



Public Record Office  
of Northern Ireland

# **INTRODUCTION**

# **McFARLAND PAPERS**

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# McFarland Papers (D3703)

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## **Summary**

The McFarland papers comprise c.2,000 documents and c.70 volumes, 1855-1981, deriving from Sir John McFarland, 1st Bt (1848-1926), and his son and successor, Sir Basil Alexander Talbot McFarland, 2nd Bt (1898-1986), both of Aberfoyle, Londonderry.



## **Sir John McFarland, 1st Bt**

Sir John McFarland, who was created a baronet in 1914, was, among other business activities, founder of and partner in McCrea & McFarland Ltd, contractors and carriers, of Belfast and Londonderry, and Chairman of the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway Co. His public offices included those of JP for Cos Londonderry and Donegal, High Sheriff of Co. Londonderry, 1905, High Sheriff of the city of Londonderry, 1904, Mayor of Londonderry, 1908-1910 and 1912, and a member of the Londonderry Port and Harbour Commission. He married in 1893 Annie, second daughter of John Talbot, JP, of Terryglass, Co. Tipperary, and Londonderry, by whom he had one son, who succeeded him in the baronetcy in 1926.



## **Sir Basil McFarland, 2nd Bt**



*Sir Basil McFarland, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bt*

Sir Basil McFarland was an Irish Rugby International, 1920-1922. He married in 1924 Annie Kathleen (d.1942), second daughter of Andrew Henderson, JP, of Parkville, Whiteabbey, Belfast, by whom he had two children, including Sir John Talbot McFarland, 3rd and present Bt. He married secondly in 1955 Mary Eleanor, second daughter of William Dougan of Northland Road, Londonderry.

### ***Public offices***

Sir Basil was High Sheriff of the city of Londonderry, 1930-1938 and 1952, High Sheriff of Co. Londonderry, 1952, Mayor of the city of Londonderry, 1939 and 1945-1950, and HM Lieutenant of the city of Londonderry, 1939-1975. He served in 1918 with the Artists Rifles, and in the Second World War served overseas, mainly in North Africa, with the 9th Londonderry HAA Regiment and was mentioned in despatches. He was Commanding Officer of the Londonderry City Battalion of the Home Guard, Chairman of the Territorial Army and Auxiliary Force Association (Co. Londonderry), 1947-1962, and a member of its national Council, Hon. Colonel of the 9th Londonderry HAA Regiment of the Royal Artillery (TA), and President of the Northern Ireland TA and Volunteer Reserve Association, 1968-1971. He was a Commissioner of Irish Lights, an original member of the Northern Ireland Unemployment Assistance Board (to 1939), a Senator in the Northern Ireland Parliament, 1945-1950, a member of the Northern Ireland Air Advisory Council, 1946-1965, Chairman of the Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners, 1952-1967, a member of the London Midland Area Board of the British Transport Commission, 1955-1961, and a trustee of Magee University College, Londonderry, 1962-1965.

### ***Business interests***

His directorships and business interests included: directorships of the Belfast Banking Co. Ltd, 1930-1970, the Belfast Bank Executors Trustee Co., and the Donegal Railways Co., a local directorship of the Commercial Union Assurance Co., and the chairmanship of Sir Alfred McAlpine & Son (Northern Ireland) Ltd, the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway Co., Lanes (Derry) Ltd, Lanes (Fuel Oils) Ltd, Lanes (Business Equipment) Ltd, John W. Corbett & Sons, R.C. Malseed & Co. Ltd, Alexander Thompson & Co. Ltd, and the Londonderry Gaslight Co. He died in 1986.

## ***The archive***

The papers relate to Sir John and Sir Basil McFarland's property, business interests and public offices, 1855-1981.

The earliest business records (and records relating to property) include plans and valuations of property in Belfast, Londonderry and the Rathmullan and Ballybofey areas of Co. Donegal, 1855-1926, and correspondence, accounts, etc, of McCrea & McFarland Ltd, contractors and carriers, which operated from Belfast, Londonderry and several locations in Co. Donegal, 1872-1929, and was owned by John McFarland and his partner, Basil McCrea. The company ran the Lough Swilly steamers, and were contractors for the Letterkenny Railway, the regauging of the Tooban-Burt section of the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway, and the construction of the Stranorlar to Glenties branch of the Donegal Railway and of the City of Derry tramways.

Also present are plans, contracts, specifications, accounts, etc, of the Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway Co., 1857-1960, of which both Sir John and Sir Basil were chairmen, plans, contracts, etc, of the Stranorlar and Glenties Railway Co., 1890-1905; and minute books, ledgers, etc, of Lanes (Derry) Ltd, coal merchants, 1937-1969, of which Sir Basil was a director, with some papers relating to that firm's predecessor, Henry Lane/Henry Lane & Co., from 1855.

The archive includes registers of grand juries of Londonderry city and county, mainly 1820-1970 (and many of them therefore ante-dating both Sir John and Sir Basil McFarland), and correspondence files of Sir Basil as High Sheriff and HML, 1930-1970. There are also volumes of newspaper cuttings, 1920-1981, and photographs, c.1940-1979, relating to Sir Basil's public and business life and to his membership of various organisations.



## ***Sir Basil McFarland's public and business life***

Numerous correspondence files and other papers reflect Sir Basil's membership and chairmanship of these and other businesses and organisations, including: Magee University College Trust, 1934-1971, the Co. Londonderry TA and Auxiliary Force Association, 1936-1970, the Ulster Development Council, 1938-1939, Londonderry War Hospital Supplies Depot, 1939-1946, the Royal Artillery Association, 1944-1970, the Northern Ireland Property Owners' Association, 1946-1956, the Diocesan Council of Derry and Raphoe, 1947-1960, Londonderry Port and Harbour Commission, 1950-1966, the London Midland Area Board of the British Transport Commission, 1954-1966, the Northern Ireland Civil Aviation Advisory Council, 1956-1964, the Londonderry City Battalion of the Home Guard, 1952-1956, the Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health, 1959-1961, the Londonderry branch of the St John Ambulance Association, 1951-1968, the Londonderry branch of the British Empire Cancer Campaign, 1957-1970, the Londonderry Gaslight Co., 1958-1961, the Irish Lights Commission, 1960-1970, and Londonderry District Scout Council, 1962-1969.

Also worthy of note are two earlier 'strays', consisting of copies of 2 letters from members of the Lyle family of Londonderry who were on active service overseas, one of the letters from Fort George, Canada, 1813, the other from Brussels, 1815, describing the Battle of Waterloo.

