



DURHAM
In Time

Seaham Harbour – its history and development - Timeline

by Jane Hatcher

- 1778** Birth of Charles William, son of Robert Stewart, from 1816 1st Marquess of Londonderry, of Mount Stewart, County Down
- 1817** Sir Ralph Noel of Seaham Hall began to contemplate the construction of a harbour for shipping coal from around the Dalden area
- 1819** On 3rd April, Charles William, Lord Stewart, married (as his 2nd wife) Lady Frances Anne Vane-Tempest, heiress to extensive properties and coal mines in County Durham. As was then the custom for husbands, he took over her estates
- 1821** Charles Stewart purchased the extensive estate based on Seaham Hall from the Milbanke family
- 1822** Charles Stewart became 3rd Marquess of Londonderry on the death of his half-brother, who had only briefly been the 2nd Marquess
- 1823** The 3rd Marquess of Londonderry was granted the additional titles of Earl Vane and Viscount Seaham
- 1828** Work began in September to create an artificial harbour by enlarging some of the coastal inlets around Dalden and erecting piers to shelter the area from the sea. Lord Londonderry had, with his agent and viewer John Buddle, taken expert advice from leading civil engineers Thomas Telford and John Rennie. The original dock was planned by William Chapman. Designs for the adjacent town were





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drawn up by leading Newcastle architect John Dobson. The new settlement was called Dalden Ness

1831 Coal from Londonderry's Rainton Pit further inland in County Durham was brought in on his own railway and loaded onto a new collier "Lord Seaham". On 25th July this vessel became the first to sail from the new dock

1843 Dalden Ness was renamed Seaham Harbour

1843 In November, Seaham Harbour was granted a market

1845 The dock area was enlarged due to increasing demand

1854 The 3rd Marquess died. Lady Frances Anne took over responsibility for their joint estates and business enterprises

1855 The loans taken out to fund construction of Seaham Harbour were paid off

1856 The 1st edition of the 6" Ordnance Survey map shows the North Dock and Outer Harbour, and the South Dock and Dry Harbour

1880 A mine disaster claimed 164 lives

1898 The 2nd edition of the 6" Ordnance Survey map shows the dock area the same as in 1856, but the town has grown considerably

1905 The dock was again enlarged





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1914 Seaham Harbour's population had risen to over 15,000

1922 The 3rd edition of the 6" Ordnance Survey map shows the South Dock extended into the Dry Harbour, and the Outer Harbour considerably extended. The town has been considerably extended southwards towards Dawdon

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