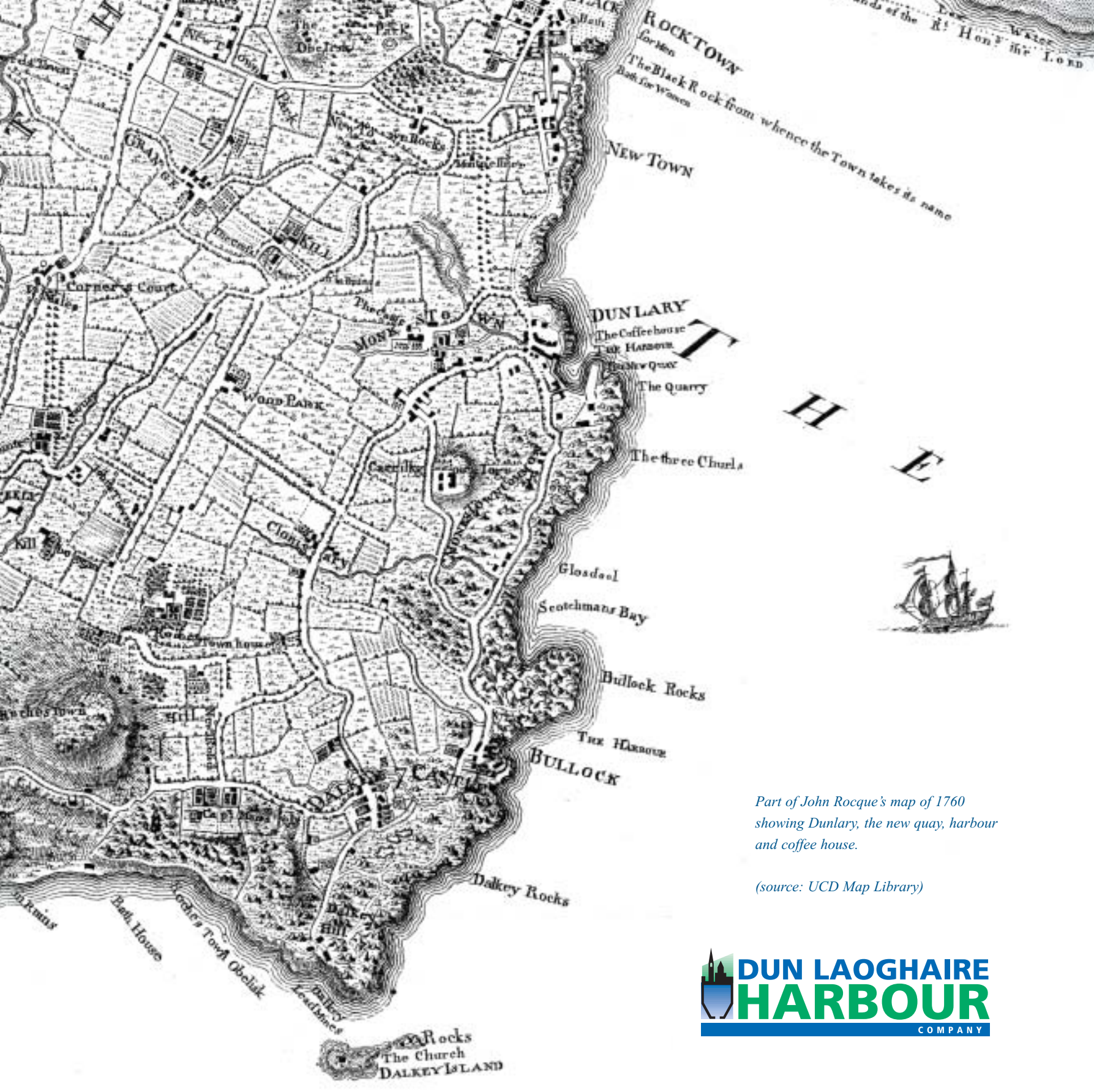


DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR COMPANY



The Construction of Dun Laoghaire Harbour



Part of John Rocque's map of 1760 showing Dunlary, the new quay, harbour and coffee house.

(source: UCD Map Library)

INTRODUCTION

In recognition of the immense contribution of those who built Dun Laoghaire Harbour between 1817 and 1842, the Dun Laoghaire Harbour Company is proud to dedicate the new public space created around the restored Victorian Fountain to the memory of these largely forgotten workers.

Over a period of approximately twenty five years, up to one thousand workers each year laboured in extremely difficult and dangerous conditions to build the magnificent Harbour we enjoy today. This booklet and the accompanying exhibition tells some of their stories.

One has only to stand in the empty vastness of Dalkey Quarry, or on the bulk at the centre of one of the piers in the Harbour, to visualise the complexity and risk involved in physically moving so much stone nearly two hundred years ago. Inevitably, it was done at a high price in terms of human life, illness, injury and poverty.

The Harbour Company is very conscious of its statutory responsibility to maintain and develop the Harbour for all its users. As custodians of its unique heritage, earlier this year the Company restored the Victorian Fountain and lamp standards, and installed new seating, steps and granite paving at the entrance to the Harbour.

The Board has also commissioned a work of poetry from a distinguished local poet, Gerard Fanning, to commemorate those workers who built the Harbour. This poem will be displayed on a plaque at the new plaza area as a permanent testament to their mighty achievement.

I am very pleased that the Dun Laoghaire Harbour Company has taken this initiative to recognise the workers who built the Harbour nearly two hundred years ago. At a time when Dublin Bay was treacherous, the men who built the Harbour took risks with their lives so that others at sea might be safe.

The workers built a Harbour that has played a part in history. Through its mouth have departed transport ships to Australia, Irish soldiers to the Crimean and First World Wars, British monarchs and Irish emigrants.

But more importantly the workers built a Harbour that has been central to the lives of millions of "ordinary" Irish people. As well as the passengers who travelled in both directions, the Harbour was a gateway for the postal services which carried good and bad news between the wider world and Ireland in both directions.

Despite the hardships endured by the workers, they left us an enduring legacy. The success of the Harbour drove the subsequent growth and prosperity of Dun Laoghaire. It developed the town as an elegant Victorian resort and made it the uniquely popular tourist, commercial, residential and recreational location it is today.



Paddy McMahon,
Chairman,
Dun Laoghaire Harbour Company



Councillor Donal Marren,
Cathaoirleach,
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council



*View of the Coffee House, Dunleary,
by John Martyn(1794-1828)*

(source: National Library of Ireland)

FROM KING LAOGHAIRE TO THE FIRST PIER (453 – 1767)



General Charles Vallancey (1721-1812) who supervised the building of the first pier. He was a military engineer in Ireland, Secretary of the Society of Irish Antiquaries and co-founder of the Royal Irish Academy. He inaugurated the Phoenician Scytho-Celtic school of Irish philology, based on supposed kinship of the Irish language with Punic (Carthaginian) and Kabmuck (the language of the Algonquin Indians). Married four times, he had twenty-seven children by three of his wives.

(source: portrait hanging in the Royal Irish Academy painted by George Chinnery)

Dun Laoghaire takes its name from a fort built on the coast by High King Laoghaire in the fifth century. No trace of the fort remains, but it probably stood where the bridge over the railway to the Coal Harbour is now.

From the time of Laoghaire to the mid eighteenth century, Dunlary (as it was called on a 1760 map) was a small village of fishermen's houses based around a creek where the Purty Kitchen pub is now. A stream flowing from Monkstown Castle ran into the sea there. From the Middle Ages to the sixteenth century, Dalkey was the main port south of Dublin.

By the eighteenth century, Dublin Bay had become badly silted up and dangerous to enter. Ships often had to await tides and winds to enter Dublin safely and while doing so moored on the coast off Dun Laoghaire. Many let off their passengers on small boats to come ashore at Dun Laoghaire and a coffee house was built around where the petrol station beside the Purty Kitchen pub is now.

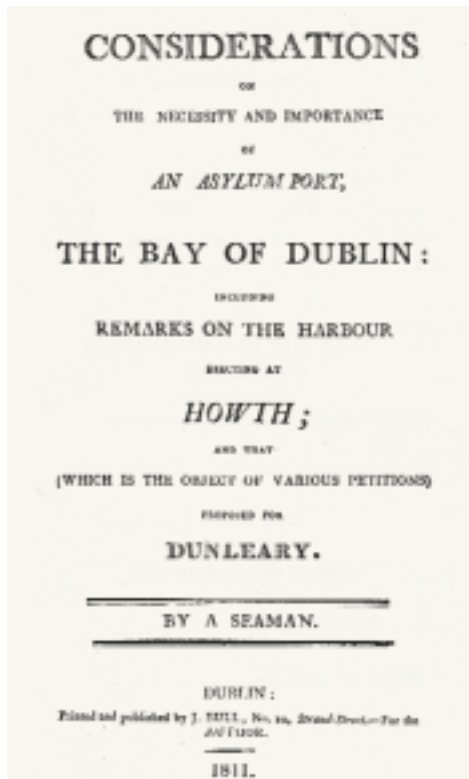
In 1710, Dean Swift complained about the Dun Laoghaire boatmen who charged him double to row him quickly out to his ship which they said was about to depart. When he got out to the ship, he found he had plenty of time.

Daytrippers came out from Dublin and the village was popular as a sea-bathing location. Some verses published around the 1720s invited the ladies of Dublin to repair to Dunleary where they would find honest residents and could procure good ale.

The continued danger to shipping of Dublin port and the increased popularity of Dun Laoghaire as a landing place led to a petition being presented to the Irish Parliament in 1755 for building a pier. This was agreed to and Parliament voted £21,000 for this to be done. The pier was completed in 1767 with locally quarried granite under the supervision of Captain (later General) Charles Vallancey.

The new pier became useless in a very short period of time. It quickly silted up with sand and was known as the dry pier before long. It remains today as the Inner Coal Harbour Pier.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR A HARBOUR (1800 – 1814)



The growth of Dublin city, increased shipping traffic, and the danger of Dublin Bay and access to the Liffey led to much debate around the turn of the eighteenth into the nineteenth century about how to make Dublin Bay safer. One popular idea was to make a deep sea harbour at Dalkey between Dalkey Island and the shore. An alternative was to build a “locked” harbour at Dun Laoghaire and run a canal from there to the Grand Canal docks near Dublin.

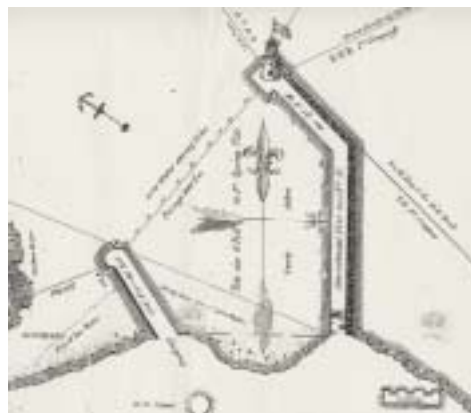
Captain W M Bligh (earlier of HMS Bounty fame) surveyed Dublin Bay in 1800 and said of the then Dun Laoghaire harbour: “It has nothing to recommend it, being ill adapted for its purpose and ill taken care of, and although sheltered from the east winds, is much incommoded by the swell which sets in around the pier end as well as with the northerly winds”.

In 1802, John Rennie, an outstanding Scottish engineer and designer of many fine bridges and harbours in Britain (including Waterloo Bridge and London Bridge) and the Irish Royal Canal, gave his “decided preference” to Dun Laoghaire as the best site for a new harbour in Dublin Bay. Despite this, in 1807, work began on building a new harbour at Howth.

In November that year one of the greatest marine tragedies in Dublin Bay took place when two ships, HMS Prince of Wales and the Rochdale, sailing out of Dublin, were wrecked in a storm on the rocks between Dun Laoghaire and Blackrock. The Prince of Wales was wrecked near where Blackrock Park is now. Nearly four hundred people were drowned, many of them soldiers and their families. Some of the soldiers from the Prince of Wales are buried in the small graveyard beside the Jury’s Tara Hotel on the Merrion Road where a memorial stone still stands. The Rochdale hit the shore at Seapoint and many of its dead were buried in the graveyard on Carrickbrennan Road in Monkstown where a plaque remembers them. There is also a tombstone in Dalkey churchyard.

The tragedy prompted a new wave of activity to lobby for an asylum harbour in Dublin Bay. In 1808 a petition was signed in Monkstown Church by “almost all the resident magistrates and gentlemen on the south side of the Bay” calling for such a harbour. The Reverend William Dawson published a plan in 1809 which included a new pier at Dun Laoghaire, and in 1811 an anonymous seaman, generally believed to be Richard Toutcher, published a pamphlet on the need for an asylum port in Dublin Bay.

Toutcher was an exceptional figure in the development of Dun Laoghaire Harbour. Born in 1758 in Norway, he came to live in Dublin and work as a shipbroker before the turn of the century. He agitated ceaselessly for a harbour in Dun Laoghaire. He was strongly opposed to the harbour in Howth, arguing that it was built in the wrong place and by certain people to enhance the value of their land.



Cover page and map from one of the most influential documents which led to the building of the Harbour. The anonymous author – “A Seaman” is generally believed to be Richard Toutcher.

(source: Royal Irish Academy)

AGREEMENT TO BUILD THE HARBOUR (1814-1817)

In 1814, the campaign for a new harbour in Dun Laoghaire intensified and Toutcher made the huge personal contribution of securing a lease for ten years to allow stone to be quarried in Dalkey free of charge for the Harbour. In subsequent years Lords Longford and de Vesci gave permission for stone to be quarried on their lands in Dun Laoghaire.

In 1815, Parliament in London passed an Act to allow the appointment of five Commissioners to oversee the construction of “an harbour for ships to the eastward of Dunleary within the port and harbour of Dublin”. A survey was to be conducted, and in June 1816 a subsequent Act of Parliament was passed authorising the building of the Harbour. At that stage, the Harbour was only envisaged as a place of refuge from bad weather and not as a port for landing or loading goods and passengers.

The original scheme approved by Parliament was for a single pier harbour at the East Pier, but at an early stage of construction John Rennie, who had been appointed as Directing Engineer, amended the plans and sought a second pier which was agreed to by Parliament in 1820.

John Aird became the Engineer on Site and Richard Toutcher was appointed as storekeeper / second engineer where he remained until his retirement in 1831. He died in 1841 having devoted a great part of his life to campaigning for the Harbour and contributing enormously to its construction, practically and financially, through securing the stone in Dalkey.

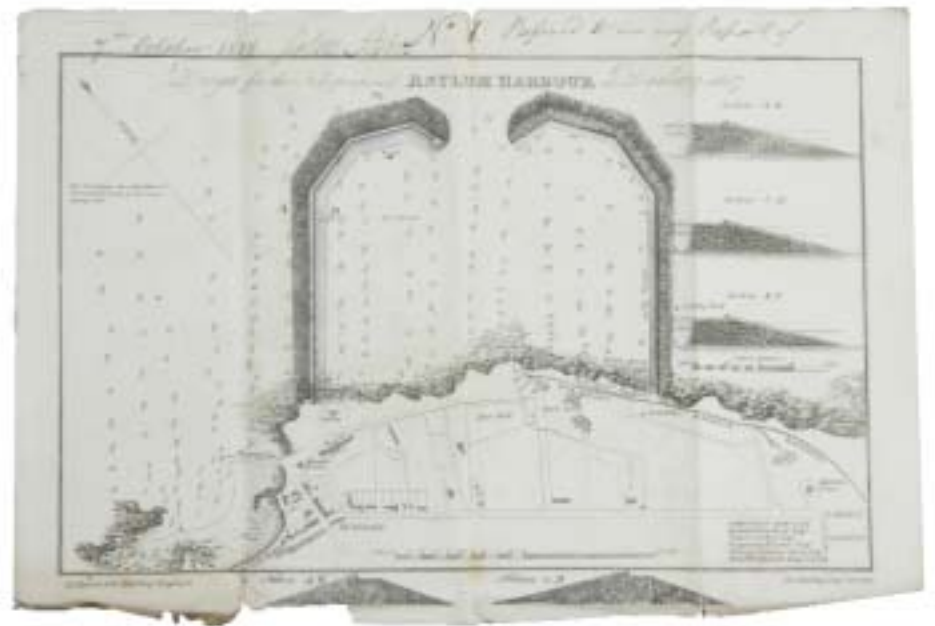
In August 1817 the contract for quarrying stone was awarded to George Smith.

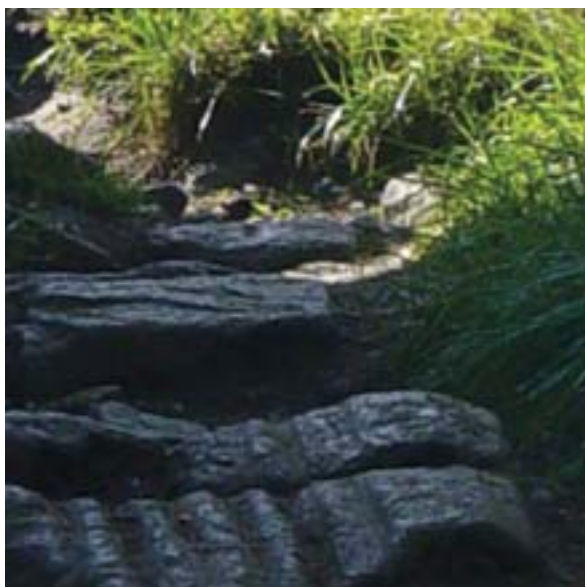
In May 1817, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Earl Whitworth laid the foundation stone. It was accompanied by a coin of the realm, ten previous days' newspapers, and an inscription which read; “In the hope that it may be the cause of life to the seamen, wealth to the citizen, Revenue to the Crown and benefit to the nation”. After the ceremony a breakfast was served for three hundred guests in a tent which had been specially erected near the new pier.

King George the Fourth departed from Dun Laoghaire on the royal yacht in September 1821 following a visit to Ireland. To mark the departure the town was renamed Kingstown, the Harbour took the title

John Rennie's “Design for the new proposed Asylum Harbour at Dunleary 1817” with two piers. Note the narrower mouth and shape of the pier ends to those finally built. The plan also shows the road that was to become George's Street, the railroad from Dalkey and the now disappeared Martello towers near the Coal Harbour pier and where the People's Park now stands.

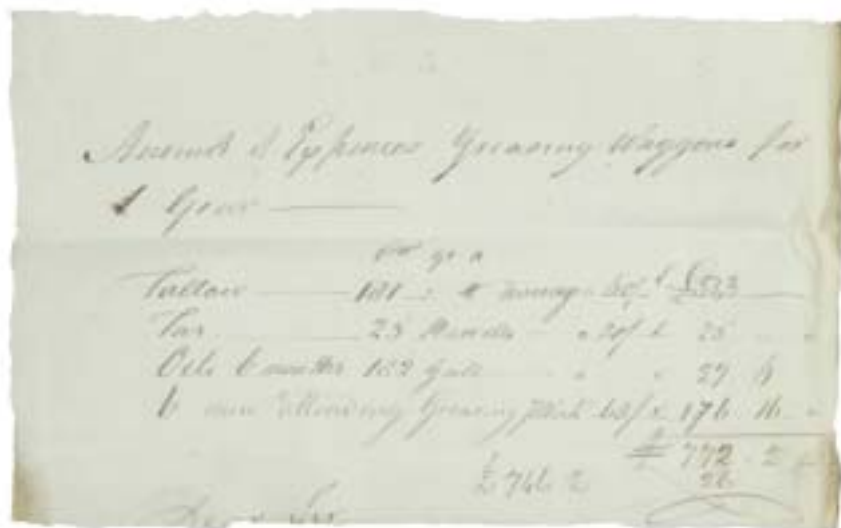
(source: National Archives)





Photographs taken in 2003 of the remains of “The Flags” pathway (off Dalkey Avenue) down which the funicular railway came from Dalkey Quarry. Granite stones still in the quarry show the erosion caused by the chains which pulled the wagons.

THE QUARRY IN DALKEY AND THE RAILWAY (1817 – 1841)



An 1821 account about the expenses of greasing the wagons that carried the granite from Dalkey Quarry to the Harbour. Tallow, tar and oil were used and six men were employed to do this work at a cost of £176 and 16 shillings, suggesting they were paid about 12 cent each per day in today's money.

(source: National Archives)

Toutcher's achievement in sourcing stone for the harbour in Dalkey Quarry led to the construction in 1817 of a remarkable funicular railway to bring stone from the quarry to the sea.

Having acquired land to run the railway across, two tracks were laid down running from the Quarry along the path beside the present railway. The track descended steeply from the Quarry to where the present railway bridge is at Barnhill Road. Part of the old track path is still visible off Dalkey Avenue. The track then ran down towards the Harbour on a series of further funicular stretches. The curved line, especially between Glenagery and

Dun Laoghaire, was used to exploit the gradual gradient to best effect. To this day the path along the railway from Dun Laoghaire to Dalkey is known as the metals.

Every "train" had three trucks, each of which held about six tons of rock. The trucks were held together by a continuous chain and ran on iron rails mounted on granite plinths. A seven foot diameter friction wheel was mounted vertically between two large, strong, twelve foot high A-frames at the top of the hill in the Quarry and a continuous cable ran down overhead parallel to each track to a smaller wheel at the bottom of the hill at Barnhill Road. The trains were connected by a second cable to the overhead cable. The weight of the full trucks going down the hill pulled the empty ones back up. An operator regulated the speed of the friction wheel with a brake. Horses pulled the trucks along the rails on flat ground around the Harbour.

The system was highly efficient until 1840 when the bulk of the stone had been transported to the Harbour. The track between Glashule and Dalkey was sold to the developers of the Atmospheric Railway in 1841. The Atmospheric Railway ran between Dun Laoghaire and Dalkey between 1844 and 1854.

Stone for the Harbour was also quarried in Glashule (where the People's Park now stands), and in Dun Laoghaire at an area known as the Churl Rocks (where Moran Park is now).

The massive volume of stone transported to build the Harbour can best be appreciated by adding together the length of the two piers (1.75 miles) and then considering their foundation width (300 feet) and depth (24 feet below low tide mark).

Detailed ledgers and weighing machines were used to quantify the exact amount of stone to be paid for by the Commissioners but, perhaps not surprisingly, by 1830 there was a considerable discrepancy of 11,000 cubic yards of stone between what the contractor said he had delivered and what the Commissioners said they received.

Dalkey Hill Feb 16th 1826

The Dalkey Hill Workmen finding no redress
from your Hon^{rs} desire deem it expedient to let
your Hon^{rs} & the Contractors know ^{that} they will not
work on the terms that are highly approv^d of,
by your Hon^{rs} & as you would not listen to
the Grievances we have to complain of, we
shall unfold them to the public.

Dalkey Hill Workmen

P.S. We have no call or blame on the works,
but shall not work on the terms propos^d

A letter from the
"Dalkey Hill Workmen" to
the Harbour Commissioners
in 1826 stating that they will
not work on the terms
proposed by the contractor
and that since the
Commissioners "would not
listen to the grievances we
have to complain of, we
shall unfold them to the
public"

(source: National Archives)

LIVING IN DALKEY AND DUN LAOGHAIRE

The massive scale of the Harbour construction project had an immediate impact on Dun Laoghaire and Dalkey. Up to then, the south Dublin coast was largely undeveloped and Dalkey, which had been an important port in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, had lapsed into obscurity and poverty.

By 1823 there were over 1,000 workers, many with their families, living in huts and stone cabins they had built themselves on Dalkey Commons and on what are now Sorrento Road, Coliemore Road and the Convent Road / Leslie Avenue area. These workers came mainly from Dublin and Wicklow but skilled stone-cutters also came from Scotland. Part of the 1821 Dublin street ballad called “The Praises of Kingstown Harbour” recited:

*“You’d be filled with wonder to hear claps like thunder
And rocks burst asunder in the atmosphere,
With brave stone-belvers, and jolly miners,
From different nations you’ll find them there;”*

Despite the above, it is doubtful if many of the workers found their existence in Dalkey to be very jolly. Most of the homes had no sanitary facilities or running water. Drinking water came from local springs. Outbreaks of typhus and cholera as well as injuries were commonplace, and in the early days of harbour construction no medical treatment was available. The work was arduous and dangerous, particularly from the amount of blasting work going on in the quarry. This led to many losses of limbs, eyes and even lives.

There were complaints from local landowners about the workers “squatting” in Dalkey and living there without permission. In 1826 the Reverend Charles Lindsay of Monkstown wrote to the Harbour Commissioners seeking a job for one of his tenants and remarking on the “lawless violence” of those who live on Dalkey Commons and who have “houses and gardens on that common, free of rent, free of tithes and free of taxes”.

The men working on the piers were paid directly by the Commissioners and those in the quarries by the stone contractor. Over the period of construction of the Harbour, employment numbers ranged at any one time between the low hundreds up to almost one thousand. In August 1823, for example, there were 129 men employed by the Commissioners and 690 by the contractor. At that time, labourers were paid 1s 8d (about 10 cent) per day and the overseers 2s (13 cent).



Notice erected on the Commons of Dalkey in 1823 warning the Quarry workers that all those who had built houses there would have them “prostrated” because they were encroaching on the rights of commonage enjoyed by the proprietors of local land and property. The workers were given three months to comply with the Court Order but this was never done.

(source: National Archives)

LIVING IN DALKEY AND DUN LAOGHAIRE

An 1826 petition from two brick and stone masons, James Byrne and Richard Reilly, to John Aird, the Harbour Engineer, seeking a wages advance "owing chiefly to the exorbitant price of provisions in this town and house rent is so very dear".

(source: National Archives)

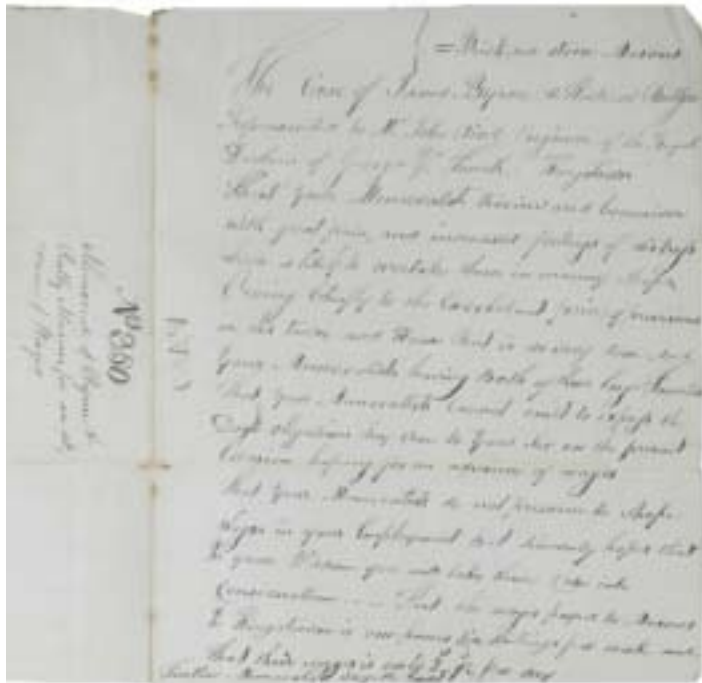
In the early stages of the works, many were paid by tickets or by arrangement with hucksters and publicans until the Commissioners ruled that the men were to be paid in cash only. It is not difficult to imagine the hardship of the labourers and wonder how they managed to exist on the pittance they earned after a tough day's work. Nor is it hard to understand why on several occasions there were riots and strikes.

Because of the many children of workers now in the area, schools were built on Dalkey Commons and Barnhill Road. They were supported by subscriptions from their parents and the Lord Lieutenant. They were known locally as the "Oxford and Cambridge schools".

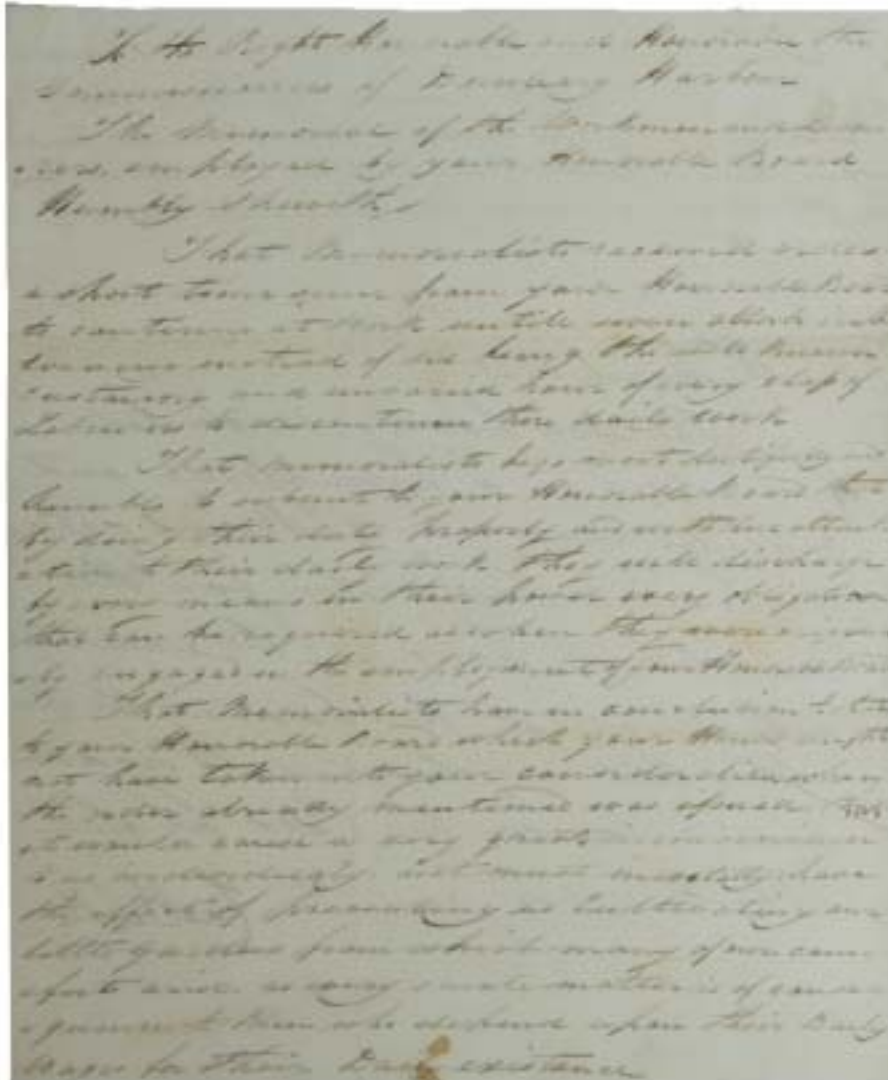
As a result of the works, Dun Laoghaire became something of a "boom town" and as early as 1826 the Commissioners were being petitioned about the high cost of living in the town.

In 1829, workmen employed on the East Pier petitioned the Commissioners following a reduction in their weekly wages from 11s3d (71 cent) to 9s9d (62 cent) that "their employment is situated in the dearest market in Ireland for all kinds of food – lodgings or rooms are double price to any other county place and higher than in the city of Dublin". They went on to point out that their employment was "dangerous in the extreme" and that their "attendance was required at all hours under every inclemency of the weather".

In 1832 an anonymous letter writer to the Commissioners complained that there were 37 public houses in the town.



HAZARDOUS AND DANGEROUS WORK



In the expectation of casualties, one of the earliest letters from the newly appointed Harbour Commissioners was to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland requesting a special carriage for “the removal of any of the men who may meet with accidents in the blasting”.

In August 1817, James Weldon was one of the first deaths on the works when a crane in Dalkey Quarry collapsed on top of him. His parents presented a memorial to the Harbour Commissioners stating:

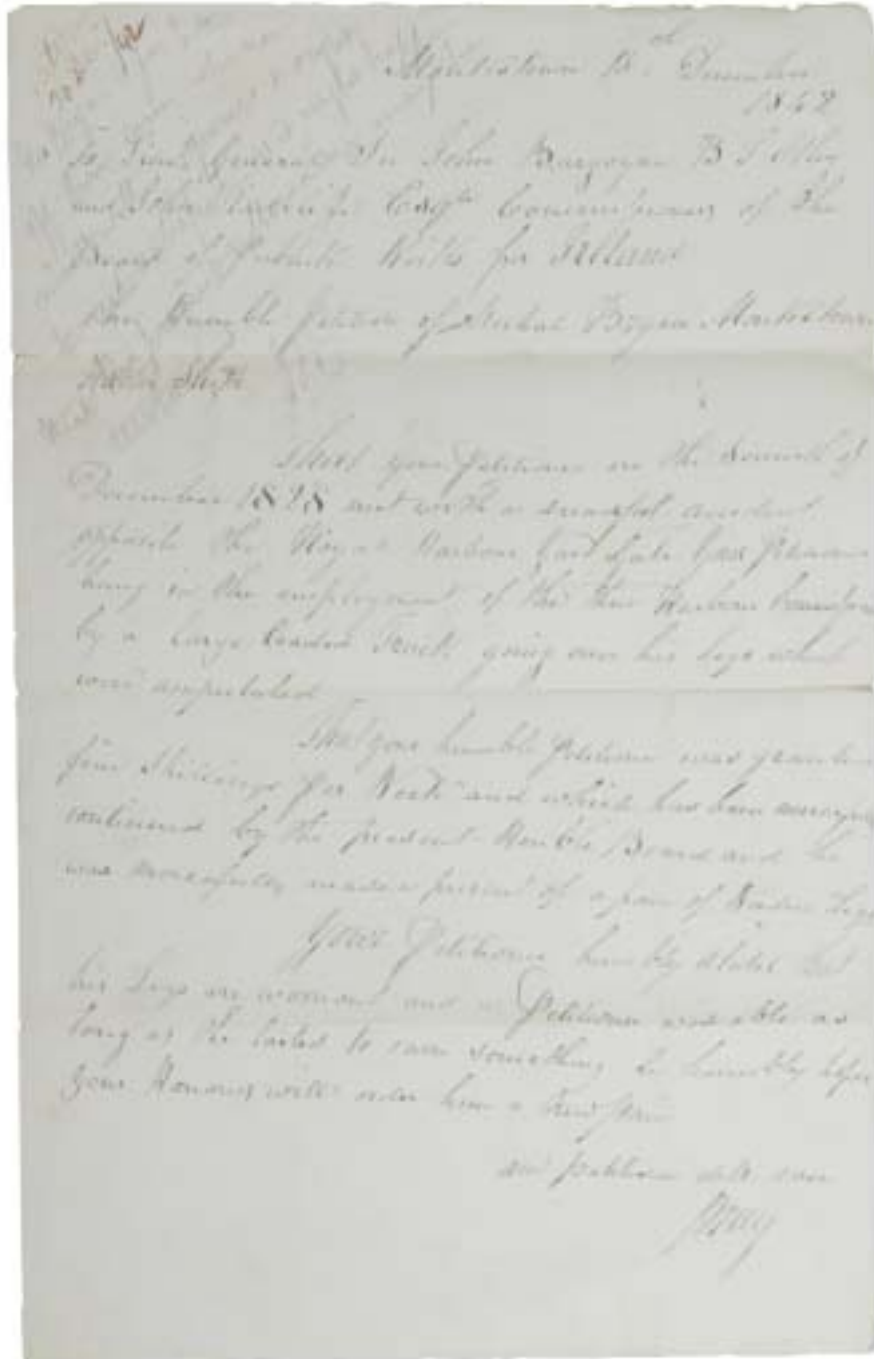
“that on the morning of Tuesday week one of the cranes erected in the quarries of Dalkey Hill gave way and fell on the son James Weldon and so dreadfully mangled him as to occasion his death.

The same day by which the memorialists have lost a good son and the chief support of themselves and seven children. The memorialists must humbly hope your Honourable Board will please take their truly melancholy case into humane consideration”.

A March 1821 memorial (petition) from the workmen in the Harbour to the Commissioners asking them to reverse their decision that the workers must work an additional hour until 7 pm each evening. The workers complained that this extra hour at work would prevent them from: “cultivating our little gardens from which many of our comforts arise, as very small matter is of consequence to men who depend upon their daily wages for their daily existence”. Noting that the men had conducted themselves in a “submissive and orderly manner”, the Commissioners agreed to the workers request on the understanding that “no loaded waggons are to be on the pier at six o’clock”.

(source: National Archives)

HAZARDOUS AND DANGEROUS WORK



The signatories were unable to write and had this memorial written for them, which they signed with an "X". They were subsequently awarded five guineas by the Board.

James Farrell was appointed as doctor to the works in April 1821 because of the numerous accidents at the Harbour and the Quarries and the fact that these were constantly attracting public notice and suspicion.

Working in the quarries or moving the stone was dangerous work and the early records of the Harbour Commissioners, and the Commissioners of Public Works who took over the project in 1831, contain many petitions and pleas from the families of workers injured or killed. The long delay in finalising the nature of the pier ends in the early 1830s and the slow down in work led many workers to be laid off. Their prospects of alternative employment were poor and they petitioned the Commissioners to no avail.

The Kingstown Dispensary, run by Charles Duffy, a surgeon, was finally opened in 1831 and a temporary cholera hospital at Glasthule was set up.

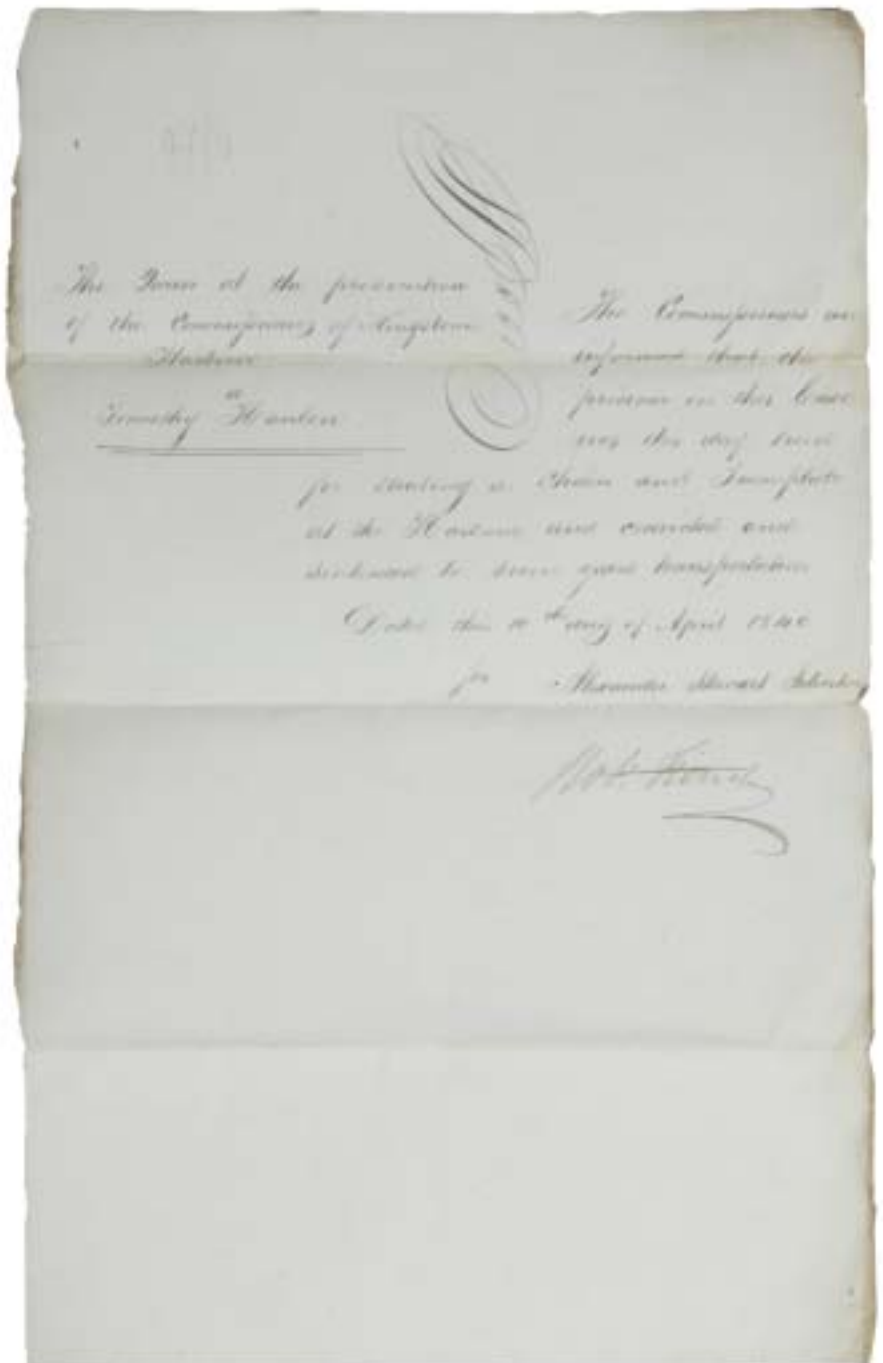
An 1842 petition from Michael Bryan of Monkstown for a new pair of wooden legs to replace his existing pair which were "worn out". He had lost his legs in 1828 when a "large loaded truck" went over his legs and they had to be amputated.

(source: National Archives)

HAZARDOUS AND DANGEROUS WORK

Theft from the Harbour workings was a persistent problem and the courts were kept busy for all of the construction period. The metal used on the railway was in particular demand. In 1833, Alice Duffy, a widow with five children, sought the return of her ass and cart which had been seized when it was found to have a piece of metal in it. The Commissioners were unsympathetic and noted that she was a habitual thief.

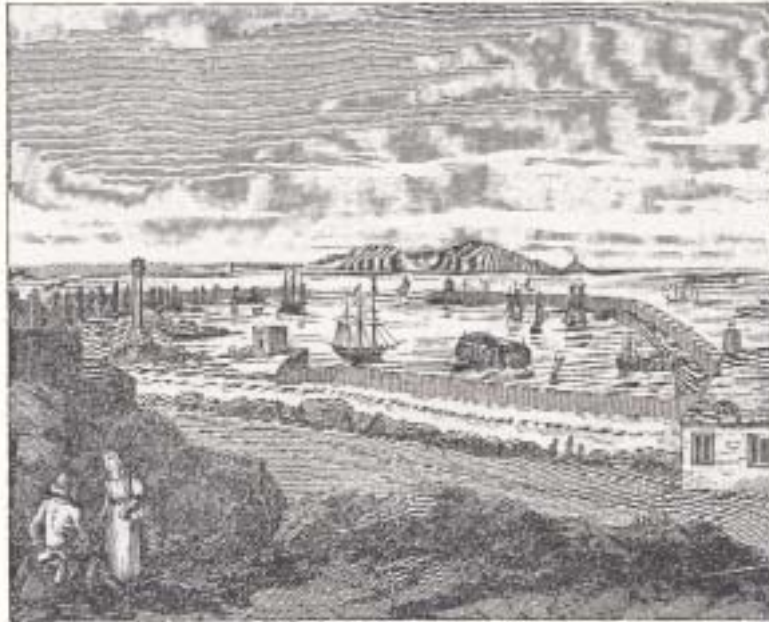
On a couple of other occasions, those who had helped apprehend thieves petitioned the Commissioners for a job for themselves as a reward.



*Notice to the Commissioners in 1840
informing them that Timothy Hanlon
had been convicted and sentenced to
transportation for seven years for the
theft of a chain and tramplate from the
Harbour.*

(source: National Archives)

THE ESSEX HULK



KINGSTOWN PIER

An 1834 engraving from the Dublin Penny Journal showing the prison hulk "Essex" in the Harbour (the vessel without masts) . The cottage on the right appears on the 1817 map on page 5 and on the 1829 map on page twenty one and is probably "Jack Kellys", an ale-house of the time. The George IV obelisk is on the left.

(source: Colin Scudds, Dun Laoghaire Borough Historical Society)

As well as the workers who quarried the stone and built the Harbour, another group of people had a hard time in the Harbour. These were the prisoners on board the prison hulk Essex which was permanently moored in the Harbour from 1824 to 1837. It was moored about fifty yards off the East Pier and 100 yards from the shore opposite what is now the National Yacht Club. The hulks were ships that had their masts removed and were stationed in harbours around Britain, usually to hold convicted prisoners who were awaiting transportation to Australia. There was also a hulk off Cobh in County Cork.

The Essex had been a distinguished American 32 gun frigate built in Salem, Massachusetts in 1799 for the then young American navy. After fighting against the British in the Pacific, and also against British whalers there, it was captured in 1814 off Valparaiso in Chile and towed to Plymouth in England where it lay until being moved to Dun Laoghaire in 1824.

Prisoners held on hulks around England usually worked on shore based building projects but this was not the case in Ireland. Although it was suggested to the Harbour Commissioners at the time the Harbour was being built that the Essex prisoners might be used in the works, this never took place.

Between 250 and 300 prisoners were held on the Essex. most of them convicted and sentenced to transportation to Australia for what now seem relatively minor offences.

An interesting anniversary in the history of transportation takes place in June 2003. On June 2nd 1853, 150 years ago, the very last transport ship from Ireland to Australia – the Phoebe Dunbar - sailed from Dun Laoghaire to Freemantle, Western Australia.

DUN LAOGHAIRE / KINGSTOWN EXPANDS AND GROWS



The annual regatta in the Harbour was a popular event from 1828 and this notice was an early attempt to regulate casual trading in 1837.

(source: National Archives)

From the time that Harbour construction began, Dun Laoghaire embarked on a period of rapid growth.

King George the Fourth's departure from Dun Laoghaire on the royal yacht in September 1821 conferred a new status as well as name on the town and as the Harbour piers extended out into the Bay, the town of Kingstown developed rapidly up the hill facing it.

The main axis of the developing town was George's Street, which was initially the connecting track between the no longer standing Martello Towers built in 1805 that stood on the site of Laoghaire's old fort at the Coal Harbour Bridge and in what is now the People's Park. What is now Marine Road, was called Forty Foot Road and the town's centre gradually moved from the junction of York Road and Cumberland Street to where George's Street met the Forty Foot Road.

In 1826 the mail service from Britain was transferred from Howth to Kingstown and a special wharf was built on the East Pier for the packet steamers.

While a committee chaired by Daniel O'Connell took evidence in 1833 about the merits of building a ship canal to link Dun Laoghaire and Dublin, the arrival of the railway killed off the idea.

In 1834 the first railway in Ireland was built from Westland Row to Dun Laoghaire. The initial station was beside the end of the West Pier but the track was extended in 1836 to where the present station is. The railway became a huge success and drove the rapid expansion of the town as a fashionable place to live. Between 1831 and 1861 the population more than doubled from about 5,500 to 11,500.

The combined growth in efficiency and speed of both the railway and the steam packet ships made Dun Laoghaire a central point for relatively comfortable and quick travel between Ireland and Britain. In 1860 the average crossing time to Holyhead of the Dublin Steam Packet Company ships was 5 hours and 40 minutes. Between 1885 and 1896 this had been reduced to 3 hours and 37 minutes and in 1896 it dropped further to 2 hours and 51 minutes.

The railway now met the boat on the Carlisle Pier and the Dun Laoghaire to Bray section of the railway had opened in 1856 making the Harbour directly accessible to Dublin and the national rail network.

DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR CHRONOLOGY TO 1924



“Newspaper notice of October 1829 seeking proposals to supply tram plates to the Harbour Commissioners. The wear and tear on the railway from Dalkey Quarry meant that there was a constant need for supplies of metal throughout the building period.

(source: National Archives)

- c453 Fort at site of present Coal Harbour bridge
- 1659 Sir Edmund Ludlow records travelling by ship through Dunleary
- 1728 Burgh’s map shows Dunlary – small village of fishermen’s houses centred around inlet of stream flowing from Monkstown Castle
- 1750 Coffee house on site of West Pier service station
- 1755 Irish House of Commons grant to build pier in Dun Laoghaire
- 1760 Pier shown on Rocques map
- 1764 British warships Wasp and Ranger repaired in Dun Laoghaire
- 1767 Pier completed
- 1768 Coal imports from Whitehaven and North of England
- 1768 South Wall to Poolbeg Lighthouse completed in Dublin
- 1790 Pigeon House Harbour is station for Dublin mail packets
- 1800 Captain Bligh’s survey of Dublin Bay
- 1804 First Martello towers built to protect against Napoleon. Towers in Dun Laoghaire and Glasthule built in 1805
- 1807 Ballast Board starts building harbour at Howth
- 1807 (Nov) Rochdale and HMS Prince of Wales sunk off Blackrock and Seapoint, c. 380 died
- 1808 Petition signed in Monkstown Church calling for asylum harbour
- 1809 Dawson’s “Plan for three harbours” published
- 1811 “Considerations on the necessity and importance of an asylum port in the Bay of Dublin” published by A Seaman (believed to be Richard Toutcher)
- 1811 Dublin Port Authority puts lightship on Kish Bank
- 1813 Howth Harbour completed
- 1814 Campaign began for a Harbour in Dun Laoghaire. Toutcher gets agreement from commonage owners in Dalkey to allow quarrying for free
- 1815 Act of Parliament to allow appointment of five Commissioners. £5,000 granted to make survey
- 1815 (25th August) First Board meeting of Harbour Commissioners
- 1815/16 Lords Longford and de Vesci give permission for stone to be quarried on their land

DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR CHRONOLOGY TO 1924

- 
- 1816 Act of Parliament to build Harbour passed (20th June). Powers to appoint fifteen more Commissioners
- 1816 Toutcher appointed storekeeper / 2nd engineer to Harbour (serves until 1831, died in 1841)
- 1816 Lord Lieutenant approves West Pier and extension of East Pier
- 1817 (May) Lord Lieutenant Whitworth lays first stone
- 1817 (June) Contract awarded to George Smith for quarrying stone
- 1817 Special Harbour constables appointed
- 1817 Cost of building the Harbour estimated at £801,159. Actual cost in 1849 turns out at £690,717
- 1818 Howth designated as mail packet station for Dublin
- 1819 Boat Harbour (the Creek) for small vessels built
- 1820 George Smith contracted to build Harbour Commissioners house for £330
- 1820 Parliament agrees to add West Pier to Harbour
- 1821 (September) Departure of King George IV; town renamed Kingstown until 1920; Harbour renamed as the Royal Harbour of George the Fourth
- 1821 John Rennie Senior dies, replaced by his son, Sir John Rennie
- 1822 William Hutchinson appointed Harbour Master (rtd 1874, d 1881)
- 1822 First temporary, movable light put on end of East Pier
- 1823 Obelisk erected on Queens Road to commemorate departure of George IV
- 1823 1000 workers living in huts on Dalkey Commons
- 1824 Convict hulk Essex placed in Harbour
- 1824 3,351 vessels took shelter in Harbour
- 1824 North Bull Wall built, improves Dublin Port
- 1826 250 wagons of granite being delivered daily to harbour on funicular railway
- 1826 Mail service transferred from Howth to Dun Laoghaire
- 1827 Wharf built on East Pier for Mail Packets
- 1828 Dublin Regatta held, first major yachting event in Harbour
- 1829 Harbour Master Hutchinson becomes first Irish man (of only 4 ever) to be awarded RNLI Gold Medal
- 1830 Northumberland lifeboat installed in Harbour

The 50th Foot marching through Kingstown (Dun Laoghaire) on their way to board the troopship Cumbria on the 24th February 1854. The 50th Foot was the first regiment to leave Dublin for the Crimea.

(source: Illustrated London News)

DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR CHRONOLOGY TO 1924

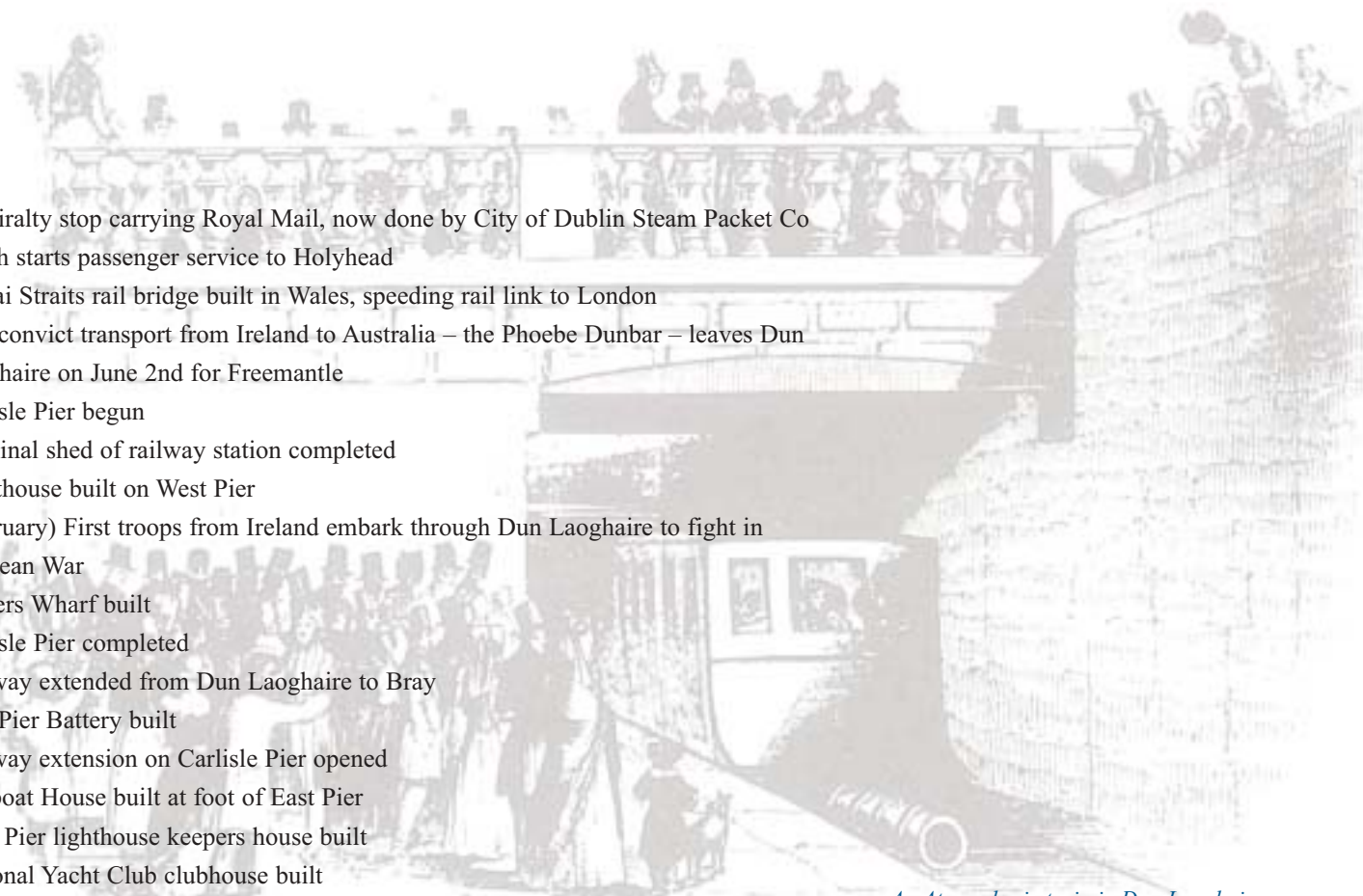


The first notice to mariners in 1822 that a lighthouse had begun working at the end of the East Pier. As the East Pier took shape, a wooden beacon was placed at its extremity to warn shipping, and moved away from the shore as work progressed. The Corporation for Improving and Preserving the Port of Dublin (est 1786), also known as the Ballast Board, had assumed responsibility for lighting the Irish coast in 1810. Later these two functions were separated when the Commissioners of Irish Lights were established in 1854.

(source National Archives / OPW)

- 1831 Kingstown Dispensary opened and temporary cholera hospital in Glasthule
- 1830/ 1831 Dispute begins about how to finish mouth of Harbour and work slows down for several years
- 1831 Commissioners of Public Works take over responsibility for Harbour from Harbour Commissioners
- 1831 Act of Parliament passed to build Dublin and Kingstown railway
- 1833 Select Committee on Ship Canal met, chaired by Daniel O’Connell, and Report published
- 1833 Construction of new wharf wall started for steamers
- 1834 Railway opens from Westland Row to just beyond Salthill (First journey on 9th October)
- 1834 Kingstown Town Commissioners formed
- 1835 City of Dublin Steam Packet Company starts to use Dun Laoghaire for passengers
- 1836 Mariners Church Built
- 1836 Railway extended from Salthill to present station (opened 13/5/1837)
- 1836 General agreement finally emerges on how Harbour should best be finished
- 1837 Convict hulk Essex removed
- 1837 Victoria Wharf built across breast of Harbour (later called St Michael’s Wharf)
- early 1840s Row over opening ends
- 1841/42 Construction of pier heads begin
- 1842 East Pier lighthouse built – Harbour considered finished
- 1840s Coastguard Station built
- 1842 Construction of railway station begun by Roberts for £2,800. Architect was JS Mulvany
- 1843 Royal St George Yacht Club clubhouse completed (designed by Mulvany)
- 1844 Atmospheric Railway opens between Kingstown and Dalkey and lasts for ten years
- 1845 Harbour Master’s house built in what is now Moran Park
- 1849 Queen Victoria embarks through Dun Laoghaire after visit to Ireland
- 1850 Royal Irish Yacht Club building completed

DUN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR CHRONOLOGY TO 1924

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- 1850 Admiralty stop carrying Royal Mail, now done by City of Dublin Steam Packet Co which starts passenger service to Holyhead
- 1850 Menai Straits rail bridge built in Wales, speeding rail link to London
- 1853 Last convict transport from Ireland to Australia – the Phoebe Dunbar – leaves Dun Laoghaire on June 2nd for Freemantle
- 1853 Carlisle Pier begun
- 1853 Terminal shed of railway station completed
- 1850s (mid) Lighthouse built on West Pier
- 1854 (February) First troops from Ireland embark through Dun Laoghaire to fight in Crimean War
- 1855 Traders Wharf built
- 1855 Carlisle Pier completed
- 1856 Railway extended from Dun Laoghaire to Bray
- 1858 East Pier Battery built
- 1859 Railway extension on Carlisle Pier opened
- 1861 Lifeboat House built at foot of East Pier
- 1863 West Pier lighthouse keepers house built
- 1870 National Yacht Club clubhouse built
- 1900 Queen Victoria embarks through Dun Laoghaire after visit to Ireland
- 1907 King Edward VII visits Ireland and embarks through Dun Laoghaire
- 1916 British troops disembark in Dun Laoghaire to quell Easter Rising in Dublin
- 1918 (10th October) RMS Leinster sunk shortly after leaving Dun Laoghaire by German U Boat -480 drowned in the worst ever shipping disaster in Irish waters
- 1920 Kingstown reverts to name Dun Laoghaire
- 1924 Harbour renamed Dun Laoghaire Harbour under State Harbours Act

An Atmospheric train in Dun Laoghaire station in 1844. The atmospheric railway ran to Dalkey from 1844 to 1854 and was innovative but ultimately expensive and unsuccessful. The drawing is made looking into the tunnel from the southbound platform of the present station. The track at that time was single. The trains ran to a station between Castle Park Road and Barnhill Road in Dalkey. The old Atmospheric track rail bridge can still be seen at Castle Park Road beside the bridge over the current track

(source: Illustrated London News, 1844)

KINGSTOWN HARBOUR, *Harbour St*

1837

Return shewing the Measurement of Ashler Blocks and Dressed Coping from *3000*
to *22 1/2* supplied by *Wm. Murray*

FROM DALKEY QUARRIES.

FROM GLASSTOOLE QUARRY.

ASHLER.

DRESSED COPING.

ASHLER.

DRESSED COPING.

No. of Stone	Description	Dimensions			Contents	No. of Stone	Description	Dimensions			Contents	No. of Stone	Description	Dimensions			Contents
		L	B	T				L	B	T				L	B	T	
379	B	4.5	1.5	1.5	250												
380	B	5.0	1.5	1.5	250												
1	B	4.2	1.5	1.5	250												
2	B	5.5	1.5	1.5	250												
3	B	4.7	1.5	1.5	270												
4	B	6.0	1.5	1.5	300												
5	B	5.9	1.5	1.5	250												
6	B	6.1	1.5	1.5	300												
7	B	5.6	1.5	1.5	250												
8	B	5.6	1.5	1.5	250												
9	B	7.0	1.5	1.5	350												
579	B	5.5	1.5	1.5	250												
3	B	5.3	1.5	1.5	250												
13	B	4.5	1.5	1.5	250												

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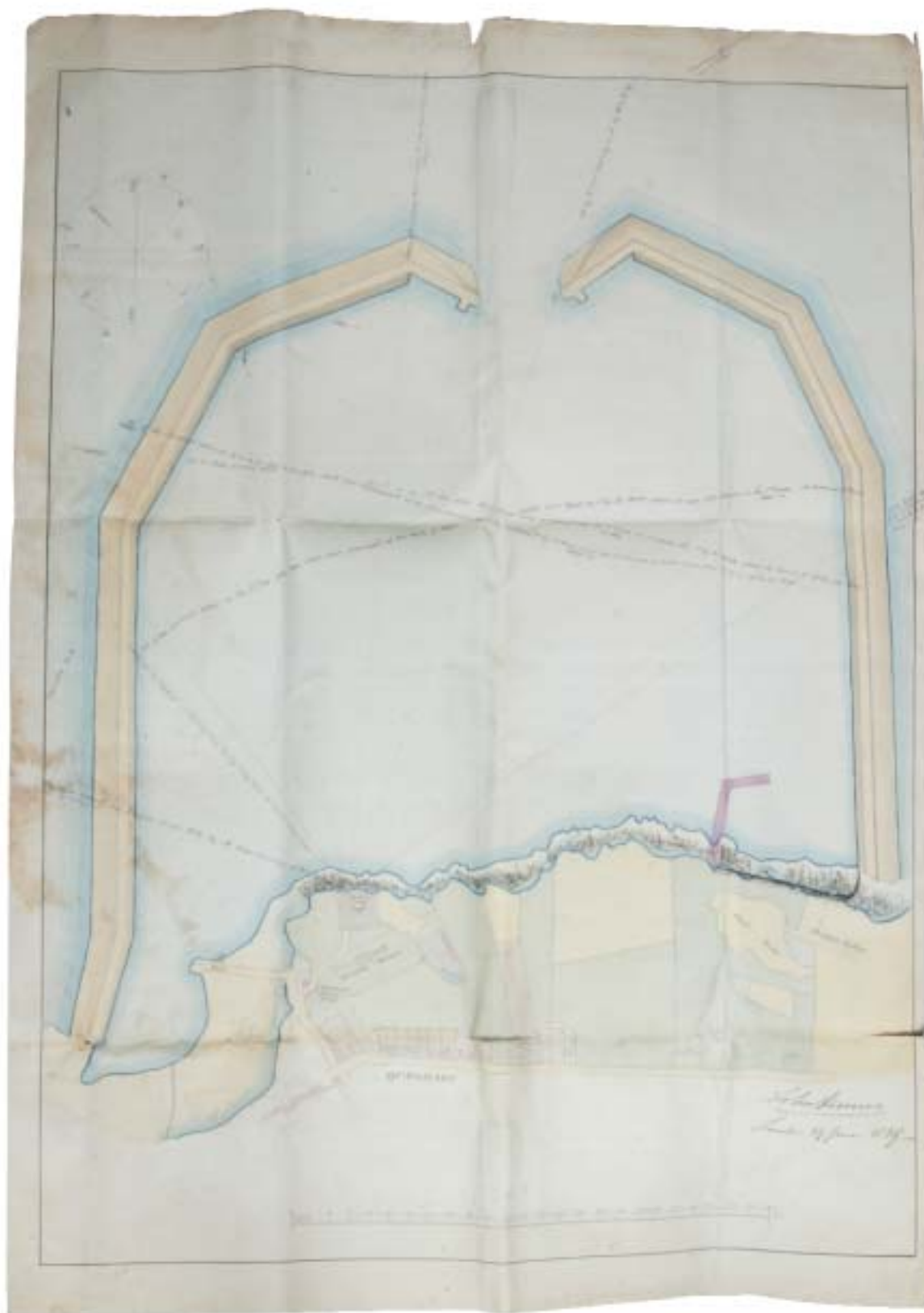
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Extract from document recording the best pieces of cut stone from the quarries in Dalkey and Glashule that were used to finish off the piers. Every one of these stones was measured in three dimensions and weighed.

(source: National Archives)



John Rennie Junior's plan of 1829, in which, like his father's plan of 1817, he envisaged and argued for a narrower Harbour mouth and different pier ends to those finally built. The pier drawn in red on the map was never built.

(source: National Archives)

Asylum Harbour

by Gerard Fanning

dedicated to the workers who built Dun Laoghaire Harbour

When I hauled myself up on our roof
To settle a silver- speared cowl,
Your arms and my arms aligned
With Pigeon House, Baily and Kish.

And as for that refuge, I recall
A funicular with its mercury tilt,
Ribbons of brine on a tattered hull,
Stone men singing shanty songs.

And if their wagons of Dalkey stone
Are all preserved in this box of light,
The sonar of dying ships
The sirens in faded livery
Are in every block that groans and strains
As foghorns bow to memory.

Gerard Fanning was born in Dublin in 1952. He is a graduate of UCD. His first collection "Easter Snow", published in 1992, was described by Poetry Ireland Review as "outstanding". It won the Brendan Behan Award and the Rooney Prize for Irish literature. His second collection "Working for the Government" was published in 1999. He lives in Blackrock.