

Placenames in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown

dIrl Lexlcon in association with Blackrock Education Centre

Compiled by Séamus Cannon and Ríonach O Callaghan

LESSON PLAN 5:

From Kingstown to Dún Laoghaire

Focus:

- The change of name from Kingstown to Dún Laoghaire in 1920. British influence on local placenames
- Dún Laoghaire as a holiday destination as evidenced in postcards

1. Resources

1. Teacher's background information
2. Picture of King George IV
3. Photo of King George IV monument
4. Minute of council meeting that caused the name to be changed
5. Lexicon online exhibition of local postcards
6. Student activity sheet

2. Introduction:

1. Discussion about how placenames can change over time: Dunleary – Kingstown – Dún Laoghaire

3. Development: *(see teacher's notes)*

1. George IV
2. Why did George visit Ireland in 1821? He was unpopular at home and glad to have a holiday in Ireland. He had landed in Howth but left from the little town of Dunleary after a short stay. Refer to streets named after George and other members of royal family. The royal visits added greatly to the attractiveness of the area as a holiday destination. The mailboat was also a key attraction.
3. Show 3, the George IV monument
4. Minute of council meeting of 1920 showing motion to change the name from Kingstown to Dún Laoghaire. Discuss why the name was changed (Nationalist movement, War of Independence, rejection of things English and associations with royalty)
5. Show 6, exhibition of holiday postcards on dIrl Libraries website at <https://libraries.dIrlcoco.ie/events-and-news/online-exhibition#dunleary>

4. Conclusion

See student worksheet

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Resource 1

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LESSON 5

King George IV

When George IV visited the little town of Dunleary in 1821, he was on his way back to England after a short stay. He was glad to have been away from England for a while since he was not at all popular, so the visit was in the nature of a holiday. Work had begun on the new harbour at Dunleary in 1817 and the small fishing village had begun to grow into a town with hundreds of workers and their families attracted by the opportunity to work in the quarry or on the construction of the harbour itself. The little fishing village of Dunleary had a population of 300 in 1815. This was to rise dramatically through the next 50 years.

King George named the harbour and the town 'Kingstown' in honour of himself!

King George was born in 1762, son of George III. When George III became mentally ill, his son reigned in his place as regent from 1811 until he was crowned king in 1820. The Regency period in British history is regarded as a time when new fashions were set in art, architecture and leisure. Both as regent and as king George caused a scandal with his wild and irresponsible personal life. He fell out with his parents and with his wife, whom he banned from attending his coronation, and lived far beyond his very substantial means. When Napoleon died, it was said that an aide approached George to say: 'your greatest enemy has died, sire' to which George replied 'Has she, by God?' He was reputed to be a witty conversationalist, 'drunk or sober' and he was reportedly very drunk indeed as he left the newly named Kingstown

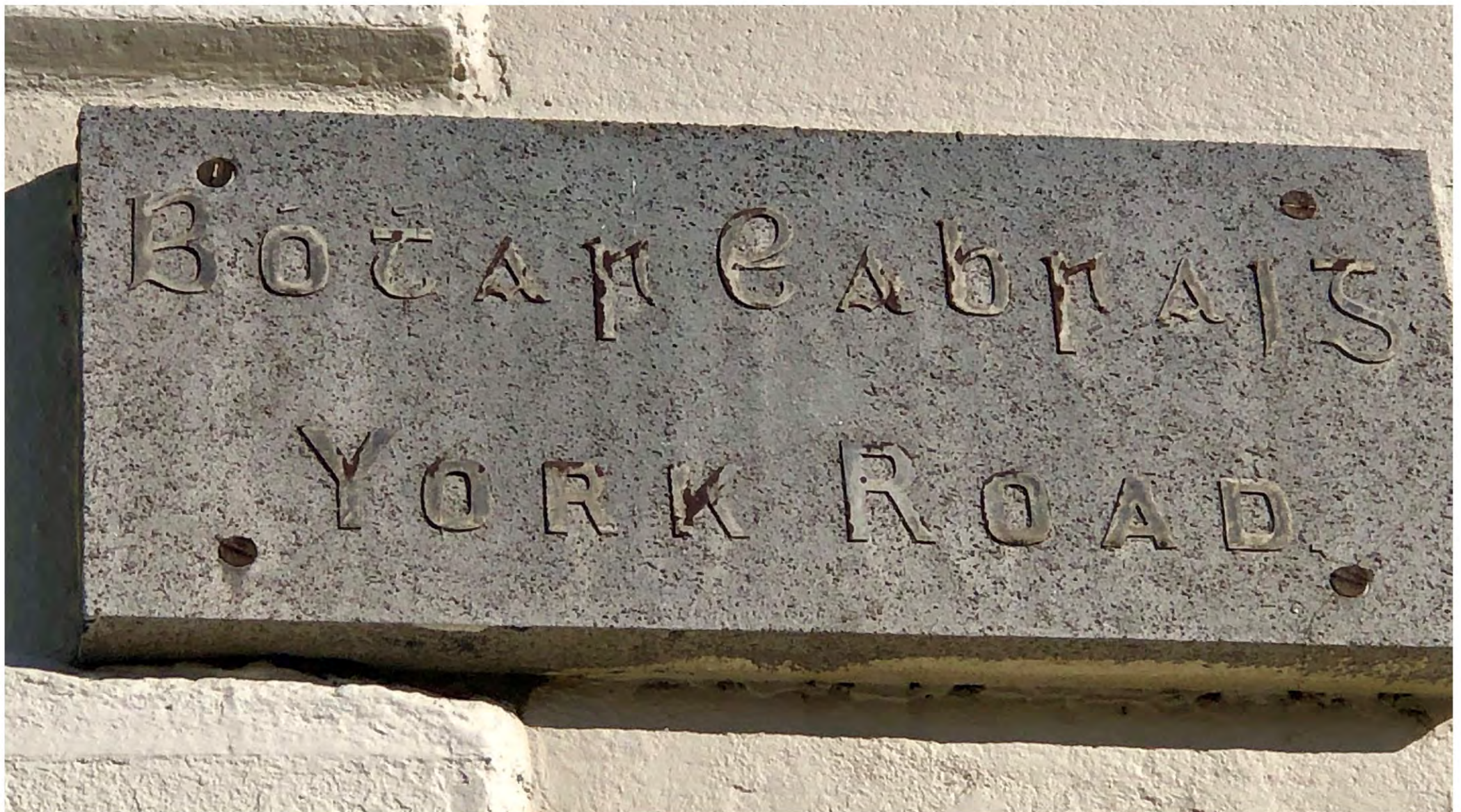
As well as giving the new town a name, George is commemorated in the principal street, George's St. Several members of his family are also honoured: Sussex St., Clarence St., Cumberland St., York St., Cambridge Terrace are named after his brothers and Adelaide St. after his sister in law!

Along the seafront in Dún Laoghaire, you can see a prominent monument to commemorate King George's visit. There is also a monument to mark the visit of Queen Victoria who came on four occasions and gave her name to Queen's Rd. Other British monarchs to have visited included Edward VII and George V. No memorials have been erected to mark their visits but like other monarchs, their elaborately inscribed initials are to be found on local letterboxes.

The royal visits added greatly to the attractiveness of the area as a holiday destination, and over time, the mailboat and the new railway drew many visitors to local guest houses and hotels. Daytrips to Powerscourt were popular. Sailing clubs were established and regattas attracted huge interest. Ladies and gentlemen enjoyed the sea air on a walk along the pier, and the Pavilion Theatre became a social centre for Dublin gentry. The popularity of Kingstown / Dún Laoghaire is very evident in the postcard display hosted by the Lexlcon.

For more information on Dún Laoghaire and its harbour, check out 'You'd be Filled with Wonder – the story of Dún Laoghaire Harbour', by Séamus Cannon and published by Blackrock Education Centre







Resource 3

be rescinded or amended as may be necessary"

Proposed by Councillor Ó hUadhaigh

Resource 4

Seconded by Councillor Kelly

(1) Resolved that this Kingstown Urban District Council do hereby change their name and style and the name and style of their District, to Dún Laoghaire Urban District Council and the Dún Laoghaire Urban District respectively

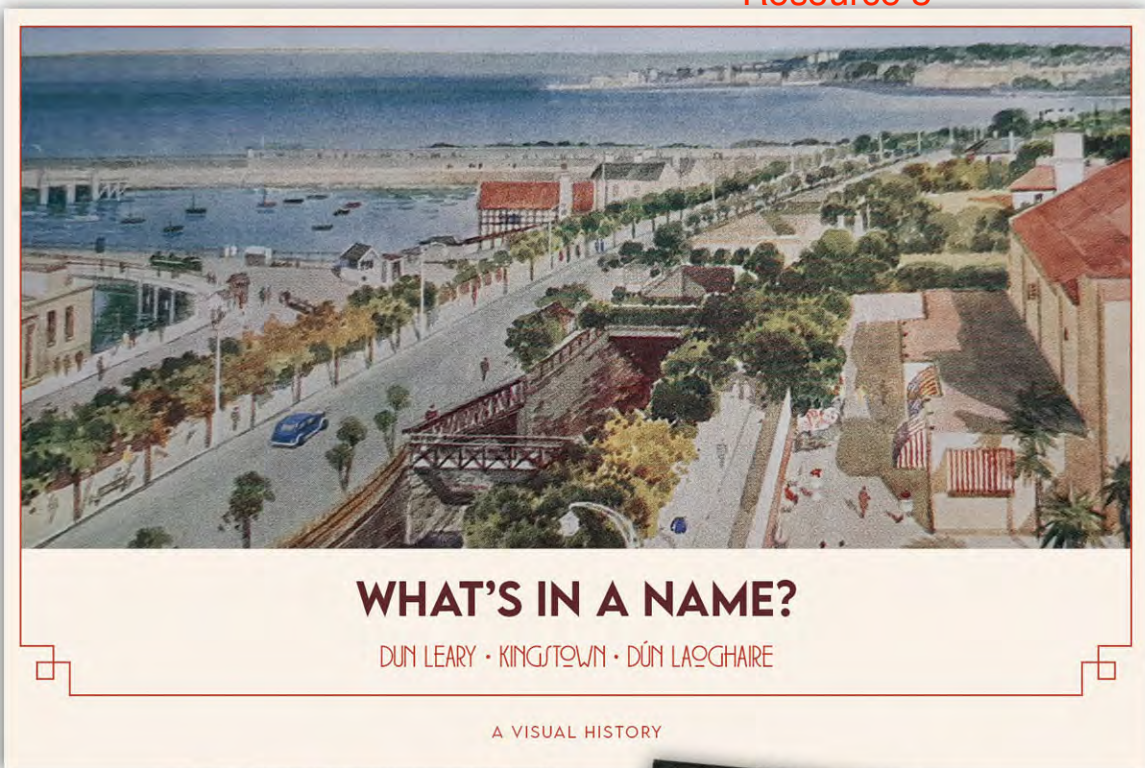
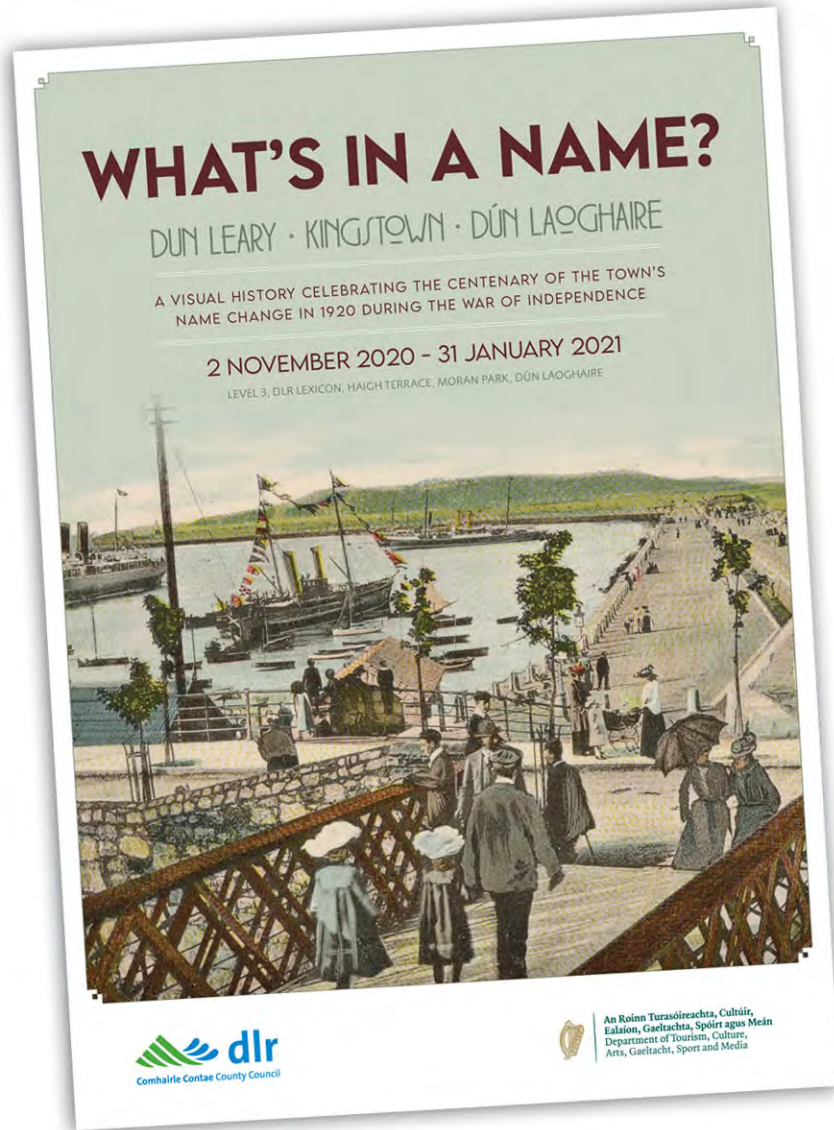
Councillor Ó hUadhaigh's motions.

Proposed by Councillor Ó hUadhaigh;

Seconded by Councillor Kelly:

(1) Resolved that this Kingstown Urban District Council do hereby change their name and style and the name of their District, to the Dún Laoghaire Urban District Council and the Dún Laoghaire Urban District respectively."

In reply to Councillor Potters, The Chairman stated that he was informed by the Law Agent that the motion was in order.



In 2020 dlr Libraries published a book called *What's in a Name? Dun Leary - Kingstown - Dún Laoghaire* and created an exhibition of the same name. Both the book and exhibition provide information about postcards and a short history of Dún Laoghaire. The online exhibition can be found at <https://libraries.dlrcoco.ie/events-and-news/online-exhibition#dunleary> and the book is available from Dubray Books.

The postcards were acquired in 2019 from the sale of the Seamus Kearns Postcard Collection and are part of dlr Lexlcon's Local Studies Department at Haigh Terrace, Moran Park, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. See also libraries.dlrcoco.ie

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Resource 6

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WORKSHEET 5

LESSON 5

- Historical photographs in the Lexicon postcard exhibition. The postcards highlight the attraction of Kingstown/Dún Laoghaire as a holiday destination. What were the principal attractions in your view?
- Create your own postcard of Dún Laoghaire, or of your own homeplace. Choose who you would like to send it to. Find out their address and write them a message.

