

BICYCLES, BARRACKS AND BANDOLIERS

Suggested Activities

Discover former RIC barracks in your area

Notes to Teachers

A group of activities that encourage pupils to use online resources such as the 1911 census to research RIC stations in the local area. The activities enable pupils to develop a better understanding of life in the RIC and respond to their knowledge with creative writing.

Tasks can be completed by pupils individually or in pairs. Where a class discussion and teacher input is required this is marked with a .

The activity set finishes with a concluding task, *task 6*, that supports pupils to evidence their learning across the theme.

Resources required:

Tasks 2 - 5: whiteboard or computers with internet access.

Curriculum Links

Learning Areas: KS3 History, KS3 English

KS3 History

- *Knowledge, Understanding and Skills*
 - Understanding different perspectives and interpretations;
 - Understanding continuity and change;
 - Developing enquiry skills to undertake historical investigations.

KS3 English

- *Knowledge, Understanding and Skills*
 - Writing and presenting in different media and for different audiences and purposes;
- *Key Element: Mutual Understanding*
 - Explore and respond to others' emotions as encountered in literature, the media, moving image and peer discussion.

Learning Outcomes

- Research and manage information effectively to investigate historical issues using ICT;
- Demonstrate creativity and initiative when developing ideas and following them through;
- Communicate effectively in oral, visual, written and ICT formats, showing clear awareness of audience and purpose.

Key Skills and Personal Capabilities

Managing information, Self management, Being Creative, (Working with others –if undertaken in pairs or small groups).

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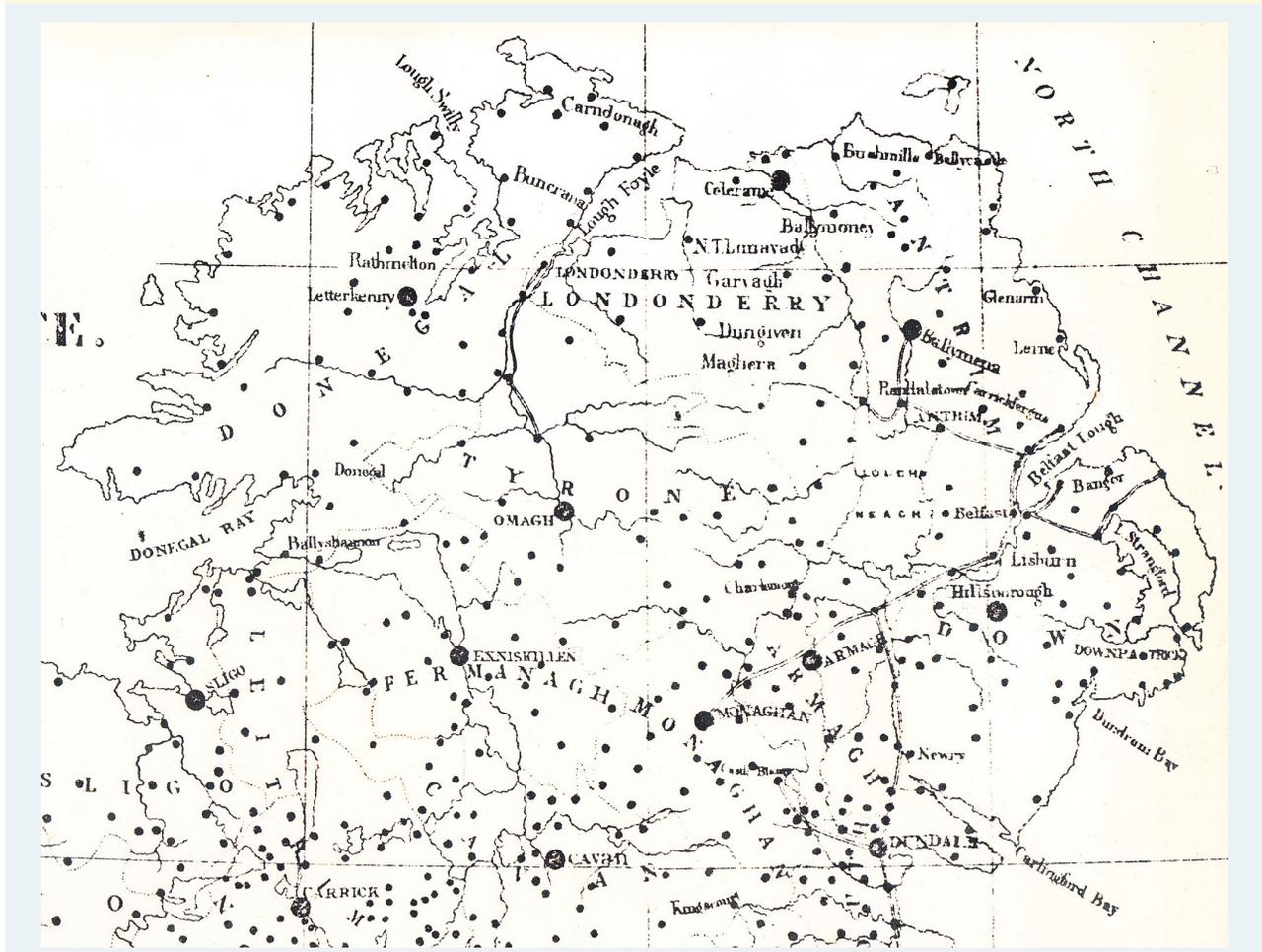
Discover former RIC barracks in your area



The Irish Constabulary was established in 1836. By 1852 there were 290 Irish Constabulary barracks in Ulster and 1,594 in the whole of Ireland. The majority of Irish Constabulary stations were in rented houses in towns and villages. The only purpose-built barracks were either strategically important, erected by landlords for the protection of their land or where there was no suitable building to rent. Men patrolled on foot and were deployed to barracks in small groups (normally four) under the command of a head constable or sergeant. Station badges were attached above the door of a building to denote the presence of a police barracks. This is a photograph of an RIC barracks at the beginning of the 20th Century, note the station badge mounted above the doorway. The location of the barracks is unknown, could it be in your local area?

Task 1: Using historic maps to find former RIC barracks in your local area

1. Explore this map of Irish Constabulary barracks from 1852. There were 290 stations in Ulster at that time, can you find one in your local area? Circle the barracks nearest to your school or home.



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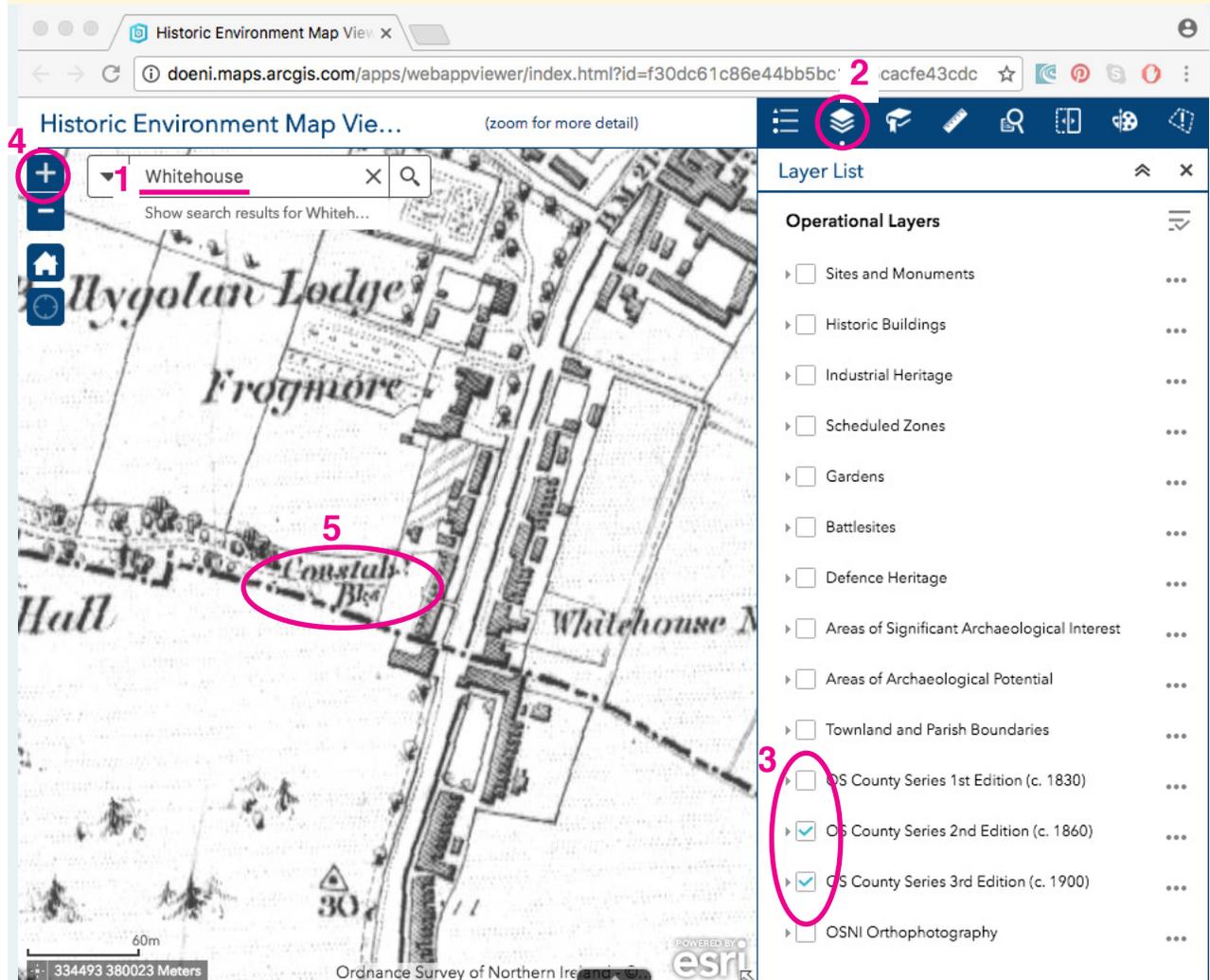
Task 2: Find constabulary barracks using six inch Ordnance Survey Maps.

The DOE NI website provides access to First (c. 1830), Second (c. 1860) and Third Edition (c. 1900) six inch Ordnance Survey maps.

<http://doeni.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f30dc61c86e44bb5bc19b5cacfe43cdc>

Click on the link to access the DOE NI map viewer (see screengrab below).

1. Enter a place name in the **search box**; the map will automatically zoom into that location.
2. Click on the **Layers icon**; a list of map layers will appear.
3. Check the tick boxes on the **OS County Series Maps layers** to reveal the historic maps.
4. Use the '+' symbol to zoom into the area.
5. Police stations which will be identified as *Constab. Bks*. Take a screengrab of any that you find.
6. Uncheck the **OS County Series Maps layers** to reveal the modern map and note the location.



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Census

The National Archives of Ireland have digitised the census returns from 1901 and 1911. Digital and scanned versions (census images) of returns are available online.

Winters online provides a clickable map of counties and links to 1911 census records for each RIC sub-district. <http://winters-online.net/RIC-Barracks/ui30.htm>

Links to the scanned forms, which provide additional information, can be found beneath the entry.

- **Form B1** (House and building return) will contain the **address** of the RIC barracks.
- **Form H** (Barrack return) contains information about the men stationed at the barracks and includes their **rank, marriage status, former occupation** and **place of birth**.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|----|------|---|-------------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|---|--------|---|---|
| S | B | 42 | Male | - | Church of Ireland | Co Cavan | Farmer's Son | Read and write | - | Single | - | - |
| T | A | 35 | Male | - | Church of Ireland | Co Leitrim | Farmer's Son | Read and write | - | Single | - | - |
| T | G | 27 | Male | - | Church of Ireland | Co Cavan | Farmer's Son | Read and write | - | Single | - | - |
| W | W J | 40 | Male | - | Church of Ireland | Co Tyrone | Farmer's Son | Read and write | - | Single | - | - |
| D | D | 48 | Male | - | Church of Ireland | Co Monaghan | Farmer's Son | Read and write | - | Single | - | - |

[Report any error in transcription](#)

[View census images](#)

[Barrack return \(Form H\)](#)

Additional Pages: [2](#), [3](#), [4](#)

[Enumerator's abstract \(Form N\)](#)

Additional Pages: [2](#)

[House and Building Return \(Form B1\)](#)

Additional Pages: [2](#)

[Out-Offices and Farm-Steadings Return \(Form B2\)](#)

Additional Pages: [2](#)

Genealogy: RIC Barracks 1911 > Antrim > College Square, North, (part of) (St. Anne's Ward, Antrim) - 22 Jan 2010 21:43:39

Task 3: Using the census to locate former constabulary barracks

1. Click on <http://winters-online.net/RIC-Barracks/ui30.htm> and click on your county.
2. Look for the name of your local village, town or townland and click on the link. This will take you to digital entry for the census return for the barracks in your area. Take a screenshot.
3. Click on Barrack return **Form B1** link at the bottom of the page (see screenshot above). This links to the original census return. The street name will be in the top right hand corner of the document, note the address.

Task 4: Investigating the location

1. Once you have discovered an address for a former barracks, look it up on Google maps <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>. Use *street view* and *satellite view* to investigate the buildings in that location.
2. Use your screenshots from *task 2 & 3* to help you identify the exact location. If the original building is still there take screenshots of the *street view* and *satellite view*.



Optional Extension activities:

- E1. If the former barracks or station is still there, visit the location to take some photographs. Look out for any architectural features that indicate its former use.

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E2. Visit your local museum, historical society or library, they may have photographs or documents from the old station.

E3. Upload your photographs and documents to Flickr's Former RIC Barracks pool.
<https://www.flickr.com/groups/ricbarracks/pool/>

CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911.

Form H.—Return of Military, R. I. Constabulary or Metropolitan Police, in Barracks. No. on Form *H*

County, *Antrim* Parliamentary Division, *South Belfast* Poor Law Union, *Belfast* District Electoral Division, *St. Anne's Ward* Townland,
 Parliamentary Borough *Belfast* City, *Belfast* Urban District, *Belfast No. 15* Town or Village, *College* Street, *College*

GENERAL RETURN of the OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, PRIVATES, and OTHERS, who were Quartered in the *Royal Irish Constabulary* Barrack of *College*
 on the Night of Sunday, the 2nd of April, 1911, and of those who arrived on Monday, the 3rd of April, who were not enumerated elsewhere.

In filling these Returns, pray observe the Instructions given on "Form A."—The Family Return.

NOTE.—In addition to this Return each Married Man, residing with his wife in Barrack, and each Widower whose Children, or any of them, reside with him in Barrack, must fill for his Family (excluding himself) a Form used by the Community at large—a note being made on the "Form A," that the Head of the Family is returned on "Form H."—Any required number of "Form A." will be supplied by the Enumerator. Permanent officials residing in Barracks, such as Barrack-Masters, Barrack-Sergeants, Canteen-Keepers, &c., with their servants, are to be supplied with "Form A.," such persons are not to be entered on "Form H."

| Initial Letters of Christian Name or Names, & of Surname | | RANK. | RELIGIOUS PROFESSION. | EDUCATION. | AGE. | OCCUPATION. | MARRIAGE. | WHERE BORN. |
|--|-----------|---|---|---|-------------------------|--|--|---|
| Christian Name. | Surname. | State the particular Rank or Occupation. [NOTE.—In the case of Military, the Title of the Corps should also be entered in this column.] | State here the particular Religion, or Religious Denomination, to which each person belongs. [Members of Protestant Denominations should not be described by the vague term "Protestant," but the name of the particular Church, Denomination, or Body, to which they belong, should be entered.] | Whether he can "Read and Write," can "Read" only, or "Cannot Read." | Years on last Birthday. | State the particular Profession, Trade, or other Employment of each Person before Enlistment or appointment. | Whether "Married," "Widower," or "Single." | If in Ireland, state in what County or City; if elsewhere, state the name of the Country. |
| <i>J. S.</i> | <i>U.</i> | <i>Head Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Church of Ireland</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>49</i> | <i>-</i> | <i>Married</i> | <i>Ballynagilly</i> |
| <i>J.</i> | <i>J.</i> | <i>Sergeant R.I.C.</i> | <i>Roman Catholic</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>39</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Tyrone</i> |
| <i>W. J.</i> | <i>A.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Presbyterian</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>28</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Tyrone</i> |
| <i>G.</i> | <i>B.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Roman Catholic</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>31</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Leitrim</i> |
| <i>P.</i> | <i>B.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Roman Catholic</i> | <i>Read & Write</i> | <i>39</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Clare</i> |
| <i>W.</i> | <i>C.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Roman Catholic</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>30</i> | <i>-</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Lifford</i> |
| <i>J.</i> | <i>C.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Roman Catholic</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>26</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Tyrone</i> |
| <i>E.</i> | <i>C.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Roman Catholic</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>32</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Limerick</i> |
| <i>W.</i> | <i>J.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Church of Ireland</i> | <i>Read & write</i> | <i>32</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Cork</i> |
| <i>J. G.</i> | <i>J.</i> | <i>Constable R.I.C.</i> | <i>Church of Ireland</i> | <i>Read & Write</i> | <i>33</i> | <i>Farmer's son</i> | <i>Single</i> | <i>Co. Antrim</i> |

Part of the 1911 Census Form H Barrack return for the College Square North Barracks in Belfast

Task 5: Researching the RIC men stationed in your local RIC barracks

1. Open up Form H from the online census entry for your local former barracks (see task 3). This provides more information about the men stationed in the barracks.
2. How many of the RIC men were born in the same county as the barracks?
3. Look at the men's (previous) occupation, how many were farmers or farmer's sons?
4. What is the age range of the men?
5. How many of the men were married?

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6. Read the following sources listed below and answer the following questions.

Return of Irish Constabulary men disciplined in 1849

<http://policehistoryni.com/irish-constabulary-discipline-return.html>

Photograph of RIC sergeant and wife

<http://policehistoryni.com/ric-sergeant-wife.html>

Tankard from RIC Phoenix Park Training Depot

<http://policehistoryni.com/ric-tankard-training-depot.html>

7. Why did so many rural workers join the RIC?

8. Why were so few RIC men married?

9. Why did men join the RIC?

10. Why do you think men were not allowed to serve in the county in which they were born?

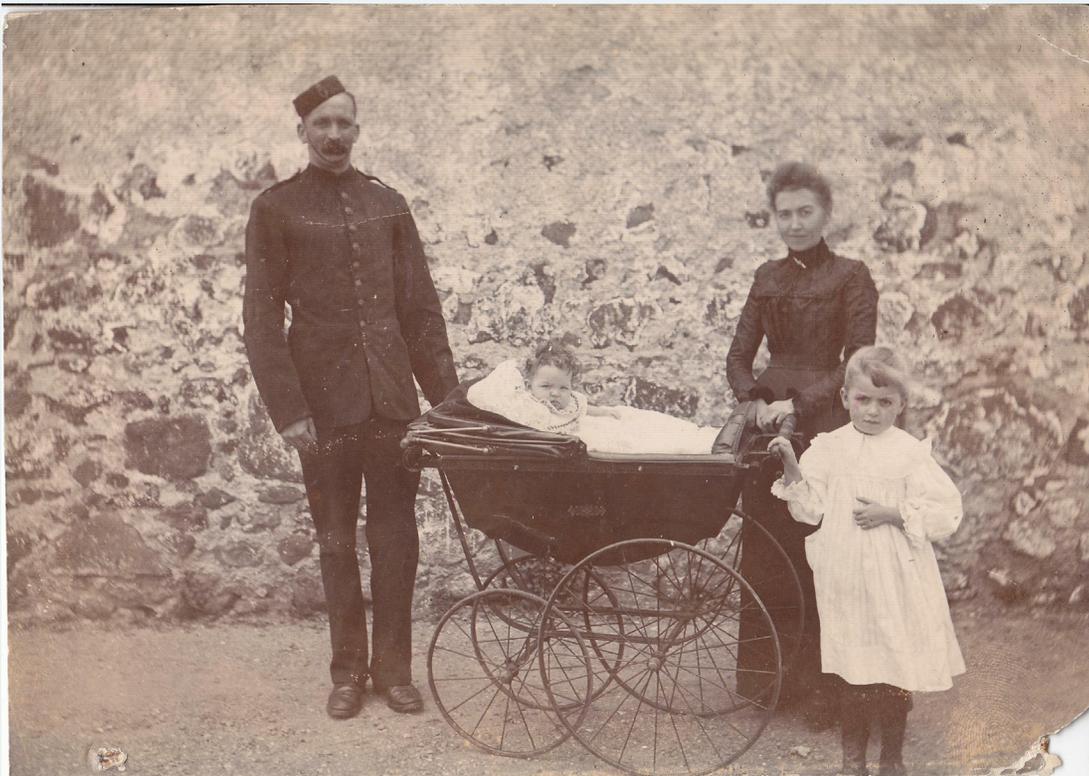
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Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) men were considered always on duty and the force's Code of Regulations governed family and domestic life. Single men were expected to live in barracks, alongside (if there was the space) the sergeant and his family and even prisoners. Married quarters for a sergeant, wife and up to four children normally consisted of two rooms; a bedroom and sitting room with a shared hallway, stairway, kitchen and lavatory.

RIC constable, his wife and children c.1900



Constable Thomas Healy reported on living conditions in his Ballymena barracks to a [1914 Inquiry into the RIC](#)

“In nearly every case the lavatory, which is seldom of a very sanitary nature, is used in common with single men, and prisoners of every class must be allowed access to it when necessary. It is a demoralising and repulsive practice that common tramps, filthy and diseased persons, should have access to the portions of the barrack premises frequented by married families and single men, and that the men should not only have to pay rent for such places, but ... have themselves to carry out the process of cleaning.

“The lock-up is in every case in close proximity to the dormitories, and the language used by prisoners of a disreputable type outrage the feelings of respectable persons, more especially women, and have also a contaminating influence on the minds of children ...”

“The dayroom in which they clean their clothes and take their meals is open to all classes of society. Special courts are frequently held on prisoners.... Very often drunken prisoners of both sexes and every rank are detained here for long periods of time when the lock-up is insufficient for their detention, which happens very often in Ballymena, and is in consequence often more like a common urinal than a place set apart for the accommodation of respectable persons.”

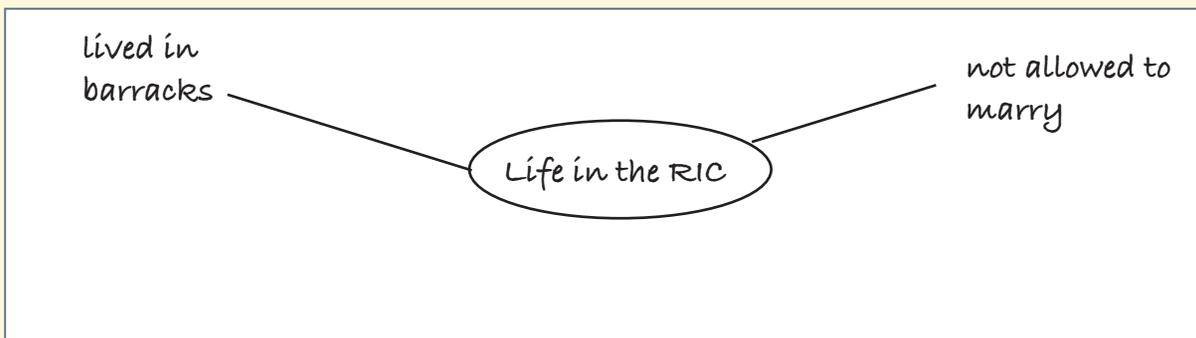
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Task 6: Creative writing: life inside a barracks

1. Read Constable Thomas Healy's description of life in the Ballymena RIC Barracks.
2. Discuss with the class what it might have been like living and working closely with your colleagues, family members and prisoners at your local barracks.
3. Based on all the sources you have looked at create a spider diagram about life in the RIC at this time i.e..



4. Many RIC men wrote diaries or memoirs. Imagine a day in your local RIC barracks in 1911. Write a diary entry for that day from the perspective of an inmate of the barracks, choose from a constable, a sergeant, his wife, his teenage son or daughter or a prisoner.
5. Read your account aloud to the class.
6. Discuss as a class the different accounts, identify similarities and differences

Links

- **Street Directories**

PRONI has digitised Ulster street directories from 1819-1900. Each page is searchable, type in "constabulary" into the keyword search box to obtain a list of references to constabulary barracks in Ulster.
<http://streetdirectories.proni.gov.uk/>

- Flickr's Former RIC Barracks pool.
<https://www.flickr.com/groups/ricbarracks/pool/>

To find out more about life in the RIC read:

- **The Memoirs of John M. Regan: A Catholic Officer in the RIC and RUC, 1909-48**, or read more witness testimonies from the 1914 inquiry or visit a former RIC barracks:
- RIC and Dublin Metropolitan Police: appendix to the report of the Committee of Inquiry, 1914
<http://www.dippam.ac.uk/eppi/documents/22111/page/622735>
- Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Co. Down
[https://nmni.com/ufm/Collections/buildings/Town-Area-\(1\)/RIC-Barracks](https://nmni.com/ufm/Collections/buildings/Town-Area-(1)/RIC-Barracks)
- Falcarragh Visitor Centre Co. Donegal
<http://www.falcarraghvisitorcentre.com/about>