



Ballycastle, Antrim

Salt pans at Ballycastle were first mentioned in the will of the Earl of Antrim in 1629. A map of 1790 shows the 'old salt pans' and Hugh Boyd's 'tram-road' to take coals and salt to his new harbour at the Quay in Ballycastle. The industrial developments of coal mining, salt making and glass works are important industrial heritage in the area.

Hugh Boyd inherited the estate in 1711, aged 21. He became manager of Ballycastle Colliery Salt Works and Co. and quickly began expanding the business. His greatest legacy lies in the development of the collieries and the construction of the harbour to ship coal to Dublin and Belfast, establishing Ballycastle as a vibrant industrial centre and fuelling the Irish Industrial Revolution.

Carrickfergus Rock Salt Mine

www.oracleireland.com/salt/index.php
Rock salt was discovered in Ireland in the 1800's when exploring for coal. The salt deposits are the same as found in Cheshire, England and stretch as far as Russia. There is no public access to the rock salt mine at Carrickfergus.

Causeway Coast and Glens Trust

www.ccght.org/
The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust manages the AONBs of the Antrim Coast and Glens and the Causeway Coast. They have policies for biodiversity, wild life and heritage with community involvement, activities and events.

Ballycastle Museum, Antrim

www.niarhive.org/Ballycastle/
Ballycastle Museum is part of the Northern Ireland Community Archive, an innovative new web portal that aims to increase access to the rich diversity of Northern Ireland's heritage and enable communities to create their own online archives celebrating their cultural heritage.

The Devil's Churn, Antrim

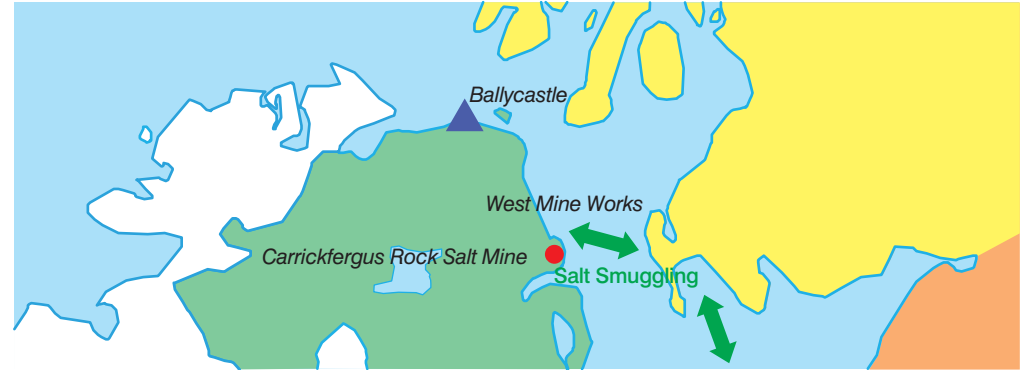


The collection of sea water is unique at the natural feature known locally as 'the Devil's Churn' where sea water was stored in a 'bucket pot' cave, carved out of the living rock. The site is marked on William Ayres beautifully illustrated map of 1817.



Photographs by Danny McGill

Remains of salt making are being eroded into the sea. A rare survival at Ballycastle is a wrought iron salt pan which is similar to those at Lion Salt Works, Cheshire with iron plates riveted together. It survives in the exact spot it was used.



The story of salt making in Northern Ireland can be found in the series of sites along the coast east of Ballycastle. Little is known about medieval or earlier saltmaking in Northern Ireland. From the end of the 17th century until 1825, the English and Scottish Salt Laws imposed heavy taxes on salt manufactured in both countries, but allowed the export of Cheshire rock-salt to Ireland where there was no tax.

As a result, many salt refineries were set up on the Irish coasts, using Cheshire rock-salt to produce white salt which was smuggled back into England, Wales and Scotland as well as supplying the local fishing industry. Salt has been extracted from the rock-salt beds beneath the Carrickfergus area since 1851. The Kilroot mine has operated since 1966 - the rock-salt is used for gritting roads throughout Ireland and is exported to England, Scotland, and the USA.



Ballycastle rock cut bucket pots

Photograph by Danny McGill