



DISCOVER  
GROOMSPORT



# The Groomsport Life-boat, “George Pooley”, is launched from Bangor to assist two boats in distress. 16<sup>th</sup> June 1897

The following report appeared in February 1898 edition of “The Life-Boat”, at pages 12 and 13.

The report may have been written by R Graham Lindsay, the Honorary Secretary of Belfast and Groomsport Branch, RNLI, who lived in Belfast, or, by the assistant Honorary Secretary, Rev. Samuel S Holmes, who was the Rector of Groomsport.

Note: The report omits to say that the reason why the Life-boat had to be launched at Bangor was because the wind and sea conditions meant that a launch from the slipway at Groomsport Boathouse was impossible.

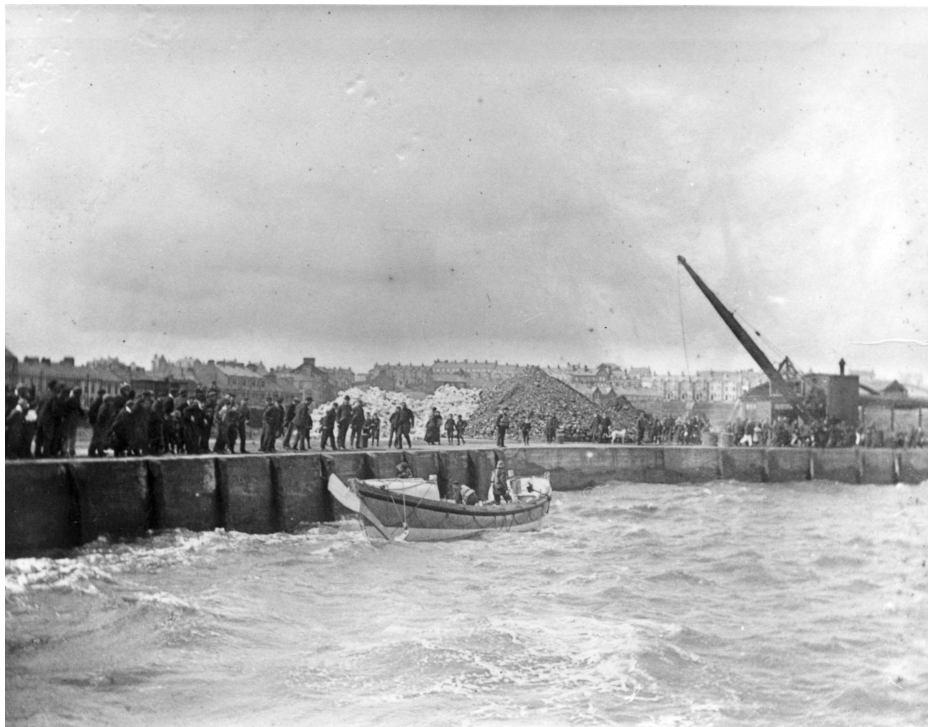
*On the 16<sup>th</sup> June [1897], while a strong gale was blowing from N.N.W., accompanied by a very heavy sea, a message by telephone was received from Bangor stating that assistance was needed by distressed vessels. The Life-boat **George Pooley** was taken on her transporting carriage by road to Bangor and found two vessels were in need of assistance.*

*One of them, the schooner, **Hollyhow**, of and for Galway, bound for Barrow, timber laden was lying about a hundred yards from the Clifton rocks, her two anchors having dragged, and the other, the smack **Harp**, of Arklow, laden with coal, had also dragged her anchors, and was about half a mile from the shore in Bangor Bay.*

*The Life-boat was, by means of skids, launched off the pier into the harbour.*



The **George Pooley** is launched from Neill's Pier, Bangor  
The Savage Collection, North Down Museum. Copyright: Ards and North Down Council



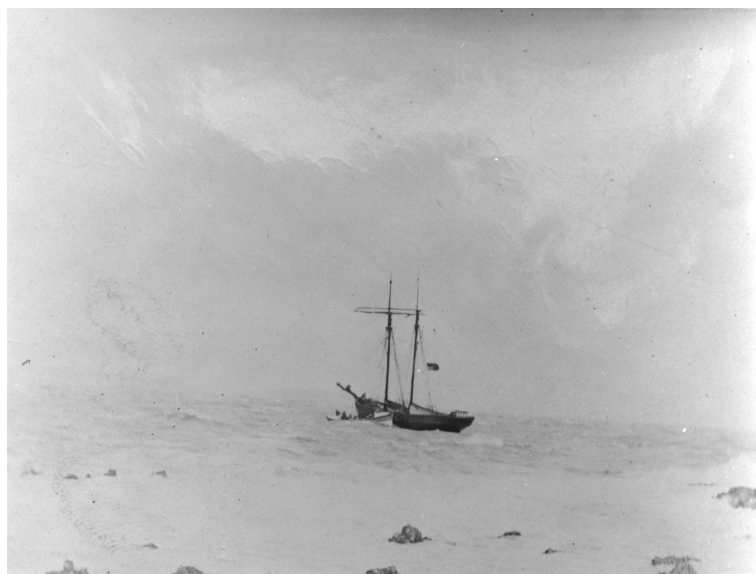
After the launch, the Life-boat prepares to set out to sea  
The Savage Collection, North Down Museum. Copyright: Ards and North Down Council



The **George Pooley** leaves Bangor  
North Down Museum. Copyright: Ards and North Down Council

*She proceeded first to the **Harp**, pulling to windward, through a heavy sea. Having anchored, she veered down on the vessel, put a line on board and rescued the crew of four men.*

*She then again pulled to windward, again anchored and veered down on the **Hollyhow**, from which eight persons were saved; they were the master, his wife and three young children, and the crew of three men.*



The **George Pooley** saving those who were on the Hollyhow  
The Savage Collection, North Down Museum. Copyright: Ards and North Down Council

*Having taken them on board, the Life-boat once more took up her anchor and made for Ballyholm [sic] Bay where the twelve people were landed safely in a creek.*



Landing the 12 people who were saved at the jetty at Ballyholme Yacht Club  
North Down Museum. Copyright: Ards and North Down Council

*The boat was moored while the crew rested and sailed her back to her station.*

*The launch and the rescues were well and skilfully managed, and in recognition of their good services an additional award was granted to the crew of the Life-boat.*

Note: The RNLi built a concrete slipway in front of the Boathouse in Groomsport in 1901. Between then and 1920, when the Life-boat station closed, all launches took place from Groomsport.

Sources:

The Life-Boat Vol XVII (No. 187) February 1898. Accessed at:  
<https://rnliarchive.blob.core.windows.net/media/1178/0187.pdf#page=12>

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