

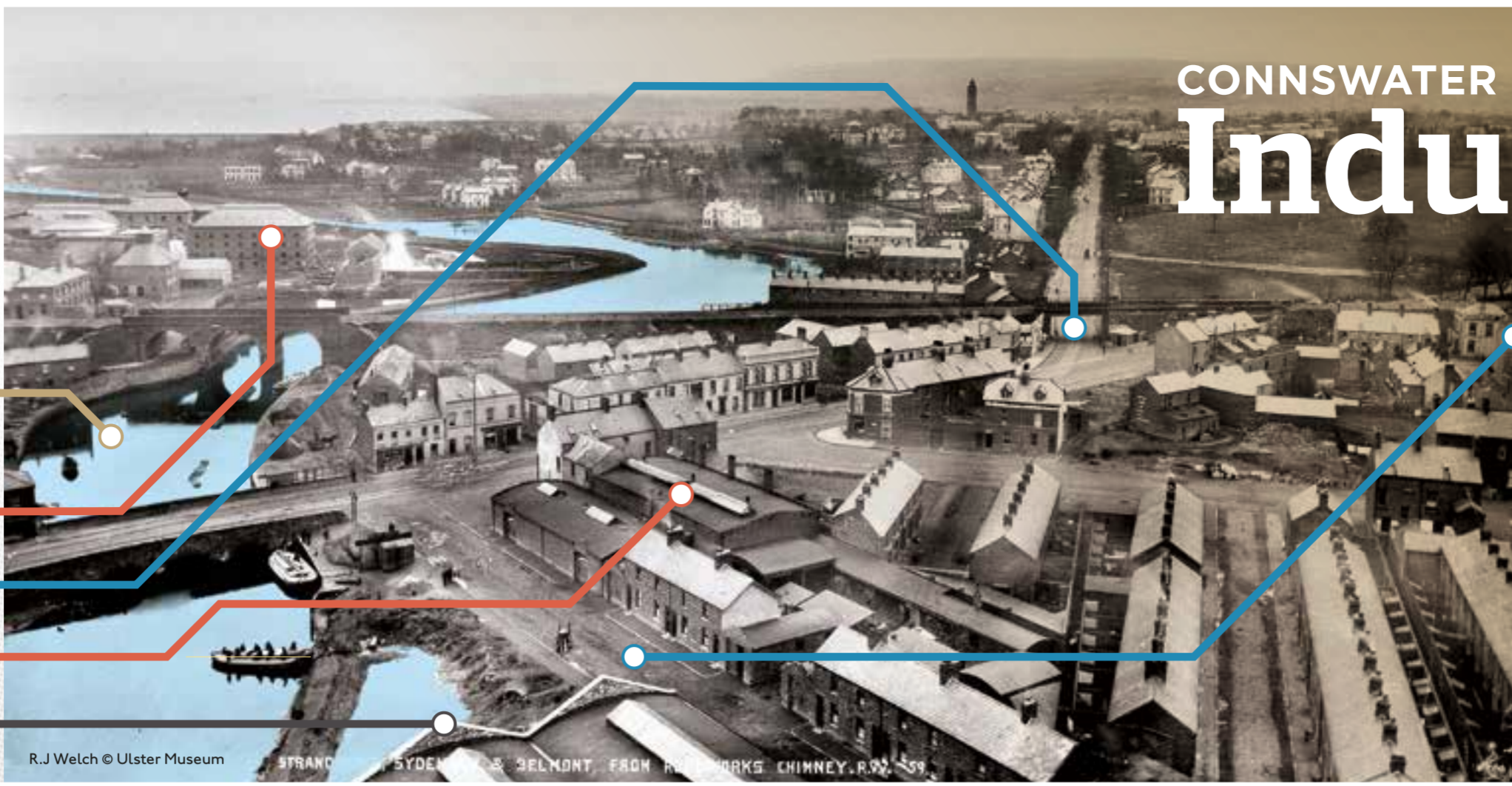
CS Lewis Square & EastSide Visitor Centre. Est 2016

Irish Distillery

Hollywood Arches

Bloomfield Bakery

Belfast Ropeworks



CONNSWATER Industrial Heritage TRAIL

RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE **£1**

Belfast

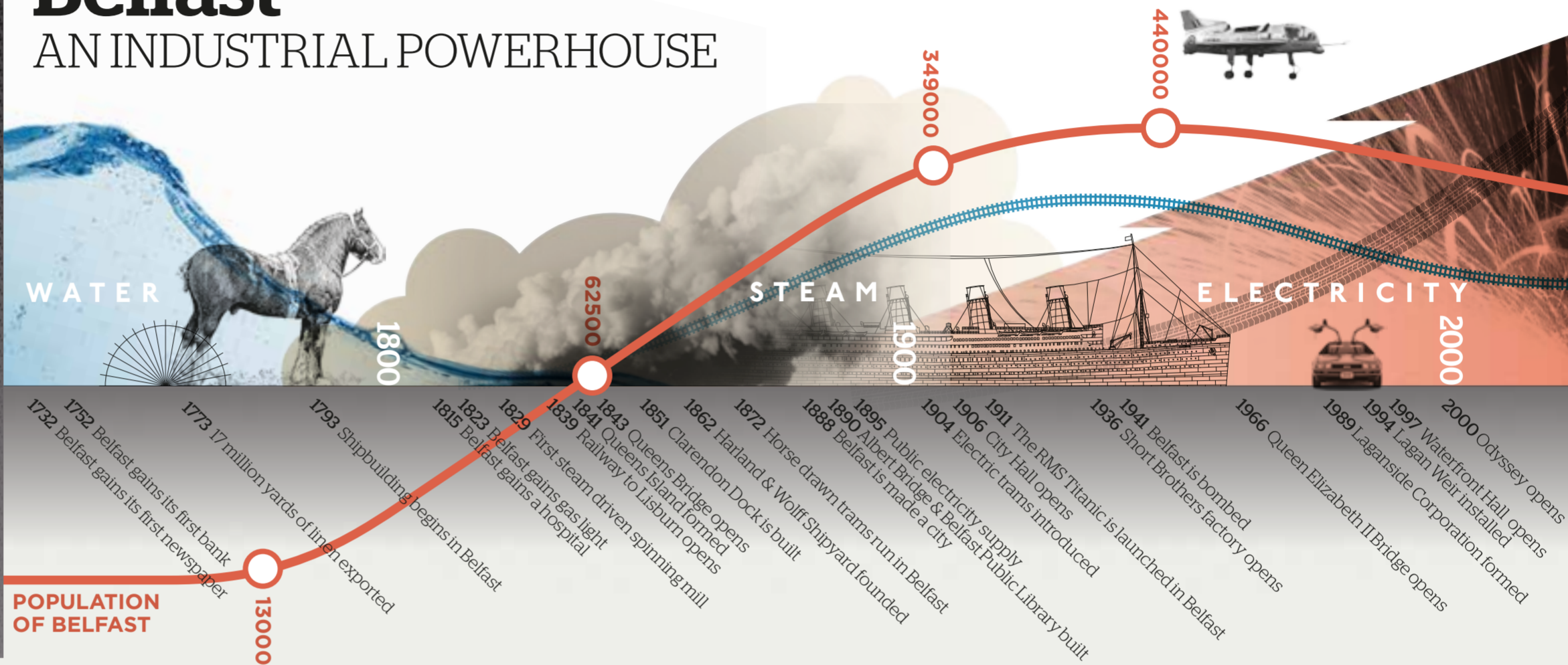
EAST SIDE
INSPIRING BELFAST

Belfast had its origins as a small settlement called Béal Feirste, at the mouth of the river Farset. Growth was slow - by 1700, its population was only 2,500. Yet 150 years later, after the Irish Famine, it mushroomed to over 100,000, as people moved from the country to the town in search of work.

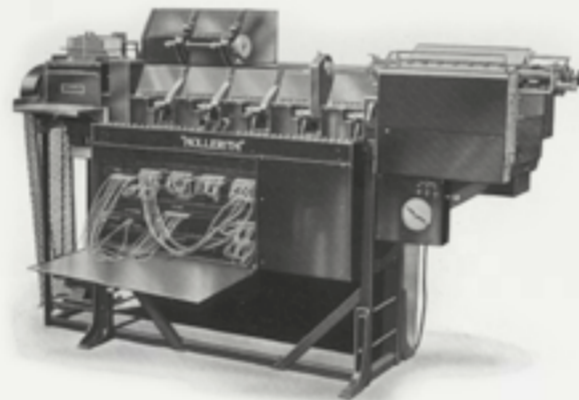
Thousands were employed in the rapidly growing linen mills, rope factories, engineering works and shipyards of east Belfast. Huge factories lined the banks of the Connswater, Knock and Loop rivers and narrow horse-drawn barges, called lighters, brought raw materials and carried away finished goods for export. Water from the rivers fed powerful steam engines and was used for many industrial processes.

Over the years, much of east Belfast's industrial heritage has been lost, as factories and warehouses have been replaced by houses and shops. But as you walk along the Connswater Community Greenway, you can still catch a fascinating glimpse of a time when Belfast was one of the mightiest industrial cities in the world.

Belfast AN INDUSTRIAL POWERHOUSE



THE QUEENS BRIDGE LOOKING INTO EAST BELFAST WITH ITS INDUSTRIAL SKYLINE



HOLLERITH TABULATOR PRODUCED BY BTM



INGLIS & CO. BREAD ADVERTISEMENT



CANTRELL & COCHRANE ADVERTISEMENT



HARLAND & WOLFF SHIPYARD WORKER

THE PEOPLE, THE PLACE

For those living and working in industrial east Belfast during the 19th and early 20th century, life was tough, gritty and often short. By 1901, life expectancy was still only 48 years.

Men worked in heavy industries such as shipbuilding, while women were employed mostly in the mills and weaving industries. The hours were long and working conditions in the factories and mills were harsh. Children as young as eight were employed under the 'half-time' system, alternating their days between the schoolroom and the linen mills, earning a few extra shillings to help sustain their families. There were more than 100 pawnbrokers in the city in 1911, which says much about the wealth and income for many in Belfast.

A network of back-to-back, red-brick terrace housing was built to accommodate the workers. Most streets shared a communal water pump or tap, but with the opening of Templemore Public Baths (1893), locals could enjoy a steaming hot bath.

Rope, linen & weaving

TWINE AND CORD

From 1750 onwards, with the port of Belfast flourishing and industries such as shipbuilding on the rise, there was growing demand for rope and thread. Belfast had many rope makers, and in 1876, a new producer, the Belfast Ropeworks Company, was established.

It went on to become the largest rope producer in the world.

At its peak, the Belfast Ropeworks Company covered 16 hectares (about 40 acres), employed over 3,000 people and produced 13,000 tonnes of rope per year. It closed around 1973.

There were also smaller ropeworks, known as ropewalks, such as the one at Ardgowan Street, opposite the Loop Bridge Spinning Mill. It specialised in twine for the textile industry and operated from around 1900 until the 1960s.

LINENOPOLIS

The Ballymacarrett area had a long tradition of cotton weaving, so when the first linen mills opened in the 1830s, a skilled workforce was available.

The Connswater river was navigable at that time and water from the Connswater, Knock and Loop rivers was used in linen production. The raw material used in linen production - flax - was also transported along the rivers to the mills.

Belfast's linen industry was helped by the American Civil War (1861-1865), which devastated cotton production, and created an opening for linen products. In 1871, there were 78 mills employing 43,000 and by 1894, Belfast was producing 644 million miles of yarn, enough to encircle the world 25,000 times.

Work in the linen mills was notoriously hard and unhealthy. A typical working week for a mill worker could be up to 60 hours over 6 days, with the working day starting at 6am and an hour for lunch.

Engineering & manufacturing

SHIP AND PLANES

In 1858, Edward Harland bought a shipbuilding yard at Queen's Island and three years later went into partnership with Gustav Wolff to form Harland & Wolff Ltd. This was to become the largest single shipyard in the world, employing over 40,000 at its peak.

Short Brothers established an aircraft factory on Queen's Island in 1936. The company later became Short Bros and Harland and in 1989, was bought by Bombardier, the world's third-largest civil aircraft manufacturer.

Shorts established its Guided Weapons Division in the Castlereagh Industrial Estate at Montgomery Road in 1952. This government-built industrial estate housed many well-known companies, from Fox's Glacier Mints confectioners to toy makers Lines Bros. at the Triang Works.

Belfast's engineering companies contributed massively to the war effort during the Second World War (1939-1945). The city was devastated by four German air attacks in April and May 1941 (the 'Belfast Blitz'), which killed more than 1,000.

CODE BREAKING

Much of the expertise developed in the design of linen-weaving equipment was transferable to the manufacture of production line machinery. In 1949, the British Tabulating Machine Co. (BTM), which had manufactured parts for the code-breaking equipment at Bletchley Park during the Second

World War, acquired a factory site at Castlereagh. Known locally as 'the Tab', BTM manufactured Hollerith tabulators, the forerunners of modern computers.

In 1959 BTM became International Computers and Tabulators Limited (ICT) and later ICL (International Computers Limited).

Food & drink

Belfast's rapidly growing population of manual workers needed a reliable and affordable supply of foodstuffs. Some workers received food tokens as part payment, which could be exchanged for meals at a company canteen.

BAKERIES

Bakeries were established to supply bread to the local populace. The New Public Bakery Co. opened at Bloomfield Avenue in 1880 and, became the Bloomfield Bakery in 1894. In 1933 the company was taken over by Inglis. The 1938 Ordnance Survey map shows a 'Biscuit Factory' adjacent to the Loop River at Orangefield. This later became the Weston Biscuit Factory and is currently occupied by Allied Bakeries.

DISTILLERIES AND SOFT DRINKS

The Avoniel Distillery occupied the site of the old Connswater Spinning Mill from 1882. The much larger Irish Distillery at Connswater Street opened 1886. Both ceased production in 1929, following Prohibition in USA.

Soft drinks factories, such as Rosses, Cantrell & Cochrane, were often sited

close to natural springs. The water in east Belfast's rivers was too heavily polluted by industrial activity to be used for human consumption.

FLOUR MILL

A map of 1834 shows Orangefield Corn Mill situated on the Knock River beside the Home Farm on the Blakiston-Houston Estate. The long mill race (a channel which takes water to a water wheel) from the river was still evident in the 1950s.

FRESH WATER

As Belfast grew throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the demand for clean water constantly outpaced the supply. The construction of the Silent Valley reservoir in 1910 brought 20 million gallons per day to the city.

The cooper, the cobbler, the carter

In the 19th and early 20th centuries the only way to transport liquids was in wooden barrels. The Belfast Street Directory for 1900 lists 16 cooperages (barrel makers), with Secker & Co., Coopers and Cask Merchants located at Ardgowan Street on Castlereagh Road, opposite McCaw, Stephenson & Orr Print Works. When the firm closed in the late 1950s, only two cooperages were left in Belfast. Coopers made new barrels, repaired damaged ones and rebuilt empty barrels previously collapsed for ease of transportation.

The heavy industries of east Belfast were hard on working men's boots - even hob-nailed leather soles would last no more than 10 to 12 weeks in the shipyard. Practically every

street had a cobbler to repair and maintain boots and shoes for the local families.

Horses were the key to Belfast's transport until well into the 20th century. They were used as draught animals to haul narrow boats loaded with goods along the rivers, to drag heavy coal carts and to pull trams, carriages, milk floats, delivery wagons and fire engines. Men called carters provided this road transport service, and laid on the hay, fodder and shelter needed for the hundreds of horses that tramped each day through the streets of east Belfast.

REGENERATION

While no longer a centre for manufacturing and industry, Belfast has adopted successful strategies to deliver regeneration, foster economic growth and improve the lives of residents.

The skills acquired at Harland & Wolff are now applied in marine and offshore renewable energy, and Belfast now has an enviable IT infrastructure and high-end customer support facilities. The former shipyards on Queen's Island are now home to Titanic Belfast, a world-class visitor attraction, as well as a large film production studio and an innovative scientific hub.

The Connswater Industrial Heritage Trail follows the Connswater Community Greenway, opened 2016/17. The Greenway is a 9km linear park along the course of the Connswater, Knock and Loop rivers, creating safer, cleaner and greener public space, whilst connecting people and places.

Research by the 'Very Local History Group'.

0.5 kilometre

CONNSWATER COMMUNITY GREENWAY
 ROPE, LINEN & WEAVING
 ENGINEERING & MANUFACTURING
 FOOD & DRINK
 THE COOPER, THE COBBLER, THE CARTER
 EXTANT
 DEMOLISHED

Duffin's Boatyard
 DATE 1905 - to present day
 PRODUCT Builders of small boats used mainly in the docks and also small yachts for club racing.

Strand Spinning Co.
 DATE 1910 - 1983
 PRODUCT Linen thread
 LATER Portview Trade Centre
 Made high quality Linen thread and table Linen. Also manufactured munitions during both World Wars.

Grove Spinning & Weaving Mill
 DATE 1834 - 1960s
 PRODUCT Linen thread and cloth
 LATER Totals
 Manufacturers of flax thread and tow. Thread for weaving linen cloth and tow (rough flax) for sacking and upholstery filling.

Avoniel Distillery
 DATE 1882 - 1929
 PRODUCT Whiskey
 A grain distillery at its peak making 300,000 litres of whiskey per year mainly for the American market.

Thompsons Bakery
 DATE 1930s - 2000
 PRODUCT Bread and fancy pastries
 EMPLOYEES Circa 100
 LATER Stewarts then Sunblest Bakeries

Weston's Biscuits
 DATE Opened 1935
 EMPLOYEES Unknown
 LATER Allied Bakeries

Loop Bridge Spinning Mill
 DATE 1840 - 1876
 PRODUCT Linen thread
 EMPLOYEES Circa 500
 LATER Tesco
 Manufacturers of Linen thread and cloth. Later as McCaw, Stephenson & Orr printers of high quality lithograph and letterpress prints and book-binding.

McDowell Ropewalk
 DATE 1920 - 1960
 PRODUCT Cord and light rope for use in the linen industry
 EMPLOYEES 2-3
 LATER Ulster Plant Hire

Castlereagh Laundry
 DATE 1901 - 1960
 PRODUCT Laundry and dye-works
 EMPLOYEES Circa 50
 LATER Decco, hardware supplies

Seckers Cooperage
 DATE 1900s - 1950s
 PRODUCT Barrel manufacture and repair
 EMPLOYEES Circa 10
 LATER Hillsborough Business Park

Pitman's Press
 DATE 1950 - 1965
 PRODUCT Printers of books and magazines
 EMPLOYEES Circa 100
 LATER Universities Press, now GPS Colour Graphics printers

Cregagh Dairies
 DATE 1940 - 1965
 PRODUCT Bottled milk and butter
 EMPLOYEES Circa 50
 LATER Now Rose Place, Castlereagh Rd

Ulster Creameries
 DATE 1950 - 2005
 PRODUCT Milk, butter and ice cream
 EMPLOYEES Circa 50
 LATER Dale Fram, now H&J Martin

Fox's Glacier Mints
 DATE 1960 - 1970
 PRODUCT Confectionary
 EMPLOYEES Circa 100
 LATER Alanbrooke Industrial Estate

Dobson's Dairies
 DATE 1950 - 2005
 PRODUCT Dairy products
 EMPLOYEES Circa 100
 LATER Private housing

Mission Manufacturing
 DATE 1960 - 1970s
 PRODUCT Valves and pipeline parts
 EMPLOYEES Circa 100
 LATER Cranes Stockman Valve Co.

Shorts Missile Systems
 DATE 1952 - 1980s
 PRODUCT Ground and sea to air missiles
 EMPLOYEES Circa 750
 LATER Thales Air Defence Ltd.

Goblin (British Vacuum Cleaner)
 DATE 1946 - 1980s
 PRODUCT Teas-maids, vacuum cleaners
 EMPLOYEES 500

Harland & Wolff
 DATE 1861 - Present
 PRODUCT Ships (passenger, naval and cargo)
 EMPLOYEES 25,000 (pre WWI)
 Built over 1700 ships, mainly passenger liners, the most famous being RMS Titanic, others include RMS Olympic and RMS Britannic.

Short Bros. Aircraft
 DATE 1936 - 1989
 PRODUCT Sea, passenger & military planes
 EMPLOYEES Circa 8,000 in 1961
 LATER Bombardier
 Researched and designed one of the first fixed wing VTOL jet powered aircraft known as the SC1, a model of which is preserved at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. It was the forerunner of the Harrier jump-jet.

Irish Distillery
 DATE 1886 - 1929
 PRODUCT Whiskey
 LATER Gallahers Bonded Warehouse
 In 1902 the distillery could produce well over 6,000,000 gallons of grain and 1,000,000 gallons of Pot Still and Malt Whiskey.

Connswater Botanical Brewery
 DATE Unknown
 PRODUCT Non-alcoholic beverages made from natural herbs and plants
 EMPLOYEES <10 (Small family run business)

Bloomfield Bakery
 DATE 1894 - 1933
 PRODUCT Bread, cakes and pastries
 EMPLOYEES Circa 200 (1911)
 LATER Inglis Bakeries now Wyse Byse

Belfast Ropeworks Company
 DATE 1876 - 1973
 PRODUCT Rope, twine and nets for cargo and fishing
 EMPLOYEES 4000 in 1920
 Buildings became an industrial estate for small businesses before being demolished, now the site of Connswater Retail Park.

Bloomfield Weaving Mill
 OWNERS Ross Brothers
 DATE Unknown
 PRODUCT Woven linen and cotton

Owen O'Cork Spinning Mill
 OWNERS James Steen & Co.
 DATE Founded 1873
 PRODUCT Linen yarn for weaving
 The present mill on Beersbridge Road was built in 1873, replacing a mid-17th century water driven corn mill, now Bloomfield Auctions.

Doagh Spinning Co.
 OWNERS Wilson family of Doagh Co. Antrim
 DATE Founded 1947
 PRODUCT Linen yarn for weaving
 EMPLOYEES Circa 200
 LATER MSO - Cleland

Orangefield Corn Mill
 OWNERS Blakiston-Houston Estate
 DATE Circa early 1800s
 PRODUCT Grinding of corn for flour

Cantrell & Cochrane
 DATE 1950s - 2014
 PRODUCT Aerated mineral water

Behr-Manning Ltd.
 DATE 1953 - 1966
 PRODUCT Abrasive coatings for engineering
 LATER Norton Abrasives

Lord Roberts Workshop
 DATE 1948 - 1970
 PRODUCT Jobs for disabled ex-servicemen
 EMPLOYEES 50

Hughes Tool Co.
 DATE 1950s - 2014
 PRODUCT Drill equipment for oil industry
 EMPLOYEES Circa 200

Lines Bros. / Triang Toys
 DATE 1951 - 1970
 PRODUCT Pram and toy manufacturers
 LATER MSO Printers

British Tabulating Machine Co.
 DATE 1948 - 1975
 PRODUCT Computers and Tabulators
 EMPLOYEES Circa 300
 LATER International Computers Ltd.

CONNSWATER Industrial Heritage Trail

