

LARNE AND DISTRICT FOLKLORE SOCIETY



HENRY MC NEILL 1836-1904

Henry Mc Neill was born in Deerpark, Glenarm. He served an apprenticeship in the wholesale and retail spirit trade. Upon coming to Larne he began a business on Main Street. With the opening of the new coastal route he believed the Glens of Antrim could be a haven for tourists. He provided the visitors with good food, comfortable lodgings and the wonders of the Antrim coastline. The visitors were at first taken along the Coast Road by long cars pulled by horses. At the height of the summer season 200 horses would have been in use. Later charabancs and buses were used. With the development of the Larne Stranraer steamship service many visitors came from Scotland and the north of England.

In 1903 the people of Larne decided to honour 'Knockemdown' Mc Neill for the work he had done putting Larne on the tourist map an oil painting was commissioned and hung in the Town hall. Unfortunately Henry Mc Neill died before the presentation could be made.