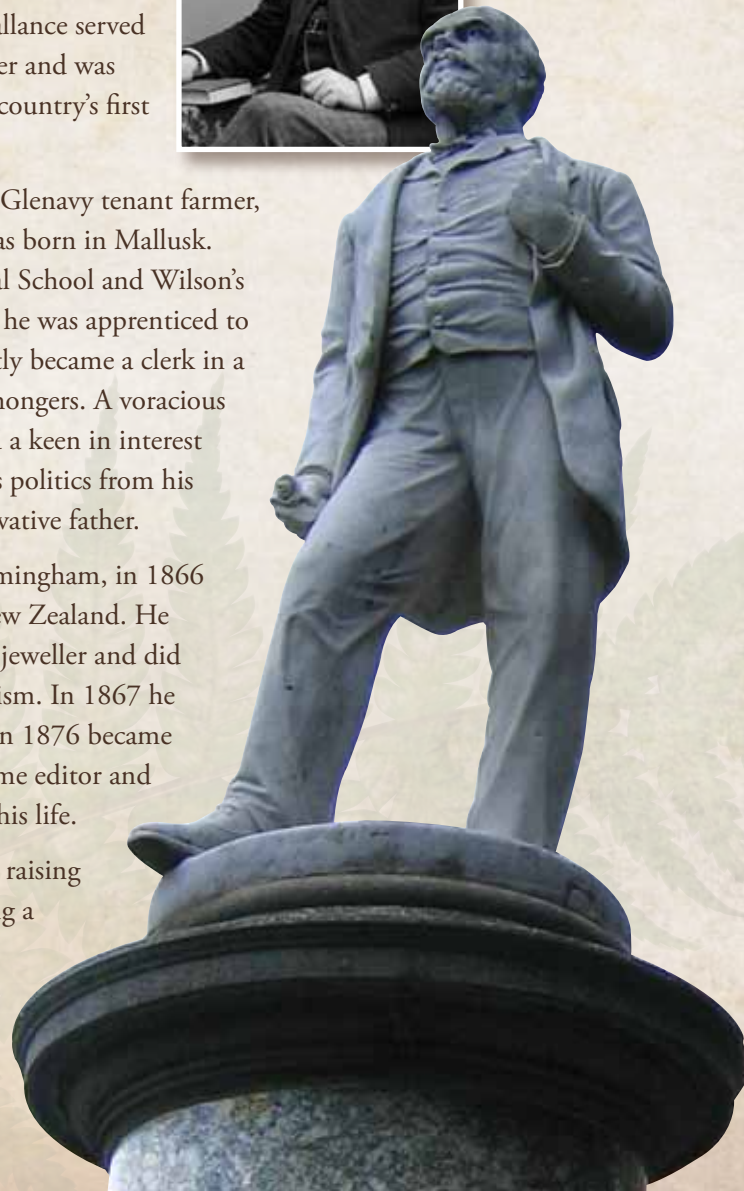
(27 March 1839 – 27 April 1893)

Between 1891 and his death John Ballance served as New Zealand's 14th Prime Minister and was the founder of the Liberal Party, the country's first formally organised political party.

The eldest son of Samuel Ballance, a Glenavy tenant farmer, and his wife Mary McNiece, John was born in Mallusk. He was educated at Glenavy National School and Wilson's Academy in Belfast. At the age of 14 he was apprenticed to a Belfast ironmonger and subsequently became a clerk in a Birmingham firm of wholesale ironmongers. A voracious reader, the young Ballance developed a keen interest in literature and politics. He took his politics from his liberal mother rather than his conservative father.

Having married Fanny Taylor in Birmingham, in 1866 Ballance and his wife migrated to New Zealand. He intended to enter business as a small jeweller and did so briefly but soon turned to journalism. In 1867 he founded the *Evening Herald* (which in 1876 became *Wanganui Herald*), of which he became editor and remained chief owner for the rest of his life.

He served in the Maori war of 1867, raising a volunteer cavalry troop and securing a commission. He was deprived of his commission for criticizing the management of the campaign



in his newspaper. Despite his dismissal, he was awarded the New Zealand Medal because he had served with distinction in the field.

In 1868, Ballance's wife died aged 24. Two years later, he married Ellen Anderson, the daughter of a Wellington architect with County Down antecedents.

In 1872 Ballance put his name forward at a parliamentary by-election for the seat of Egmont but withdrew before the vote. Three years later he entered Parliament as MP for Rangitikei. He had two planks in his electoral platform: the abolition of the provinces and the provision of free education. After only two years he entered the Cabinet of Sir George Grey and served as Minister of Customs, as Minister of Education and later as Colonial Treasurer.

In 1879 he was elected to represent Wanganui but lost the seat by just four votes (393 to 397) in 1881. He was returned to Parliament for Wanganui in 1884. He also re-entered Robert Stout's Cabinet, becoming Minister of Lands and Immigration, Minister of Defence and Minister of Native Affairs (the remit of the post being relations with the Maori).

In his role as Minister of Lands, he encouraged intensive settlement of rural areas, aiming to increase the number of people leaving the cities to 'work the land'. His system of state-aided 'village settlements', by which small holdings were leased by the Crown to farmers and money lent them to make a beginning of building and cultivation, met with success.

Despite this desire for increased settlement of government-held lands, he strongly supported the rights of the Maori to retain the land they still held – at a time when most politicians believed that acquisition of Maori land was essential to increasing settlement. He also reduced the government's military presence in areas where tension with the Maori existed, and made an attempt to familiarise himself with Maori language and culture.

Stout's government lost the General Election of 1887 but Ballance's personal popularity remained undiminished. After a brief period of illness and political inactivity, Ballance returned to become Leader of the Opposition in July 1889.

The following year Ballance led a loose coalition of liberal politicians – which became the Liberal Party – to victory in the general election. A number of features of his premiership merit mention. He was responsible for the introduction of a progressive land tax and progressive income tax. A firm advocate of female suffrage, he told the New Zealand Parliament in 1890: 'I believe in the absolute equality of the sexes, and I think they should be in the enjoyment of equal privileges in political matters'. The relevant legislation passed the House of Representatives in 1892 and in 1893 the women of New Zealand became the first women in the world to possess the right to vote in parliamentary elections. By presiding over a period of increasing prosperity Ballance earned himself the nickname 'the Rainmaker'.

In 1893, at the height of his success and popularity, Ballance's premiership was prematurely curtailed as a result of his death in Wellington after an operation. As a politician, he exhibited kindness, courtesy, consideration and patience, attributes not always associated with politicians. He was widely acknowledged to be a man of great honesty and integrity. While he lacked charisma and was not a great public speaker, he was an extremely accomplished politician. The fact that New Zealand's next four Prime Ministers would come from his Liberal Party forms a not inconsiderable part of his political legacy.

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## Sir George Ferguson Bowen

*(2 November 1821 – 21 February 1899)*

The eldest son of Edward Bowen, rector of Taughboyne, County Donegal, Bowen was a colonial administrator whose appointments included postings to the Ionian Islands, Queensland in Australia, New Zealand, Victoria (Australia), Mauritius and Hong Kong. He was appointed governor of New Zealand in 1867 and took office on 5 February 1868. Within the framework of responsible government the governor's position was that of a constitutional figurehead with limited discretion. Bowen served the Crown with dignity, generally obeyed orders, and accurately represented settler opinions in his dispatches. Aided by his wife, Diamantine Bowen, he made Government House a centre of social life and a neutral meeting place for politicians of different persuasions. Bowen left New Zealand on 18 March 1873 to take up the governorship of Victoria.

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## Peter Michael Butler

*(31 May 1901 – 24 September 1995)*

Born in Whiteabbey, County Antrim, Butler was a seaman, trade unionist, communist and local politician. He has been described as 'one of the architects of the industrial labour movement' in New Zealand. Somewhat incongruously, in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 1985 this one-time communist was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire for services to the trade union movement.

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## James Crichton VC

(15 July 1879 – 25 September 1961)

Crichton was born in Carrickfergus, County Antrim, but grew up in the hamlet of Northrigg by Blackridge, West Lothian, Scotland. Before emigrating to New Zealand, he had served with the Cameron Highlanders during the Boer War. At the outbreak of the Great War, he enlisted in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and served as a baker on the Western Front until May 1918. He then transferred to the 2nd Battalion, Auckland Infantry Regiment, and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his deeds on 30 September 1918 at Crèvecoeur.

The citation reads:

*Private Crichton, although wounded in the foot, stayed with the advancing troops despite difficult canal and river obstacles. When his platoon was forced back by a counterattack he succeeded in carrying a message which involved swimming a river and crossing an area swept by machine-gun fire. Subsequently he rejoined his platoon and later undertook on his own initiative to save a bridge which had been mined. Under close fire he managed to remove the charges, returning with the fuses and detonators.*

Crichton later achieved the rank of sergeant. He died at Takapuna, New Zealand.

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## Joseph McMullen Dargaville

(1837 – 27 October 1896)

Born in Cork and of Huguenot ancestry, Joseph McMullen Dargaville came to New Zealand via Australia in 1867. He became a prominent Auckland politician and Orangeman, becoming Grand Master of the order in New Zealand in 1874.

As a politician, he was a fluent and accomplished debater in Parliament and on the hustings, but his colleagues and constituents were often uncomfortable with his forthright manner and trenchantly expressed opinions.

In 1881 he was elected to the House of Representatives for Auckland West as an independent. He was against New Zealand participation in a proposed confederation with Australia, and under the auspices of the Auckland Trades and Labour Council published a pamphlet to this effect. Dargaville was censured for a speech he gave in Parliament on 31 July 1883, in which he accused Premier Frederick Whitaker and Colonial Treasurer H. A. Atkinson of using their political position to promote legislation which was in the interests of private institutions and not for the good of the colony.

A shrewd businessman, Dargaville became a timber merchant and founded the town of Dargaville which he modestly named after himself. Through his enterprise and business acumen a thriving kauri timber and gum industry, centred on Dargaville, was established. This industry made a significant contribution for many years to the struggling economy of the colony.

On 10 September 1875 he made an interesting speech at a reception in Auckland to welcome a group of new immigrants from Ireland, presumably George Vesey Stewart's Ulster settlers destined for Katikati. He referred to their values and characteristics as industry, perseverance, frugality, a 'deep-seated love for Queen and country' and 'loyalty to Britain'.



## James Dilworth

*(15 August 1815–23 December 1894)*

James Dilworth, the son of Mary Bell and her husband, John Dilworth, a farmer, was born in Donaghmore, County Tyrone. Educated at the Royal School, Dungannon, James worked first on his father's farm and then in the Ulster Bank.

In 1839 James had emigrated to New South Wales before moving to New Zealand in 1841. After a brief period exploring prospects at a number of settlements, he settled in Auckland as accountant to the New Zealand Banking Company in Princes Street.

Within a very short time his property deals and farming interests enabled him to give up his employment. He acquired properties throughout Auckland province. Occasionally he got his fingers burned in some of his business ventures but his land acquisitions were invariably astute.

Detail is scant about Dilworth's private life, largely because of his natural reserve. On public occasions he merged into the background, leaving speechmaking to others. However, we do know that on 12 July 1853, he married Isabella Hall, an Ulster immigrant.

Dilworth's life was one of impressive public service. He was, for 27 years from its opening in 1847, a trustee of the Auckland Savings Bank. An ardent low church Anglican, he was a longstanding member of the Diocesan General Trust Board. He served on the Auckland Provincial Council for eight years. Public causes he supported included the kindergarten movement and the YMCA.

Education was close to his heart, and he was a member of the Auckland University College council for the last four years of his life. Dilworth bequeathed the bulk of the estate to a Trust which was instructed to set up an

institute (or school) which would take in and educate boys who were living in 'straitened circumstances' and 'sons of persons of good character': the Dilworth School.

Dilworth's Will required the Trustees to ensure that students be given a Christian education, grounded in the traditions of the Anglican Church. Accordingly, the Bishop of Auckland serves as the school's Episcopal Visitor and visits the school on a regular basis, reporting both to the Trustees and to the Anglican Church.

Within a century Dilworth School became one of one of New Zealand's largest boarding schools. Dilworth School and the Royal School, Dungannon, enjoy a warm and friendly relationship and operate an exchange scheme by which gap-year students travel to their sister school to act as tutors and to experience life and education on the other side of the world.

Every day as James Dilworth walked to school in Dungannon, he passed the ancient High Cross at Donaghmore. This fact inspired Dilworth School to commission a High Cross, made of stone quarried in



*Dilworth School*

Ulster. Weighing 18 tons and dedicated in 1995, it stands in the grounds of the School as a memorial to James Dilworth and as a symbol of Dilworth's Christian heritage. In 2002 the Royal School, Dungannon, erected its own High Cross, made of bog oak, as a symbol of its own Christian heritage and of its the relationship with its Antipodean sister school.

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## James Sands Elliott

(28 May 1880–26 October 1959)

Born in Randalstown, County Antrim, Elliott was a doctor, editor, medical administrator and writer. An influential member of the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association (NZBMA), Elliott was chairman of the NZBMA's council for three terms and president in 1929. He was editor of the *New Zealand Medical Journal* from 1911 to 1933. Fluent in Latin and less so in Greek, Elliott wrote *Outlines of Greek and Roman medicine* in 1914.



## David (Dave) Gallaher

(30 October 1873 – 4 October 1917)

Born in Ramelton, County Donegal, Gallaher's family emigrated to New Zealand in 1878 and originally settled in Katikati. The family subsequently moved to Auckland in the 1890s and it was here that Gallaher began to play provincial rugby. He played 26 representative matches for Auckland.



Gallaher was the captain of the Original All Blacks (often simply referred to as 'The Originals'), New Zealand's first national rugby union team to tour outside Australasia. He captained the team from 1903 to 1906. The legendary All Blacks tour of Britain in 1905 probably constitutes the highlight of his career. The All Blacks scored 976 points and conceded only 59, setting a high standard for all subsequent All Black sides.

Gallaher served in the Boer War in the 6th and 10th New Zealand Mounted Rifles. He shaved three years of his age to serve in the Great War. He was killed during the Third Battle of Ypres on 4 October 1917. He is buried at Nine Elms Cemetery, Poperinge. Two of Gallaher's brothers were killed in France.

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## Aileen Anna Maria Garmson

(c.1863–30 May 1951)

Born in County Cavan, Garmson was an influential trade unionist and political activist. She was active in the Shearers' Union, becoming treasurer and secretary of the Christchurch branch of the Amalgamated Shearers' and Labourers' Union of New Zealand between 1893 and 1896. Having been



in domestic service before her marriage, she also tried to organize domestic servants. In the General Election of 1919, as Aileen Cooke, she was one of the first three women to seek election to the New Zealand Parliament.

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## Samuel Kirkpatrick

*(c.1854–21 May 1925)*

Samuel Kirkpatrick was the son of Rebecca Montgomery Marshall and her husband, William Kirkpatrick, a draper. Born in Newry, County Down, he was a businessman, who arrived in New Zealand in 1878 and recognized the prospects of fruit preserving. Within twenty years his jam factory was one of the largest manufacturing firms in Nelson. An enthusiastic Mason and a widower, he left most of his substantial fortune to charity.




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## John Martin

*(11 November 1822 –17 May 1892)*

Born at Moneymore, County Londonderry, John Martin was a member of the Legislative Council of New Zealand and the son of a retired Church of Ireland clergyman. ‘Johnny’ Martin arrived in New Zealand in 1841 and began work as a pick-and-shovel hand and eventually purchased a horse and cart. He impressed others as ‘a very steady, plodding and industrious young fellow, with a shrewd head and frugal instincts’. In other words, Martin became a ‘self-made man’ through raising himself ‘by untiring energy and

perseverance from the bottom of the ladder’.

In 1879 Martin purchased the township of Waihenga and renamed it Martinborough. Although Martinborough failed to match the grand vision of its founder, the town was designed in the shape of a Union Jack, with streets radiating from a central square and named after famous places Martin had visited during his travels. Since the 1990s Martinborough has reinvented itself as a wine village.

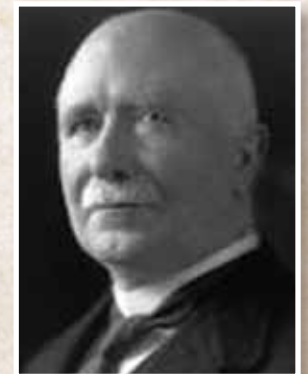
Martin left his mark on Wellington’s urban landscape too in the form of Martin Square; Marion, Jessie and Espie streets were named after his two youngest daughters and his mother.

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## William Ferguson Massey

*(26 March 1856 – 10 May 1925)*

Between 1912 and 1925 William Ferguson Massey served as the 19th Prime Minister of New Zealand. After Richard Seddon, John Ballance’s Liberal successor, Massey remains to date the second longest-serving Prime Minister in New Zealand’s history. Like John Ballance, he founded a political party, the Reform Party.



Massey was born in Limavady, County Londonderry. Bill Massey, as he was generally known, was the eldest child of John Massey and his wife, Mary Anne Ferguson. Bill’s father came from a long-established Ulster family but both his mother and his paternal grandmother were Scots.

In 1869 John Massey sold the family farm in Ulster and migrated to New Zealand. Bill Massey remained in Ulster for a further year to complete his

education at a private secondary school, having attended Limavady National School. He arrived in New Zealand in December 1870.

After arriving in New Zealand, Massey worked as a farmhand for some years before acquiring his own farm in 1877. In 1882 Massey married his neighbour's daughter, Christina Allen Paul. The couple had seven children.

During these years he achieved a prominence in local life through the local farmers' club (of which he was president) and through the Presbyterian Church. In 1892 he was briefly Grand Master of the Orange Order but New Zealand historians are uncertain as to how strong his Orange sympathies were. Rory Sweetman, for example, contends that the strength of Massey's Orange sympathies have been 'assumed rather than demonstrated'.

In 1893 Massey failed to win the electorate (the New Zealand term for a constituency) of Franklin in the general election of that year but successfully contested a by-election in the neighbouring electorate of Waitemata the following year. As an independent, he was joining a disorganized and dispirited collection of individuals with no realistic prospect of dislodging the Liberals from power.

In 1901 he became Leader of the Opposition and in 1903 leader of the National Association. By force of personality and his political acumen both inside and outside Parliament he transformed the Opposition into a coherent and organized political party. In 1909 Massey announced the creation of the Reform Party. The choice of name is revealing about the centre of political gravity in early-twentieth century New Zealand and renders Massey's future longevity as Prime Minister all the more impressive.

In the General Election of 1911 the Reform Party won more seats than the Liberal Party but not an absolute majority. The Liberals, relying on support from independents who had not joined Reform, were able to stay in power

until the following year, when they lost a vote of no confidence.

In 1912 Massey became Prime Minister. Like Abraham Lincoln, he had sufficient intellectual confidence to surround himself with able and talented colleagues. Between 1912 and 1925 his governments confronted serious challenges arising not only from prosperity but also with economic recessions, strikes, growing divisions within society, a world war and the worst epidemic in the country's history. He secured an absolute majority on only one occasion (1919) but Massey's skilful parliamentary management enabled him to govern and achieve the unique distinction of being the only Prime Minister in the world to hold office before, during and after the Great War.

Like Ballance, Massey was a man of honesty and integrity but he was more direct and blunt than Ballance. In domestic politics Massey's political mindset was essentially that of a late- nineteenth-century Ulster tenant farmer wishing to become a landed proprietor. This is reflected in his election slogan in the 1890s: 'Every man his own landlord'. In this respect, he has some affinity with Ballance too. However, he was a man of broader vision. At one stage he was prepared to contemplate New Zealand becoming part of Australia. During the Great War he became an Imperial statesman. No part of the British Empire was more loyal to the Mother Country than New Zealand. On 31 July 1914 (even before war was declared) the New Zealand Parliament voted unanimously to send an expeditionary force to Europe. Despite having only a population of slightly over a million, New Zealand sent 11% of its population to war, of whom 17,000 did not return. Massey represented New Zealand at the Versailles settlement in 1919, ensuring appropriate recognition of New Zealand's sacrifices at Gallipoli and on



the Western Front. Despite his deep-seated scepticism (which was fully vindicated by events), he took New Zealand into the League of Nations, precursor of the United Nations.

Sir James Craig (Prime Minister of Northern Ireland 1921-1940) and W. F. Massey had a very high regard for each other.

In Belfast Sir James Craig said that 'If anything happened to him, he hoped that Ulster would tempt Mr Massey to become Prime Minister of Northern Ireland' (*Evening Post*, 30 November 1923).

In Londonderry Massey confided to his audience that 'he had to divide his affection between the land of his birth and the land of his adoption, and he was really not quite sure which made the greater call' (*Evening Post*, 19 January 1924).

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## John Alexander McCullough

(17 January 1860 – 29 July 1947)

John Alexander (usually known as Jack) McCullough was born in Belfast, the eldest of five children. He was the son of Sarah Davison and her husband, William John McCullough, a seaman, staunch trade unionist and Orangeman. Both his parents were devout Presbyterians. Jack was baptised in Sinclair Seamen's Church, Belfast. In February 1880 the family emigrated to New Zealand.

Jack was a tinsmith, trade unionist and political activist. He became vice president of the Canterbury Trades and Labour Council in 1899 and



president in 1901. He probably organised more unions than anyone else in New Zealand at the turn of the century – 17 in 1901 alone. He became a member of Canterbury Fabian Society in 1908, developed an enthusiasm for socialism and supported the establishment of a New Zealand labour party (which came into existence in 1910). He was the workers' representative of the Arbitration Court between 1908 and 1921 and was appointed to the New Zealand Legislative Council by the country's first Labour Government in 1936, serving until his death.

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## James McGowan

(1841 – 7 May 1912)

The son of James McGowan and his wife Jane Munn McGowan, McGowan was born in Maxwell's Court, Comber, County Down. He emigrated to Auckland in 1865. After five years, he moved to Thames where he founded a large store and a bakery. He was Mayor of Thames in 1889 and in 1892–1893. He was elected to Parliament as a Liberal for Thames in a by-election in 1893. He resigned on 6 January 1909 so that he could be appointed to the Legislative Council on that same day, where he served until his death.

He held a variety of Cabinet posts, becoming Minister of Justice and Minister of Mines in January 1900 and in August 1906 he became Minister of Immigration. From November 1906 until his resignation from the lower house, he was Minister of Industries and Commerce. McGowan's parents are commemorated by a pillar in Comber graveyard which also records that their son was a prominent politician in New Zealand.



## Mary Jane Milne

*(16 September 1840–4 April 1921)*

Mary Jane Milne was born at Coalisland, County Tyrone, to Margery Fay, née Dawson, and her husband, James Stewart Milne, a builder. Mary Jane was the eldest of their six children, one of whom died in early childhood.

The family settled in Auckland in 1863. Mary Jane found employment as a milliner. Early in 1867, despite the economic recession in Auckland, Mary Jane bought into a business with her sister, Charlotte. The business, originally concentrating on drapery, flourished and eventually became Milne and Choyce (Charlotte's husband's name), a department store.

Mary Jane's energy and business acumen ensured that the company adapted, and survived lean as well as buoyant times. It provided employment for many shop assistants, dressmakers and managers, as other departments developed from the millinery and drapery business. Her buying trips ensured that some of the finest goods were imported into Auckland from European markets.

Mary Jane Milne was a very remarkable woman because she pursued a very successful career in commerce at a time when most women would have settled for domesticity rather than a business career.

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## Harriet Morison

*(June 1862- 19 August 1925)*

Born in Magherafelt, County Londonderry, Harriet Morison was the daughter of Margaret Clark and her husband, James Morison, a master tailor. She was a significant figure as a trade unionist, being the first vice-president and later secretary of the Dunedin Tailoresses' Union between 1899 and 1896. In 1906 she became an inspector of factories. She was a lay preacher for the Bible Christian church and served a term as chairwoman of her Unitarian church committee. As a feminist, she believed women had a duty to care for the morals of society as well as a right to be protected from its evils.



## Alan Edward Mulgan

*(18 May 1881–29 August 1962)*

Alan Edward Mulgan was born on George Vesey Stewart's settlement in Katikati, in the Bay of Plenty. He was the son of Frances Maria Johnston and her husband, Edward Ker Mulgan, a farmer who was later a journalist, newspaper editor and teacher, and who eventually became a chief inspector of schools. Both sides of the family were involved in the foundation of the settlement: the Johnstons remained important members but in 1879 Alan's paternal grandfather moved to Auckland.



Alan became an important journalist, writer and broadcaster. He was chief

leader writer of the Auckland Star between 1916 and 1935. He was a prolific author of books and widely regarded as New Zealand's leading man of letters. Of particular significance are *Home: A New Zealander's adventure* (1927), *An Ulster plantation: the story of the Katikati settlement* (1938) and his autobiography, *The making of a New Zealander* (1958).

In 1935 he accepted the newly created position of supervisor of talks for the New Zealand Broadcasting Board (later the National Broadcasting Service). Working with radio stations throughout the country, Mulgan wrote talks (mainly on literature and the arts) and found and instructed speakers.

John Mulgan, his elder son was also a writer and journalist.

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## Edward Ker Mulgan

(1857–14 November 1920)

Edward Ker Mulgan was born at Ballynahinch, County Down, the son of Arabella Maria Stringer and her husband, the Revd William Edward Mulgan, later rector of Dunaghy, County Antrim. He established a dairy farm at Katikati, became the editor of the *Bay of Plenty Times*, and then moved into education, first as a teacher and, after twelve years, as an inspector.



He wrote two textbooks: *The New Zealand nature-study book* in 1905 and *The New Zealand citizen* in 1914. The latter, co-authored with his son, Alan Mulgan, was an early civics text. Following a visit to Great Britain in 1915 with his wife, Mulgan wrote a report on English and Scottish post-primary education which was well received back in New Zealand.

## William Sharman Crawford Nicholl

(1852–6 August 1937)

Billie Nicholl believed he was 10 when he arrived in Auckland in 1862. He was born William Sharman Crawford Nicholl, at Garvagh, County Londonderry. He emigrated with his parents, Martha Jane George, and her husband, George Nicholl, a labourer. His father seems to have died soon after. By 1868 he was living on the Thames goldfields and spent the rest of his days as a prospector and goldmine developer.




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## Thomas Moore Philson

(10 August 1817–22 November 1899)

The eldest child of Eliza Ball and her husband, Matthew Philson, a mathematics master at a large private school, Thomas Moore Philson was born in Londonderry, County Londonderry. He was educated by his father before entering the University of Edinburgh in 1834.



In 1843 Philson received a commission as assistant surgeon to the 58th (Rutlandshire) Regiment of Foot, and in 1845 he and his wife accompanied it to Sydney, Australia. The regiment was soon ordered to New Zealand and was sent almost immediately to the Bay of Islands. Philson saw military action there, including the battle of Ruapekepeka in 1846, for which he was mentioned in dispatches. The regiment remained in the Bay of Islands until it was moved to Wellington and, later, to Wanganui.

Resigning his commission, Philson entered private practice in Auckland in 1851. He continued his military connections and was appointed surgeon to the Auckland Regiment of Militia in December 1856 and again in April 1860, and in April 1887 he was appointed brigade surgeon to the New Zealand defence forces, with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

As a doctor and hospital superintendent, he occupies an important place in the history of medicine and healthcare in New Zealand. He was a co-founder and member of the Auckland Baptist community and attended the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle for many years, as well as supporting other benevolent societies.

## 5th Earl of Ranfurly

(August 1856 – 1 October 1933)

The 5th Earl of Ranfurly paid a visit to Katikati on 11 May 1899. George Vesey Stewart addressed him as ‘an Irish nobleman connected with that district of Ireland [Tyrone] from which so many of us have come’. Uchter John Mark Knox, the 5th Earl, was the second son of the 3rd Earl. He was educated at Harrow, and Trinity College, Cambridge. The 15th Governor-General of New Zealand, holding the office between 1897 and 1904, he was conspicuously more proactive than most of his predecessors and successors. He had a strong sense of the dignity of his position as the Queen’s representative. He did not hesitate, if occasion warranted, privately to call Ministers to order. Nevertheless he was greatly respected by his Ministers, and universally admired by the people. His departure in 1904 was an occasion for impressive



public demonstrations of affection. His great memorial in New Zealand is the Ranfurly Shield – the premier rugby trophy.

## George McCullagh Reed

(1831–13 November 1898)

George McCullagh Reed was born in County Monaghan, the son of James Reed, a farmer, and his wife, Jane Ann Lewis. He graduated from Queen’s College, Belfast, in 1856, and after being ordained as a Presbyterian minister, spent some time in France and Switzerland. In 1857 he emigrated to Victoria, Australia, where he took charge of the North Melbourne Presbyterian Church. He later became the first moderator of the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

He then embarked on a second career as a newspaper editor and proprietor, moving to New Zealand and founding the *Auckland Evening Star*. In Dunedin he founded another newspaper, the *Guardian* and bought the *Otago Times*. He became New Zealand’s immigration agent in Ireland in 1878, moving to Belfast with his family. During a spell in London he launched a paper called the *Anglo-New Zealander* in 1884. By the end of the 1880s he was writing editorials for the *Sydney Morning Herald* in Australia and by 1895 he was writing editorials for the *New Zealand Herald* in Auckland.

This restless man also enjoyed practical jokes. In 1883 for April Fool’s Day he reported that Noah’s Ark had been discovered intact in a glacier on Mount Ararat. The story was reprinted by papers throughout the world, so much so that there are still people who fail to appreciate that this was simply an elaborate hoax.



## Frances Jane Ross

*(26 April 1869 –13 July 1950)*

Frances Jane Ross was born at Rosebury farm, Otepopo, North Otago, New Zealand, one of six children of Dorathea Mee and her husband, Angus Ross. Her father came from Ross-shire, Scotland, and her mother from County Cavan. To her parents and rural upbringing she owed her splendid health, her love of education, her staunch Presbyterian faith, and her happy extrovert outlook.

In 1886 she was a foundation pupil of Girton College, which had been established by Caroline Freeman, the first woman student from the University of Otago to graduate. Girton College, unlike many other girls' schools, encouraged its pupils to pursue academic studies, and Frances Ross went on to Otago, graduating BA in 1890. In 1891 she returned to Girton as first assistant, eventually becoming co-principal. She gained her MA in 1900.

She was co-principal of a number of educational establishments and in 1914 became sole principal of Columba College, established by the Presbytery of Dunedin as a secondary school for both boarders and day girls.

During her retirement she was active in the work of the Young Women's Christian Association of New Zealand. Whenever her services were required she came out of retirement. For example, in 1939 she was acting warden of St Margaret's College, a university hostel. In 1942 she was principal of the Presbyterian Women's Training Institute in Dunedin, and in 1943 and 1944 she was a relieving teacher at St Hilda's Collegiate School.

A pioneer in women's education, she was an outstanding teacher who combined knowledge and dignity with a sense of fun.

## Joseph (Joe) Scott

*(3 June 1860 –9 February 1908)*

Joseph Scott was born at Lettermacaward, County Donegal, the son of John Scott and his wife, Hannah McElheny. John Scott was a member of the Irish Constabulary. He and his family emigrated to Victoria, Australia, about 1861, and he was one of the policemen brought from there to Otago in 1861 or 1862. As a race walker, Joe Scott became New Zealand's first world champion athlete and world-record holder in 1888.

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## Margaret Jane Scott

*(17 January 1869–1 May 1958)*

Born at Carnafane (near Cavan town), County Cavan, Margaret Jane Scott was the daughter of Anne Kenny and her husband, Henry Scott, a farmer. The family emigrated to New Zealand in 1880 and settled on land outside Christchurch. A tailoress, in 1892 Margaret Jane became the first female secretary of the Christchurch Tailoresses' and Pressers' Union, a post she retained until 1897. She achieved national prominence as Vice-President of Canterbury Trades and Labour Council in 1894.

As a factory inspector for the Department of Labour, her principal responsibility was to investigate factories and shops throughout New Zealand where women and girls were employed to ensure that their places of employment complied with factory legislation. Before her resignation in 1910, she was the highest paid female public servant in New Zealand.

After her marriage in 1898 she signed herself as Margaret Scott Hawthorne. Her significance was two-fold: first, she spearheaded the campaign to improve conditions for women workers and, secondly, she was one of the first women to achieve a position of status in the public service.



## Marianne Smith

(10 March 1851 – 1 September 1938)

Born Mary Anne Caughey in Portaferry, County Down, she was the youngest daughter of James Caughey, a grocer, and his wife, Jane Clarke. She married William Henry Smith, who worked with her brother Andrew at a Belfast drapery store, in 1874.

When she arrived in Auckland in early 1880, she opened Smith's Cheap Drapery Warehouse. As the new firm could not support husband and wife, William initially worked for another draper, but by 1881 Marianne's store was doing sufficiently well that William was able to join her. The shop's success was built on a policy of high turnover through low retail margins, embodied in the mottoes, 'Small profits and quick returns' and 'A nimble sixpence rather than a slow shilling'. She encouraged a Maori clientele by advertising in the Maori-language newspaper *Te Korimako*.

She was an extremely successful business woman. An energetic Methodist, she devoted much of her life to the work of the denomination and to philanthropy. She left a huge estate worth around £325,000

## George Vesey Stewart

(1832–3 March 1920)

George Vesey Stewart, the third son of Mervyn Stewart, a retired army officer of Martray, County Tyrone, and his wife, Frances Vesey, was born in Brighton, Sussex. In 1844 he was sent to school in London before entering the College of Civil Engineers, Putney, to train as an estate agent. In 1852 Stewart entered Trinity College, Dublin. In 1856 he graduated with an

honours degree in Classics and married Margaret Torrens Miller, daughter of Emily and John Rowley Miller.

While pursuing a career as an estate agent, Stewart farmed several estates in Ireland, and started a linen mill to provide employment for his tenants in County Tyrone. It was the failure of this venture which prompted him to emigrate to New Zealand in 1873. After a countrywide search, he came upon Katikati on the shore of the Tauranga Harbour in April 1874. It was here he was to found what might be regarded as 'an Ulster plantation in New Zealand'.

Stewart negotiated with the authorities in New Zealand to establish his settlement and on 24 June 1874 the Crown agreed to set aside 10,000 acres of land for Stewart's Ulster settlers. Stewart, who became Grand Master of the Orange Order in North Island in the course of that year, recruited his settlers by circularizing Orange lodges in Ulster and his brainchild was converted into reality through the support of Orangemen prominent in public life in New Zealand, notably Joseph McMullen Dargaville.

In his pitch to prospective settlers, Stewart contended:

*Emigrating to a new country with, perhaps, friends or acquaintances; or, at least, countrymen, and settling down within easy distance so as to be able to enjoy social intercourse, is very different to an isolated family starting off 16,000 miles to locate themselves among strangers, with no bond of fellowship, no connecting link save one common language. We have at once our church, our school, our parson, and carry with us all the little prejudices, customs, and manners of the old country, of which people cannot divest themselves when emigrating in their more mature years.*





The first party, consisting of mainly tenant farmers and their families, for the Katikati Special Settlement left Belfast in the *Carisbrooke Castle* in June 1875 and arrived in Auckland in September 1875. They quickly established themselves at Katikati where they were much admired for their industriousness.

For many of the settlers, the overwhelming attraction of Katikati was its Ulster and Orange character. In the words of one Robert Stuart: 'Be you an Orangeman, you shall meet Orangemen; be you a Blackman, you shall meet Blackmen; be you a Freemason, you shall meet Freemasons; be you what you may, you shall always meet a hearty welcome ... from honest and contented countrymen'. John Hamilton, another settler, identified another appealing feature of life in Katikati.



He thanked Stewart for bringing him to a land 'where a man can live under his own vine and fig tree' and without 'fear of landlord, agent or bailiff'.

Stewart soon obtained a further 10,000 acres adjoining the original Katikati lands and a second party of settlers came out in 1878 in the *Lady Jocelyn*.

Among the passengers were Stewart's parents, his brother Hugh, and Hugh's wife, Adela.

After the success of these two settlements, Stewart decided to organise a third, this time at Te Puke, and despite competition he was allocated the land he wanted. This party, drawn from all over the British Isles, was the first to sail directly to Tauranga, where the *Lady Jocelyn* arrived on 2 January 1881. Between 1877 and 1885 Stewart published eight pamphlets advertising his special settlements and raised six parties of settlers. He is credited with bringing about 4,000 emigrants to New Zealand.

Stewart was an exceptionally able man with imagination, drive and determination and possessed great organizational flair. He aspired to



prominence politically but while success eluded him at national level, his achievements at local level were genuinely impressive. For example, he managed to secure more money for the Bay of Plenty from central government than all the area's parliamentary representatives put together. On a national level, his personal contribution to the settlement of New

Zealand was in a league all of its own.

Today Katikati is famous for its many murals. Beginning with three murals in 1991, there are now 44 murals. Most offer interpretations of the town's history but some look to the future. Originally a tourist project to attract more visitors to the town and the surrounding area, the murals assisted Katikati secure the distinction of being New Zealand's 'Most Beautiful Small Town' in 2005.

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## Rutherford Waddell

(1850–1932)

Rutherford Waddell was born in Ballyroney, County Down. His father was the Revd Hugh Waddell, a Presbyterian minister; his mother, Jean Reid, was the sister of Thomas Mayne Reid, a famous author.

He arrived in New Zealand in 1877 and in 1879 he was called to the flourishing new charge of St Andrew's Church in Dunedin, of which he was to be the minister for 40 years. He became 'one of the outstanding personalities of nineteenth-century Otago', his influence reaching far beyond his church and Dunedin.

Despite having a slight speech impediment, Waddell became one of the country's most notable preachers. His sermons were published in their thousands. Theologically orthodox, he was socially radical and believed that the Christian gospel should be actively interpreted through social justice. Waddell played a leading part in exposing sweated labour in Dunedin.



As well as being a notable minister and social reformer, Waddell was an active journalist and editor of the national Presbyterian weekly, the *Christian Outlook* (later called the *Outlook*), from 1894 to 1902.

His older brother Hugh was one of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's first two missionaries to China and thus the uncle of Helen Waddell, the celebrated medievalist and Latinist.

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## Crosbie Ward

(10 February 1832 – 10 November 1867)

Crosbie Ward was born in Killinchy, County Down. He was the third son of Henry Ward, rector of Killinchy, and his wife, Anne Mahon. He married Margaret Townsend, of Rangiora, on 13 January 1857 at Lyttelton, New Zealand. Nicknamed 'Mr Punch of Canterbury', Ward, like his great rival John Williamson, was an influential newspaper proprietor, editor (of the *Lyttelton Times*) and politician. Ward represented the Lyttelton electorate from 1858 to 1866. As Postmaster-General and Secretary for Crown Lands, he was a Cabinet minister. Between 1866 and 1867 he represented the electorate of Avon.

Socially, as a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and an Anglo-Irish gentleman, he offers an interesting contrast with John Williamson (nicknamed 'Carbuncle Jack') from Newry and a fellow County Down man. Williamson was of humble origins, a Wesleyan Methodist and a printer by trade. Based in Auckland, Williamson founded the *New Zealander*



in 1845 and the *New Zealand Herald* in 1863. ‘Carbuncle Jack’ was an MP and a Cabinet minister (as Minister without Portfolio). John Williamson, who was born in 1815 and died on 16 February 1875, enjoyed greater longevity than ‘Mr Punch of Canterbury’.

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A generous benefactor to Knox Presbyterian Church, he could always be relied upon to give willingly to charitable appeals.

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## Robert Wilson

(16 December 1832 – 19 August 1899)

Robert Wilson was born in Omagh, County Tyrone, where his parents farmed flax for the linen trade. The family emigrated to Victoria, Australia, in 1852.



Robert Wilson arrived in Dunedin in 1861, hoping to take advantage of circumstances created by the discovery of gold in Otago. Although business was slower than anticipated, he decided to stay. He set himself up as a ship and commission agent and general merchant, as well as undertaking some carting, but soon concentrated on wholesale grocery. An enterprising, energetic and successful entrepreneur, for almost 20 years Wilson was active in promoting various companies in Dunedin, serving as a director of most of them. He was a founder of the National Fire and Marine Insurance Company of New Zealand in 1873, and a board member until his death. He was also associated with the Colonial Bank of New Zealand, the Mutual Agency Company of New Zealand, the Kaitangata Railway and Coal Company and many other concerns.

## *Further Reading*

D. H. Akenson, *Half the world from home: perspectives on the Irish in New Zealand 1860-1950* (Wellington, 1990)

Timothy McIvor, *The Rainmaker: A Biography of John Ballance, Journalist and Politician* (Auckland, 1989)

Brad Patterson (ed.) *Ulster-New-Zealand Migration and Cultural Transfers* (Dublin, 2006)

Unfortunately *Ulster-New-Zealand Migration and Cultural Transfers* does not have a bibliography but the footnotes effectively constitute a running bibliography. So, for example, the footnotes to Brad Patterson's article entitled 'New Zealand's "Ulster Plantation": Katikati revisited' are an invaluable guide to the literature available on the subject.

James Watson, *W. F. Massey* (London, 2010)

*The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*

First published as a series of print volumes from 1990 to 2000, since 2002 it has been available on line at [www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies](http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies)

Consisting of over 3,000 biographies, this marvellous resource is managed by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage of the New Zealand Government.

*The McIlrath Letters: a family history in letters from New Zealand to Ireland, 1860-1915* (Killyleagh, 2009)

This publication consists of 64 letters sent to their family home near Balloo, Killinchy, County Down, from the Antipodes over a period of 55 years.

They chart the progress and achievements of the McIlrath brothers, as well as personal events, marriages, births, illness and deaths.



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