

The Cruise of the Callabar

Come all ye dry-land sailors and listen to my song
It's only forty verses so I won't delay you long
It's all about the adventures of this old Lisburn tar,
Who sailed as man before the mast aboard the Callabar.

The Callabar was a clipper ship, well-fastened fore and aft.
Her stern stuck out behind her and her helm was a great big shaft.
With half a gale to swell the sail she made one knot per hour.
She was the fastest ship on the Lagan Canal and only one horse power.

The captain he was a strapping lad, he stood full four foot two.
His eyes were red, his face was green and his nose was a Prussian blue.
He wore a leather medal that he won in the Crimea War,
And his wife was steward and passenger cook aboard the Callabar.

One day the captain came to me, he says my lad, says he,
Would you like to be a sailor and roam the raging sea,
Would you like to be a sailor on foreign seas to roll,
For we're under orders for Aghalee with half a ton of coal.

On leaving the Abercorn Basin the weather it was sublime,
And passing under the old Queen's Bridge we heard the Albert chime,
But going up the gasworks straight, a very dangerous part,
We ran aground on a lump of coal that wasn't marked on the chart.

Then all became confusion and stormy winds did blow.
The bosun slipped on an orange peel and fell into the hold below,
More steam more steam the captain cried, for we are sorely pressed,
But the engineer from the bank replied, the old horse is doing its best.

A farmer on his way to work he heard us loudly roar,
And he threw us the end of his gallusses and pulled us all ashore,
I'm done with ocean rambling and roaming the raging main,
And the next time I'll go to Lisburn, bejabbers I'll take the train.



Zebra mussels are small shellfish that live in freshwater and feed by filtering the surrounding water and removing the plankton from it. They were formerly found only in the Black and Caspian Seas but expanded their range to include much of Europe following the building of canals by attaching to the hulls of ships and boats. The zebra mussel themselves reached Britain in 1830. In 1986, they were introduced into North America in ships' ballast water and now cause serious fouling problems there.

- Find the Black Sea and Caspian Sea in your atlas.

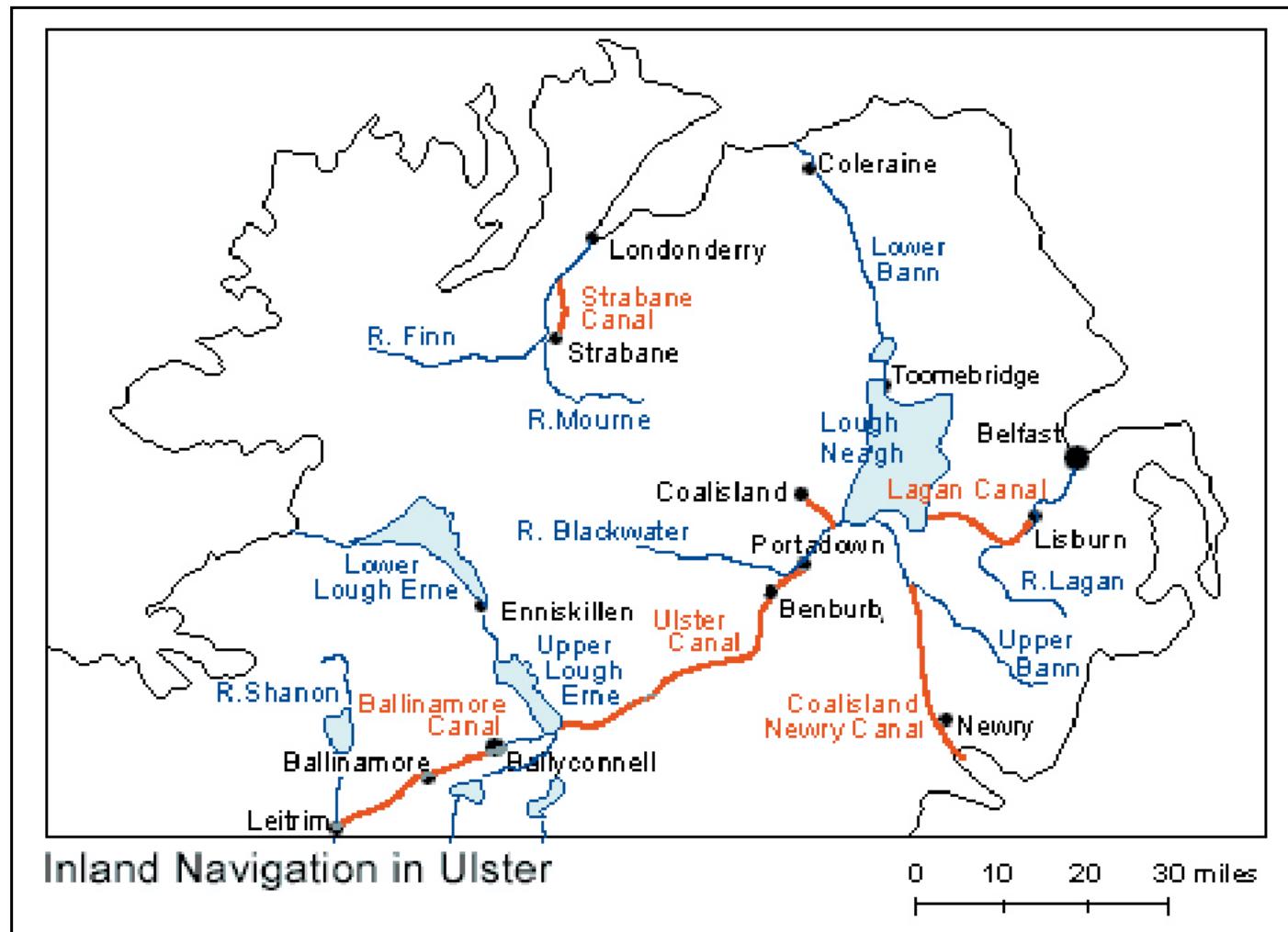
Why are zebra mussels a problem?

Zebra mussels congregate in very large numbers: as many as 100,000 per square metre. They can clog intake pipes, drains and screens causing reduced water delivery to power plants, industries, fish hatcheries and municipal waterworks. They can also have serious consequences for fisheries, fish spawning grounds and aquatic plant life.

Large numbers of zebra mussels were discovered in 1997 in the Republic of Ireland. They probably arrived in Ireland on the hulls of private boats and barges imported on trailers. Every year their numbers increase fifty-fold. They are now in Lower Lough Erne. So far no zebra mussels have been found in Lough Neagh but it is only a matter of time before they are introduced to the Lough by accident on the hull of a boat transported by trailer.

- Can you think of any ways in which we might prevent the spread of zebra mussels into Lough Neagh and other inland freshwater navigations in Northern Ireland?
- Look at your map and think about what would happen if the Ulster Canal was restored and boats could once more make the journey from Limerick right up into Lough Neagh.
- Write a letter or article for your local newspaper describing your worries.

Using a map of Northern Ireland, find the towns and villages that lie along the canals and mark them on your map.



Here are some of the leisure activities which might follow from a canal being restored. Starting with your favourite, number them one, two, three.

Now find out if your number one is the same as your friend's. Compare your lists!

- Canal cruising
- Holidays on a canal barge
- Boat trips
- Floating restaurant
- Painting
- Fishing
- Birdwatching/wildlife
- Walking
- Cycling
- Hot air balloon trips over canal
- Canoeing
- Rowing
- Pony trekking