

Sir Richard Wallace (1818 – 1890)

Sir Richard Wallace, Landlord of Lisburn, became a Member of Parliament for Lisburn in 1873 and served as MP until 1884. He became the principal benefactor of the city, paying for the improvement of water supplies as well as the building of assembly rooms, a court house (demolished in 1971) and a school, which survives as The Wallace High School. Sir Wallace also employed the architect Thomas Ambler to build a house in Lisburn: 'Wallace House' in Castle Street. Wallace House has been a place of further education from 1914 to present day.



Wallace had hoped that his son Edmond would take up residence in Lisburn, but this was not to be and Wallace House was rarely used. After his death in 1890, the citizens of Lisburn erected a magnificent monument to Sir Richard Wallace in Castle Gardens, where one of two Wallace fountains in the city may also be found. Wallace's name lives on elsewhere in Lisburn, in Wallace High School, Wallace Park and even in a recently opened shopping centre, Wallace Colonnades.

Sir Richard Wallace gave the world the famous Wallace art collection, and donated 5 fountains to the city, 2 of which still remain. In 1870, when he was living in Paris, the city was under siege and water was both hard to come by and expensive. Wallace donated 50 fountains to the city, providing free water to the poor to prevent them from turning to alcohol. Many of these fountains are still in existence, and are known to locals as 'Les Wallaces'. Other Wallace fountains can be found in Rotterdam, Canada, Brazil and Mozambique.



Wallace donated large sums of money towards a new town reservoir, the Union bridge over the Lagan and £1000 to improve market accommodation.