

## SOME HISTORY OF THE COASTWISE LIGHTS OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE

### PART II

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*Read 27 October, 1945.*

**B**EFORE we leave the Mersey estuary, a word or two about the lightships may not be out of place.

The earliest reference that I have found to a lightship per se, is the resolution passed by the Liverpool Council in 1759, to fix a vessel with two lights at the N.E. spit of the Hoyle Bank, "which will tend greatly to the preservation of lives and property, and hope it may induce our captains and masters to inform themselves how to bring a vessel into the Hoyle Lake, without, as was formerly the case, trusting to the chance of meeting a pilot."

Twenty years earlier (1738), there is a resolution of the Corporation "that an addition be made to the present dock, or basin, for light ships to lie in, whilst refitting . . ." but this I take to mean ships which had discharged their cargo, and were "light."

By 1811, the Mersey was beginning to be used by ships, in preference to the Hoyle Lake, and the mariners bringing ships into the port after dark had to rely on five lighthouses, viz. Pt. Lynas, Upper and Lower Hoylelake, Leasowe, and Bidston. Some of the leading shipowners of Liverpool petitioned the Dock Committee to replace the North West Buoy by a lightship, as there were as yet no lighted buoys. The Dock Committee, having an act (53 George III) which empowered them to place a lightship on the N.W. station, and levy dues for its cost and maintenance, on 13 Sept. 1813 purchased a Dutch Galliot for £525, and renamed her *Good Intent*. The original water colour drawing, reproduced on the opposite page, was in Capt. F. W. Mace's room at the Dock Board Building, but was destroyed when that building was damaged during the war. Mr. J. Colin MacIver reproduced it in his article, "Lightship Changes in Liverpool Bay," which

appeared in No. 3, Vol. V of *Mersey*, and it is by his kind permission that it is now reproduced. She was 78 tons burden, and was fitted with a sperm oil lantern visible from every direction. Her hull was black, with "Liverpool N.W." in white letters on her sides, with a white strake. The following Notices to Mariners are of interest.

*Liverpool Mercury, 12th November, 1813.*

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Floating light at the entrance to the harbour of Liverpool, established by Authority of Parliament.

The Trustees of the Liverpool Docks give Notice that a Floating Light is preparing to be moored at the N.W. Spit of East Hoyle Sand Bank, in the entrance into the Port of Liverpool. Its bearing will be by compass. The present N.W. Buoy, S.E. one mile distant. The Landmarks on Hilbre Island in one bearing S.  $\frac{1}{4}$  E. five miles distant. The Mockbeggar and Bidston Light, a little open to the Southward, bearing S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  E.

The Light will be RED, to distinguish it from all the Lights upon the Shore, and will be exhibited in a Lantern, hoisted at the main masthead of the vessel, and will be lighted for the first time on Wednesday, the first of December next, and will be continued to be for the future from Sunset to Sunrise.

*By Order.*

JOHN FOSTER, *Secretary, etc.*

*Dock Office, Liverpool, October 20th, 1813.*

N.B. In the daytime from Sunrise to Sunset a Blue Flag with the letters N.W. in white, will be hoisted at the main masthead, and in thick and foggy weather, either by night or day, a bell will be kept constantly ringing to prevent vessels running foul of the Lightvessel.

*Liverpool Mercury, 9th September, 1814.*

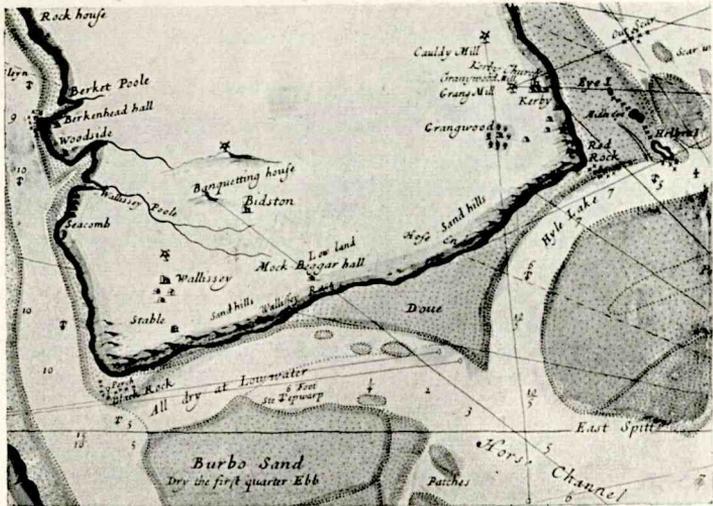
NOTICE TO MARINERS

Floating Light at the entrance of the Harbour of Liverpool.

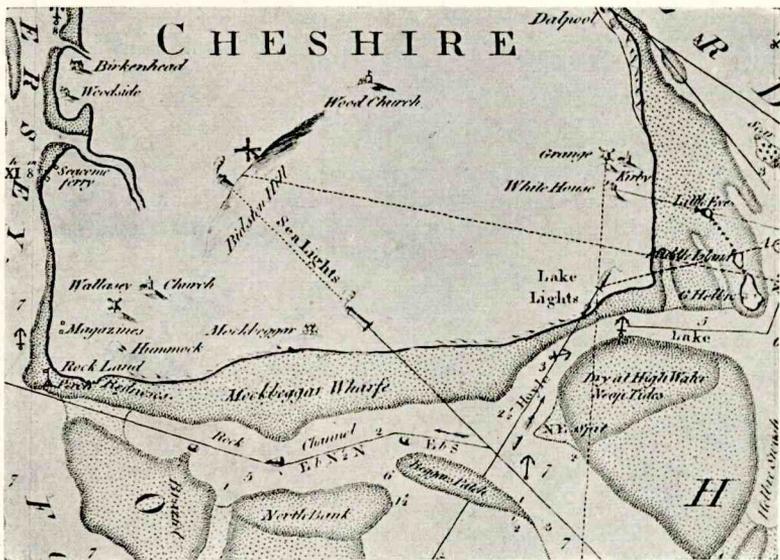
The Trustees of the Liverpool Docks give Notice that the RED light now exhibited on the vessel moored at the North West of East Hoyle Sand Bank in the entrance into the Port of Liverpool will be discontinued upon the night of Saturday the 1st of October next, and in lieu of it a WHITE light will be exhibited from each of the Three Masts so as to give a triangular appearance and thereby render the Floating Light distinguishable from the Lights upon the shore.

*By Order.*

JOHN FOSTER, *Secretary.*

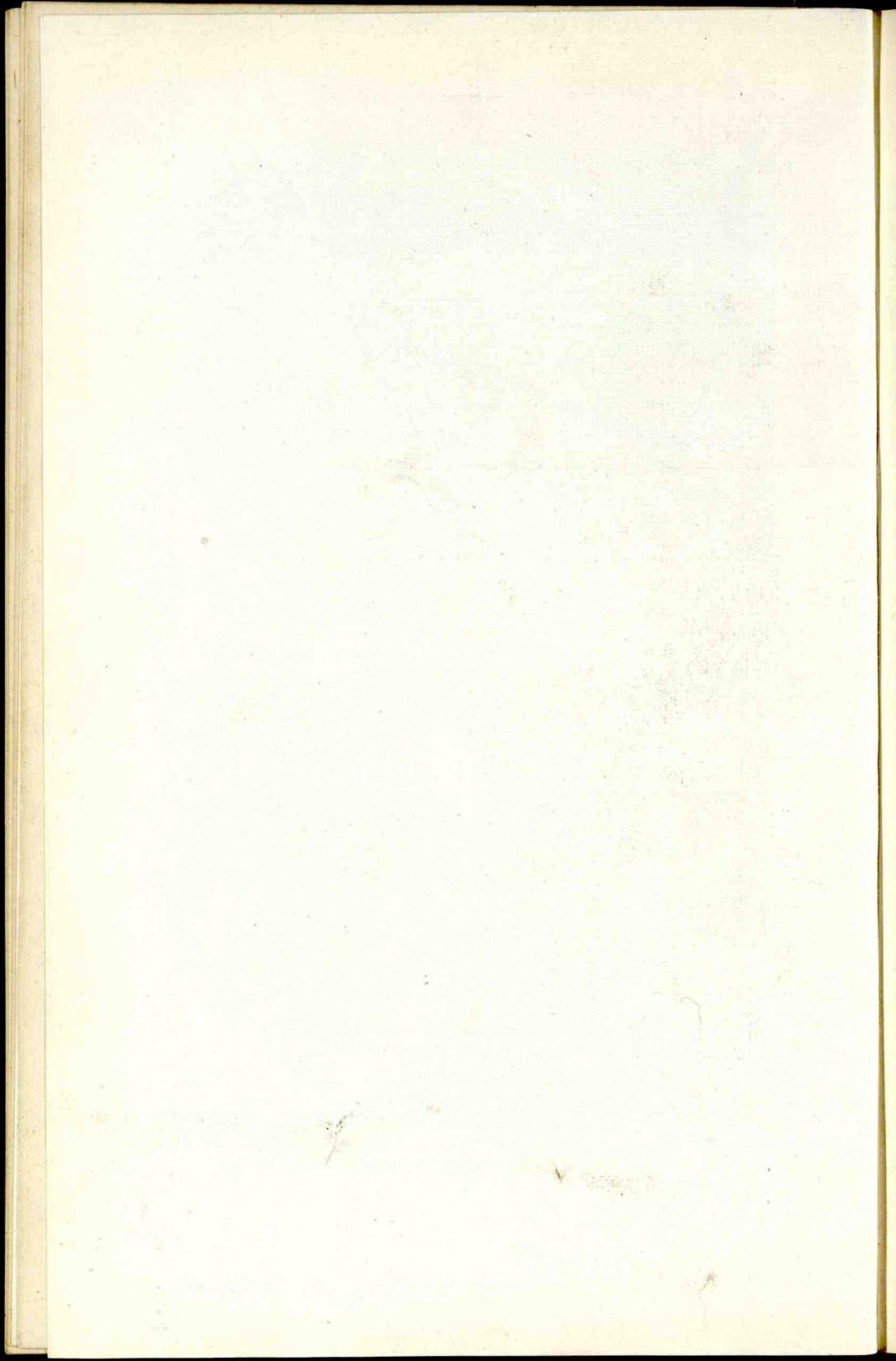


FROM COLLINS' CHART, 1689



FROM BURDETT'S CHART, 1771

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Another sidelight on the N.W. Ship, is to be gathered from an advertisement from the same paper, of March 15, 1819.

*Liverpool, March 4th, 1819*

One hundred Pounds Reward.

A Reward of One Hundred Pounds will be paid at the Dock Office, to any person who shall recover the ANCHORS and CHAIN CABLES belonging to the Floating Lightvessel from which she parted on the 16th ult., and a proportional sum will be allowed for the recovery of any part of the same property: such rewards to be paid upon the delivery of the property at the Crane, at the end of Nos. 2-3 Graving Docks. Any information respecting the place where the said anchors and cables were parted with, may be had by application to the Harbour Master, or the Master on board the Floating Lightvessel.

It has already been mentioned that the wooden perch, on the Perch, or Black Rock, was many times during its existence carried away, either by the action of the wind and waves, or rammed by some ship, as in 1821, when Pilot Boat No. 9, the *Irlam*, came into violent contact with it. Even when it was decided to erect a lighthouse at this spot, many years elapsed before the work was begun. In the *Liverpool Mercury* of 13 October, 1826, appears this notice.

TO MARINERS.

*Dock Office, Liverpool, October 7th, 1826.*

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that from and after 13th October, instant, a FLOATING LIGHT will be exhibited during the winter months, or until the new Lighthouse shall be completed on the East side of the Rock Perch, at the entrance to the River Mersey.

The following will be the bearings of the Light by which a clear channel will be found on both sides of the vessel viz:—

The Upper Bootle Mark its own breadth open to the Southward of the Bridge, and Taylor's Mill its own breadth open to the westward of St. Paul's Church.

*By Order of the Dock Committee.*

*(signed)* WILLIAM FOSTER, *Secretary.*

*Liverpool Mercury, 4th May, 1827.*

Harbour Master's Office, 2nd May, 1827.

NOTICE TO MARINERS. On the 17th inst., the FLOATING LIGHT situated off Rock Perch will be taken away.

*(signed)* JOHN ASKEW.

A Notice to Mariners (*Liverpool Mercury*, 21st September, 1827), states that the FLOATING LIGHT will come into operation again on the 1st October. It was evidently not considered necessary during the summer months, but was again placed on the station on October 1st, 1827. What happened during the subsequent winters until March, 1830, when the light was first exhibited from the lighthouse is not known.

The *Good Intent* was offered for sale in March 1835, and the notice stated that she had lately been used as a floating light vessel. In 1817 the *Milo* was built which succeeded her. She was a Liverpool built ship, and was sold in 1841. She was followed by the *Comet*, in 1820. The next was the *North Star*, in 1834, followed in 1835 by the *Meteor*, of 142 tons. The last named was used as a wreck marking ship later, and was only broken up in 1916. In the great storm of 1839, it was she that, when her moorings parted, left the N.W. station, whereupon her crew hoisted her sails, and brought her safely into the Mersey. Capt. Denham was Marine Surveyor at the time, and he tells how he dispatched Mr. Henderson, Master of the duplicate Formby vessel to Crosby, to find how the Formby vessel had fared. He returned to the Pierhead, and on his way to the Tug Office saw the N.W. Ship rounding the Rock under her own sails.

In 1842 the *Prince*, the first iron lightvessel ever built in this country, was built by Laird Bros. of Birkenhead, of Low Moor iron. In 1896 she was converted into a wreck marking vessel. She was sold in 1926 to a Widnes firm of shipbreakers, and used as a barge. The *Tobin*, 200 tons, built by Vernons of Liverpool in 1850, measured 98 ft. × 21 ft. × 11 ft. 6 in. She was on the station in 1860. The *Comet*, apparently the second of that name, was built of iron by Potter & Co. in 1866. The *Prince*, the second of this name, was built by R. & J. Evans of Birkenhead in 1870. In 1873 two more iron ships, the *Orion* and the *Sirius*, were built by Potter & Hodgkinson. In 1915 the *Orion* was converted into a wreck marking vessel. In 1879, R. & J. Evans built the *Planet*, and in 1885 the *Star*, which was the last "manned" ship. In 1912, the *Alarm* was built by Hawthorne & Co. of Leith; her plates below the sheer strake are iron, the remainder steel. The *Alarm* and *Comet* are only suitable for their own stations, viz. the Bar and Crosby respectively; the other ships

can be adapted for any station. In 1890 the hull of the N.W. Ship was painted red. On 22 November 1927, the N.W. Lightship was withdrawn, and replaced by a Bell Boat Beacon, 40 ft. long, with 16 ft. 9 in. beam. She carries on the after part of the deck a belfry housing a 5 cwt. bell. This bell was cast about 1830, for use as the small bell at New Brighton Lighthouse ; it is sounded by the motion of the boat. She and several others of the Bell Boat Beacons were built from the designs of Mr. J. Colin MacIver.

The position of the Bar was first marked by a light vessel in 1873. Before that a large Pillar buoy with a bell on top was moored in this position. In 1923, the hull was painted red, with BAR in white letters on the side.

The Formby station was established, and the light first exhibited, on 1 August 1834, and it is said that the *Milo* was the first ship. The character was a single fixed red light, which was changed to white in 1835. In 1923 the hull was painted red, with FORMBY on the sides in white letters : she had two masts with a red ball below the lantern on the foremast.

The Crosby station was established in 1840, with a single fixed white light. The hull was in 1923 painted red with CROSBY on the sides in white letters. One might imagine that life on a lightship would be somewhat monotonous and lacking in interest, but there is plenty of excitement at times. On 10 March, 1939, about midday, when the *Comet* was on the station, she broke adrift and headed for the shore north of Crosby. She let go her emergency anchors, which held her about quarter of a mile from the shore. The New Brighton lifeboat went to her assistance, and later she was safely towed into dock, and the *Sirius* was towed out by the Dock Board tender, and moored on the station. The fact that this same vessel (the *Comet*) was sunk three times on the Crosby station, viz. in 1895, 1898, and 1909, and the *Planet* on the Formby station by the *Greenbriar* in 1921, shows that the men on these ships, on occasions at least, have as much excitement as they want. It may be of interest to state here that the *Greenbriar* had been, in the 1914-1918 war, the famous German raider, *Moewe*.

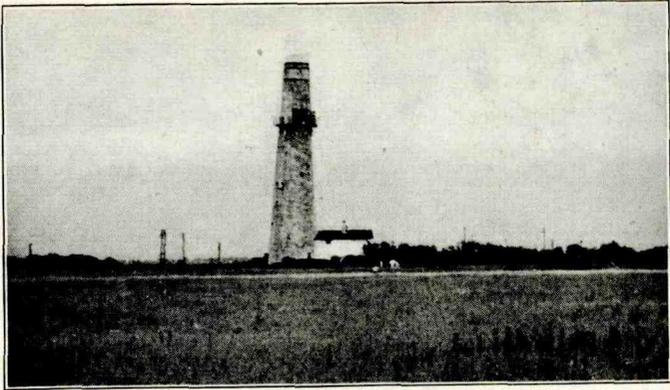
The Port of Preston extends along the coast, from the North West Mark on Formby Point, to a point just south of the Central

Pier at Blackpool. The seaward or western limit is the Nelson Buoy. Baines, in his *History and Gazetteer of Lancashire*, says that Preston has ranked amongst the ports of Lancashire since the first dawn of commerce in these parts.

In 1806, an act of Parliament was passed for improving the navigation of the Ribble, and for levying certain rates, etc. The original proposal was for 14 cone buoys to be supplied, at a cost of £579 2s. 4d., but for thirty years little was done except fixing a few buoys at the entrance to the channel, erecting a perch about 10 ft. high, and setting up a pole near the mill at Lytham, upon which occasionally an oil lamp was hoisted. To quote Edward Baines once more, he says, writing in 1825: "Much unnecessary danger has arisen to vessels navigating the coast, for want of a lighthouse, and some distant marks at the entrance to the Ribble, by which navigators could instantly distinguish between this estuary and that of the Mersey. It is not uncommon for ships which have not taken a pilot on board off Ormes Head, to overshoot the Mersey when the wind blows fresh from the south, and sail by mistake up the Ribble. These mistakes are not to be wondered at when it is known that there is not any chart of the Irish Channel with the least pretensions to accuracy. It is true that the Board of Ordnance is making a Survey, not only of this, but of other parts of England; but though the matter has been in hand nearly thirty years, it has not reached Lancashire yet, at least the result of the Surveyor's labours here is not published."

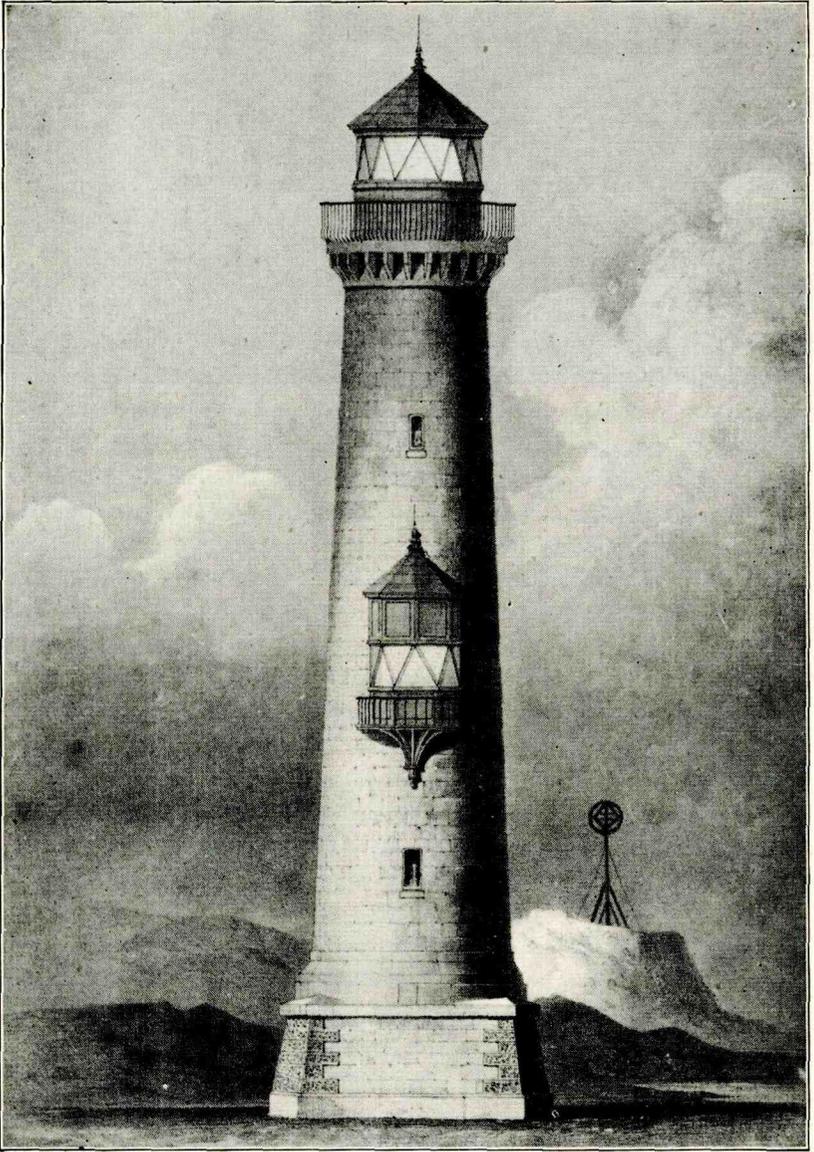
The first Lytham Lighthouse, situated on a stanner (that is, a bank of gravel, shingle or pebbles, piled up by the action of the wind and tide at or above high water mark), three miles below Lytham, was built in 1847, to the design of Stevenson and Sons. The foundation stone was laid by Peter Haydock, Chairman of the Ribble Navigation Co., on 13 May, 1847. The stone tower contained two lights, the upper white, and the lower red, which were visible for about eight miles. The light was first shown on 1 February, 1848.

By 1862, the beach had been partially washed away, and the building undermined by tidal water, and in spite of every effort to save it, it collapsed in a gale on 21-22 January, 1863. The light and all movable fittings had been removed, prior to the collapse.



FORMBY LIGHTHOUSE, 1940

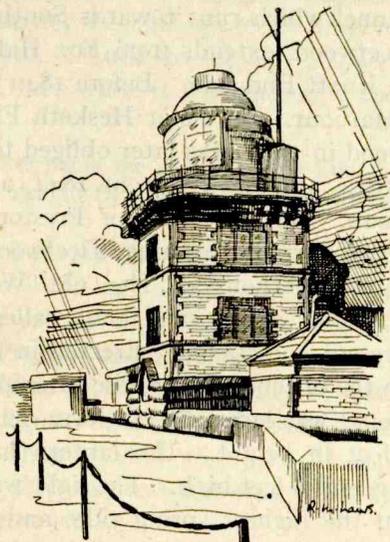
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THE RIBBLE LIGHTHOUSE

[To face page 165.]

An application was now made to Trinity House, to replace the light with a lighted buoy in the channel, or to rebuild, but in vain. However, in 1864, Trinity House selected a site, some 423 yards further inland than that occupied by the old lighthouse, and a new one was erected. Its light was first shown on 1 January, 1865. It was an intermittent light (three-and-a-half minutes light, and half minute dark), lit by gas. The light continued in use till 1890, when it was superseded by two lighted buoys in the channel. The building was demolished early in the present century.



NORTH WALL LIGHTHOUSE. 1927.

In 1906, a screw pile lighthouse was erected on the north wall of the river at a point twelve miles down. This is an unwatched light.

There are several buoys, that also mark the channel, or warn ships of the dangerous banks along this coast.

Nelson Buoy marks the extreme limit of the Port of Preston, and acts as a signpost to ships entering the Ribble. Placed in position in 1890, it is a bell boat buoy. Originally the bell was operated by the action of the waves, but in 1931, it was fitted with an apparatus worked by compressed carbon-di-oxide, contained in steel cylinders, which rings the bell at intervals of thirty

seconds. The reason for this replacement was that a bell rung by wave action, was of course, silent in calm foggy weather. The Gut Gas Buoy, the Bar Buoy, and until about 1939 the Ansdell Buoy, marked the entrance to the Ribble, the navigable channel of which is shown by Salter's Buoy, the lighthouse, various perches, and lamps on poles up to the Naze. At this point stands Freckleton, which is classed by Baines in 1825, with Poulton and Lytham as Preston's dependant ports, but times have changed. The perches continue up to Preston Dock. The Bulls Run Buoy marks the south point of the Horse Bank, and the mouth of the channel which runs towards Southport Pier.

The Port of Fleetwood, extends from Fox Hall, Blackpool, to Fluke Hall on the Knott End side. Before 1840 this estuary was known as Wyre Harbour. Sir Peter Hesketh Fleetwood, Bart., founder of Fleetwood in 1836, was later obliged to sell his estates in Southport in 1842, and the Fylde in 1844, and died a comparatively poor man. He was M.P. for Preston from 1832 till 1847. There are two ports in this area, Fleetwood, and Poulton-le-Fylde, and three lighthouses. The old Wyre Lighthouse stood on the N.E. elbow of the sand bank called North Wharf, near where the present one stands. Erected in 1840, it was the first to be built on the Mitchell Screw Pile principle in the United Kingdom. The house was hexagonal in form, 22 feet from angle to angle, and 9 feet in height. The lantern had twelve sides 10 feet in diameter, and 8 feet high. The light was raised 31 feet above the level of the highest spring tide, and 44½ feet above that of high tide. It had a fixed white light with a visibility of eight miles. It met with an unusual accident on 19 February, 1870. The schooner *Elizabeth and Jane*, of Preston, inward bound for Fleetwood during a dead calm, drifted into the piles of the lighthouse (her anchor having failed to hold), and lifted the body of the lighthouse on to her forecastle, greatly to the alarm of the two keepers. No one was hurt, but the vessel was badly damaged, and was with difficulty towed into Fleetwood, with the lighthouse still aboard. A second lighthouse, of the same type, was erected near the site of the first: it has a fixed white light, visible for ten miles. At Fleetwood one is surprised to come across a lighthouse at the bus terminus in one of the principal streets in the centre of the town. It is a stone tower about 80

feet high, and shows a fixed white light, visible for thirteen miles. There is yet another stone tower, but not so lofty, 850 feet away, close to high water mark. It also exhibits a fixed white light, visible for nine miles: both were erected in 1841. Poulton-le-Fylde, which was supplanted as a port by Fleetwood, has on the stone pier a stone tower, 50 feet high. It was erected in 1851, and used to show one fixed white light, visible for eight miles, but is not used now.

"Time honoured Lancaster" was no doubt a port even before the Roman era. In Elizabeth's reign, with the rise of England's sea power, Lancaster became quite an important place again. The town's motto, "Luck to Loyne", shows the importance attached to the river when it was chosen. Spenser alludes to it thus. . . .

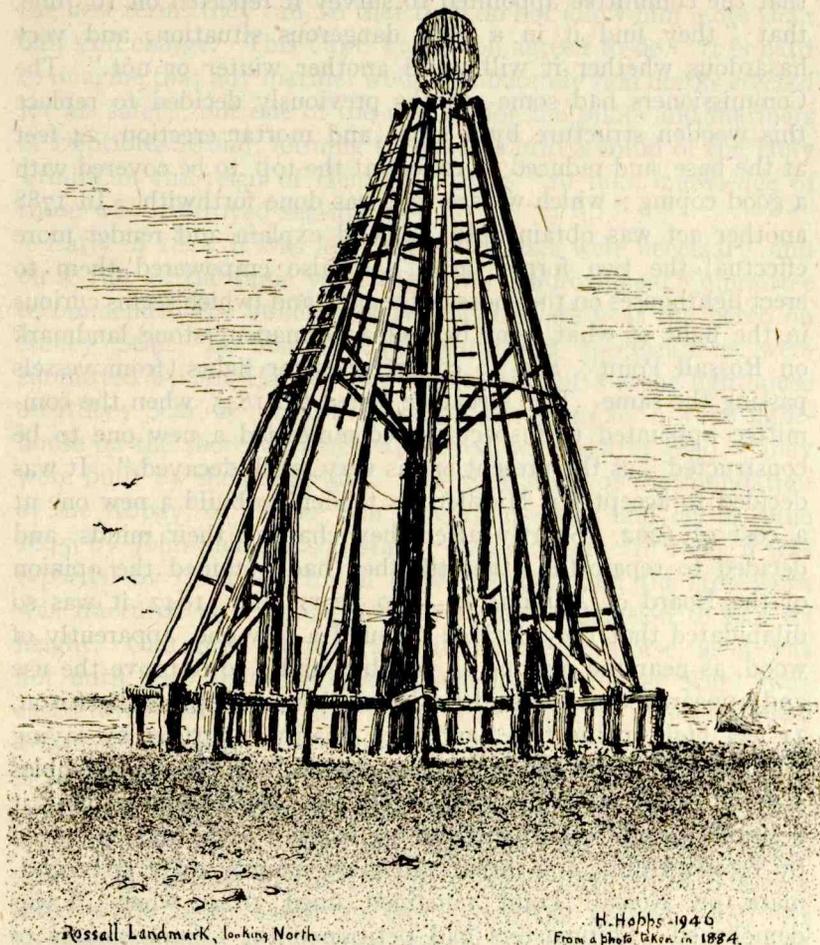
"After came the stony shallow Lone,  
Which to Old Lancaster, its name doth lend."

When Charles I levied the Ship Money in 1636, the county of Lancaster had to build and equip one ship, of 400 tons, manned by 160 men, the estimated cost being £1000. Lancaster's share was £30, while Preston and Liverpool were only assessed at £25. As a port it suffered from the difficulty of navigating the Lune, due to accumulation of sand, with constant changes in the position of the channel, and also (like Liverpool and Preston) the difficulty of ship masters knowing when they were opposite the mouth of the river.

In 1721 a town's meeting was called by a number of the leading shipowners and other residents, and a petition was presented to the Rt. Worshipful the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Bailiffs, that a large buoy or perch should be set or fixed at some proper place, about the "Shoulder of Loyne," which was "to direct all ships inwards or outwards to the depth of the channel, and to avoid (as may sometimes happen) vessels from running on the shallows, from whence they cannot be gotten without some trouble or damage." The petitioners offered to provide by subscription for its maintainance. The subscription list was open from 1721 until 1750. In 1734 it had to be augmented, and even then the revenue was not sufficient. The buoy was moored, on the edge of Bernard's Wharf Bank, where many vessels had been

lost. A buoy is still moored near this spot, and other buoys mark the course of the channel to Glasson. Buoys and perches mark the training walls at high water of the winding river from Glasson to Lancaster. Several of these buoys, which were built of wood, some more than one hundred years ago, are still in use.

Till 1739 Lancaster was considered for Customs Duties as a "Creek of Chester," but in this year the Court of Exchequer appointed a Commission, and ten years later (1749) the Port Commissioners were constituted by act of Parliament. Among the powers conferred upon them by this act were the placing of buoys at the entrance to the river, and the right to levy duties on vessels using the port between Lancaster Bridge and the Perch at Cockersand Abbey, for twenty-one years. The Custom House on the Quay at Lancaster was built in 1764, and was used by the Port Commissioners as their office for many years. Early in this recent war they moved up into the town for convenience. I am told that it was a Custom House and a store for bonded goods in the old days, and that merchants and seamen of all ranks collected there for business. Commissioners are still elected triennially by shipowners, with the Mayor *ex officio*, under this act. At a meeting of the Commissioners on 12 June, 1766, a report was made by the gentlemen appointed to survey Rossall Point, as in the Commissioners' opinion a landmark erected there would answer all the purposes intended by a perch at North Wharf. It was also resolved "that the gentlemen do enquire if the Poulton (now Morecambe) and Overton Merchants will contribute to the expense." By 10 July a reply had been received from "the Merchants in trade to Wyer, but none from Oversands." The proposed landmark was to be 60 feet high from the surface of the ground, 20 feet diameter at the base, and reduced in a regular manner to 6 feet at the top. At a meeting on 2 October, 1766, Mr. Richard Walker submitted a wooden model of it, and estimated it would cost £137, but the committee thought it could be erected at "a more moderate expense." Permission was granted by Fleetwood Hesketh, to erect it on his land at an annual rent of 2s. 6d., and a lease was ordered to be prepared forthwith. The work was completed by 17 June 1767. It only had a short life however, for on 19 May 1768, Richard Walker "was desired to replace it as soon as he conveniently



Rossall Landmark, looking North.

H. Hobbs - 1946  
From a photo taken in 1884.

can, in such a manner as he thinks will best answer the end intended." He lost no time, for he reported on 14 July that he had replaced it "in a sufficient manner for the intended purpose," and Henry Tindall was ordered to pay him the expenses attending it. Richard Walker, however, seems to have been so busy as he expresses it "diligently attending" to the building of the New Quay that the landmark was not fully completed by 3 August, so John Rowland was asked to get it made "secure and durable." By 1783 this wooden structure was again needing repairs so badly

that the committee appointed to survey it reported on 10 June, that "they find it in a very dangerous situation, and very hasardous whether it will stand another winter or not." The Commissioners had some months previously decided to replace this wooden structure by a stone and mortar erection, 24 feet at the base, and reduced to 12 feet at the top, to be covered with a good coping; which we are told was done forthwith. In 1788 another act was obtained to "amend explain and render more effectual the two former acts." It also empowered them to erect lighthouses on the shore of the bay, and (which seems curious in the light of what went before) a permanent stone landmark on Rossall Point; and to collect dues for lights, from vessels passing the same. This structure lasted till 1845, when the committee appointed to inspect it, recommended a new one to be constructed "as the present one is very much decayed." It was decided to accept Mr. Middleton's tender, to build a new one at a cost of £202. Shortly after they changed their minds, and decided to repair the other till they had obtained the opinion of the Board of Admiralty. Two years later, 1847, it was so dilapidated that they decided to build a new one, apparently of wood, as near the old one as possible, and "to improve the use and appearance of the said landmark, by erecting a ball of iron, 11 feet high on the top," and they qualify it further by saying "the appearance of the present Landmark from the sea resembles a vessel under all sail, and therefore the Commissioners think it desirable to add this distinguishing mark." This was approved by Trinity House, and carried out in due course. The last Landmark on Rossall Point remained until 1924, when it was demolished. Shipmasters had petitioned the Commissioners to have it removed, as it now served no useful purpose. To put it in repair would have cost a considerable sum, so Trinity House was approached, and agreed to its demolition. There is mention of a Perch at Cockersand in 1749, but it is not shown on Fearon and Eyes chart of 1735. This may be the "Out Perch," which in November 1769 was damaged by the brig *Hamilton*, owned by Capt. Parkinson, and which cost the sum of £10 6s. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. to make right. The minute states that "as it appears the damage was not done wilfully [the committee] desires Henry Tindall and John Rawlinson, will settle same with him [Capt. Parkinson] on

the best terms they can, so that they do not allow him more than half said charge. This Capt. Parkinson agreed to do. It is hard to imagine that any mariner would deliberately ram marks erected for his safety, but one of the reasons for the pilots and mariners of Deptford Strond, forming themselves into a Guild of the Holy Trinity in the reign of Henry VII, was "to take knowledge of those who destroyed sea-marks."

Early in 1844, it was felt that lighthouses were necessary, and on 1 July of the same year, the River Improvement Committee recommended the building of two lighthouses near the perch on Abbey Scar. In March 1845, plans and specifications were submitted by Mr. Hartley, for the erection of a stone lighthouse on Abbey Scar, at a cost of £1,020. The plans for a wood lighthouse on the shore were also approved, at a cost of £650. They were built by the Admiralty. The first stone of the foundation of the Abbey, or Plover Scar, Lighthouse was laid on 10 June 1845, by John Sharp, Esq., Mayor of Lancaster. In 1850, it was reported by the Inspector of Public Works, that the stonework was fractured in several places, from the foundation to half its height. One must suppose that it became no worse, as it was not until 1900 that the lower lighthouse on Plover Scar "was cased with stone". The Plover Scar Rock, is about midway between Cockersand and Sunderland Point. The present Keeper is Miss Janet Raby, members of whose family have held the post continuously since the light was first shown in 1847.

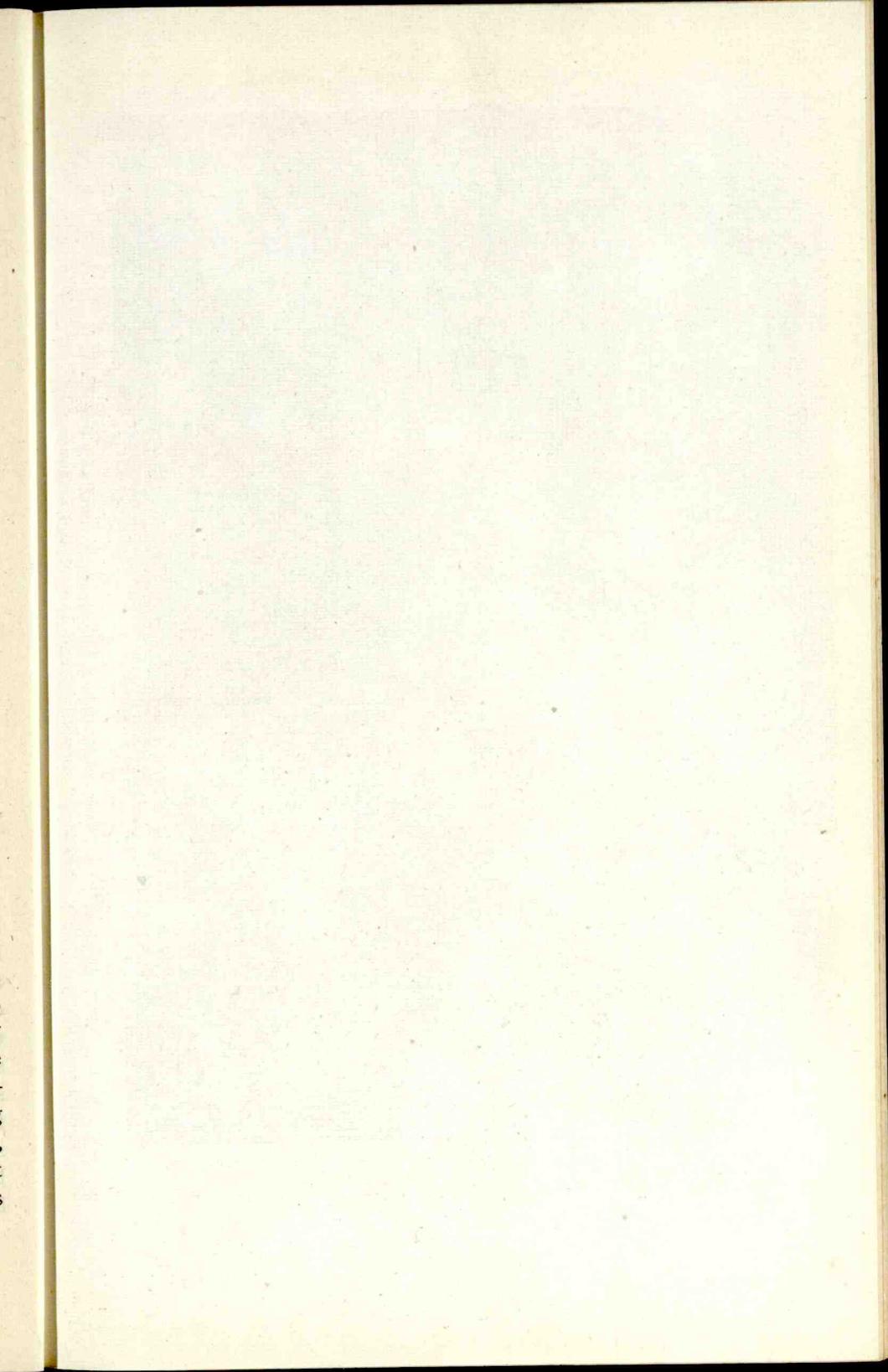
At Glasson Dock, which was made in 1873, there is a small structure attached to the Dockgate men's hut, which houses a fixed white light, about 12 feet above the ground level. At Sunderland Point at the other side of the estuary stands an old house, called "The Lookout," which is said to have been a light and watch house before Glasson Dock was made. On the ceiling of one of the rooms are still to be seen painted the points of the compass, where the indicator attached to a weather vane outside, showed the direction of the wind. It was from this house, rumour says, that a lookout was kept for the arrival of the ships from the West Indies, and other foreign ports. There are two lightships in Morecambe Bay. Lune Deeps was placed on the station by Trinity House in 1854. It originally showed one fixed red light, later altered to a white, flashing light. The other lightship

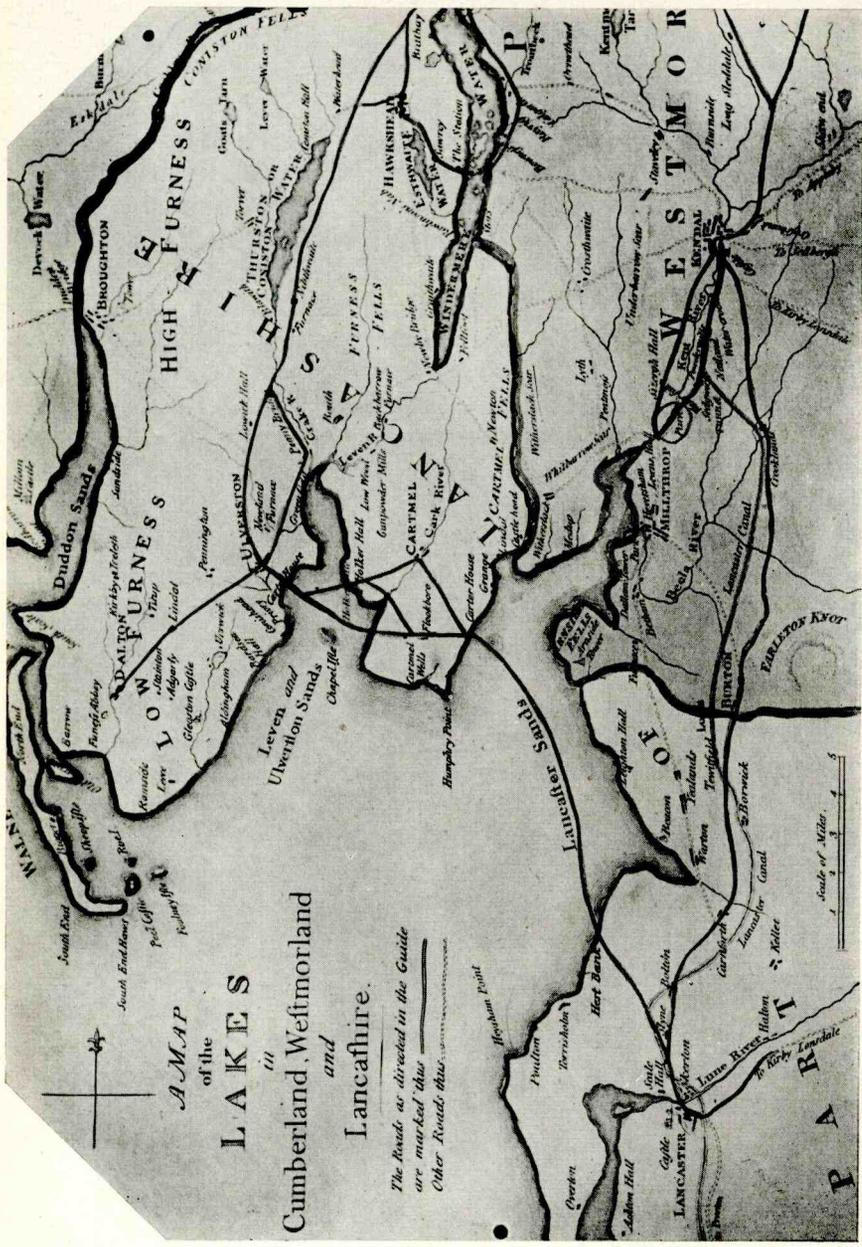
which has functioned since 1863, had one revolving light flashing every 30 seconds and visible for ten miles; now it is a group flashing white light, 2 flashes every 30 seconds.

Heysham was not a port till created by the Railways; the pier was erected about 1867. In 1889 a memorial was presented in conjunction with the Lancashire and Yorkshire, and London and North Western Railways, the Owners of the Port of Fleetwood, and the Midland Railway Co., to the Elder Brethren of Trinity House, asking for the substitution of a gas buoy carrying a bell, for the ordinary buoy on Danger Patch. This was done, and the cost shared by the ports of Fleetwood, Lancaster and Barrow. The buoys, perches, and various lights are reported on triennially, by the Commissioners, to Trinity House.

At Morecambe, which was previously known as Poulton-on-the-Sands, there is a small lighthouse, at the end of the western pier of the old stone jetty, which has a fixed red light visible for 2 miles; it stands about 30 feet high. The harbour was last used for traffic in 1904, and was then used by Wards, as a shipbreaking yard from 1905 to 1932. It was here that Lord Brassey's famous yacht, the *Sunbeam*, ended her days.

On Fearon and Eyes' Chart (1737) near the mouth of the River Keer, is shown what appears to be a conical mark built of stone, but the site is now covered by the slag heaps from the old Carnforth Iron works. There are traditions that the Romans used the Keer, and some three or four miles from the mouth is a farm called Dockacres, where a rectangular excavation has at some time been made, which is said to be a Roman Dock. The next creek we come to as we proceed along the coast is Quicksand Pool, and on the near side of the headland now known as Jenny Brown Point, just above high water mark, stands what looks like one of the Round Towers which are found in Ireland. But first a few words about Jenny Brown Point itself. Fearon and Eyes call this Silverdale Point, so that the other name must be of fairly recent origin. One would like to think that the name of some rustic beauty is here perpetuated, but—alas for romance—rumour (who we know is ever a lying jade), persists in asserting that this was the name given to an old steam engine or crane, which used to work (or not, as the case might be) in the adjacent quarry, when the scheme for reclaiming the foreshore at this



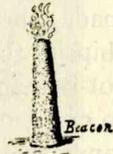


**A MAP**  
of the  
**LAKE DISTRICT**  
in  
**Cumberland, Westmorland**  
and  
**Lancashire.**

*The Roads as directed in the Guide  
are marked thus ————  
Other Roads thus ————*

PART OF MAP FROM WEST'S GUIDE (1802 EDITION)  
"BEACON" SHOWN BETWEEN WARTON AND LEIGHTON HALL

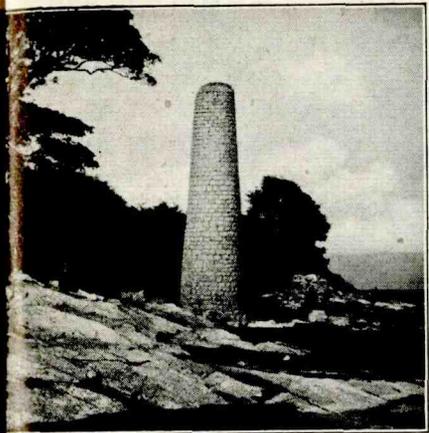
point was in progress, but this is a digression. The tower, which is built of the local limestone, is about 35 feet high, circular in section with a circumference at the base of about 20 feet, tapering to about 3 feet, hollow like a chimney, and open at the top. There is an opening on the ground level about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet by 2 feet on the landward side, and a similar opening on the opposite side has been built up. No one seems to know definitely what it was built for, but there are several theories. It is said to be the ventilation shaft of a mine, but there is no excavation under it, and no sign of any mine near it. I have seen it stated that it was the chimney of a lime kiln, but old lime kilns did not have chimneys. Another suggestion is that it was the chimney of a copper smelting furnace, but if so where is the slag which is always to be found in the vicinity? Whatever its use, it is very free from discoloration inside, and in fact shows no signs of having been used for any of these purposes. May I add another suggestion which I think has possibilities? Father West in 1796, published one of the earliest guides to the Lakes, complete with a map, though this I must confess is *not* absolutely accurate in all its details. He was also the author of *Antiquities of Furness*, and knew this part of the country very well. On his map of the Route across the Sands from Hest Bank to Ulverston, as far as one can judge, about a mile from the mouth of the River Keer (which is roughly the position of the structure we are considering) is shown a tower with flames and smoke issuing from its top, and the word BEACON. The question naturally arises why a beacon should be put in this position. I can suggest two reasons: first, it was a guide to ships bringing ore for the furnace on Leighton Beck, which is also shown on this same map. In the Beetham Repository it is stated that soon after the beginning of the eighteenth century, the wood which had been very plentiful in Furness had all been felled and converted into charcoal, so that the proprietors of the Iron Works in Furness, having purchased the "fall of Leighton Park," built this furnace on a "goit" drawn out of Leighton Beck, for smelting iron. The old buildings are there still, but converted to other uses, and there are quantities of slag near them. The ore was brought across the bay from



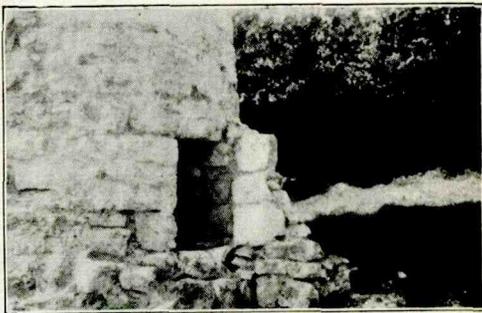
THE BEACON  
Enlarged from West's  
Map by Mr. H.  
Hopps

Stenton in Furness, and it was found by experience here that the turf, which was both very good and very cheap, "doth not only spare char coal, but makes better iron than char coal alone." It is stated that some of the ore was shipped to Arnside, but with the wind in certain quarters it would be very much easier and quicker for a ship to make Quicksand Pool. Till the railway was made in 1855, the sea used to flow up beyond Silverdale Station, as far as Troughbarrow, so that at that time there would be a big scour on the ebb, and on the 1736 chart Quicksand Pool is shown as a short straight channel out to deep water at high tide, much wider and deeper than at present. Also, Father West in describing what he calls "this curious and pleasing" ride across the sands from Hest Bank to Kents Bank, makes no mention of crossing the channels of either the Kent or the Keer, only this stream now known as Quicksand Pool. He calls it by its older name "Eau (pronounced Eea) or river of the sands". He describes the sands as seemingly immense in extent, continued on in a dead level. "But when the traveller reaches the side of the Eau . . . he there drops down a gentle descent, to the edge of a broad and seemingly impassable river, where the only remains he can perceive of the surrounding lands are the tops of the distant mountains." This description, though no doubt exaggerated, shows that before the railway embankment was made, there was a channel, at high tide, deep enough for the ships of those times. Lucas, in his *History of Warton*, says that it got its name from its being the part of the Sands most dangerous to cross, on account of quicksands. It was said that the quicksands on Ulverston Sands were caused, in some instances, by the schooners which used to take salt and grain to Milnthorpe, and the hematite ore to Backbarrow, settling on the sands for one or two tides. Has this theory any application to Quicksand Pool?

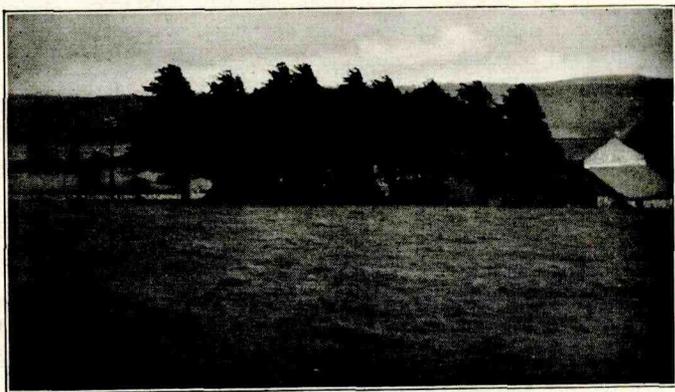
A second possible use for this strange erection was as a guide for those persons crossing the sands from Hest Bank to Silverdale, but they would hardly have been numerous enough, one would imagine, to make this necessary. I recently heard it said that when strangers were about to make the crossing from Hest Bank to Silverdale, they were warned to leave the Sands *when the nine yew trees are in a line*. At Slackwood Farm, which is within half



STONE TOWER AT JENNY BROWN  
POINT, SILVERDALE

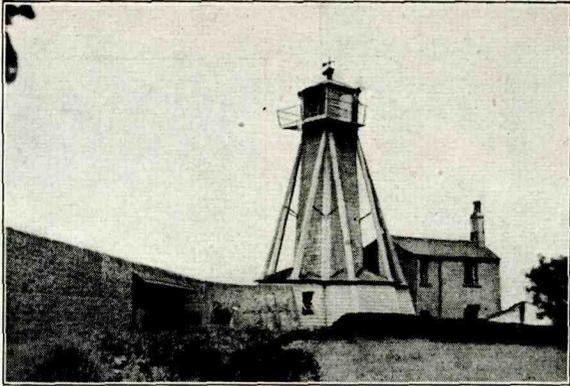


BASE OF TOWER AT JENNY BROWN POINT,  
SILVERDALE



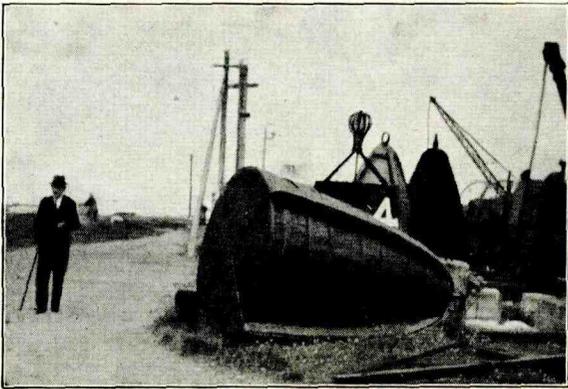
NINE YEW TREES IN A LINE AT SLACKWOOD FARM, SILVERDALE

[see page 174.]



INNER COCKERSAND LIGHTHOUSE

Was made on wheels so that it could be moved when  
channel altered; now stationary



OLD WOODEN BUOYS AT GLASSON DOCK

*[To face page 175.]*

a mile of the beacon, there stand nine old yew trees in a line pointing towards Hest Bank, but whether they were planted thus for that purpose is more than I can say ; there is still a rough cart track, however, from near the beacon to the bottom of the hill called Slackwood. The high land of Jenny Brown's Point would mask the beacon from a ship coming from Furness, until she was opposite the mouth of Quicksand Pool. If my conjecture is correct about the use of this building, I would suggest that it had a fireplace in which material to produce a smoke was burnt, and that it was only used during the hours of daylight. A sailing vessel would hardly attempt to make its way up an unbuoyed channel during darkness, but would anchor off, or beat about until daylight and high water made it possible.

About two miles further on from Quicksand Pool, the Lancashire boundary comes down to the coast, a little north of Silverdale Cove, and having continued out across the Sands in a westerly direction for about one and three-quarter miles, turns north across the Kent, to the old mouth of the River Winster where it flowed into the Kent before the present straight cut was made ; so Arnside, Sandside and Milnthorpe are not within the scope of this paper, being in Westmorland. Before the Furness Railway was made in 1857, all foreign produce consumed in the Furness district was brought entirely by sea. This fact, together with the export of iron ore, larch, fir, timber, sheep, cattle, slates, etc., constituted a considerable coasting trade, which meant that any place that could be reached by the small and shallow-draft craft of those times, was reckoned a port. Probably the reason why the channels to these were **not** defined by lighthouses, perches, etc., was that the owners of ships frequenting them did not want to have to pay the dues necessary for their upkeep ; moreover, as the channels are frequently changing their position, these marks would become a hindrance rather than a help. Even Piel Harbour was without a light till 1790. Ulverston certainly did want to become a port, for in 1795-6, a canal (designed by John Rennie, the eminent engineer), was cut from the eastern side of the town to the channel of the Leven, one and a quarter miles away at Hammerside Hill. But in spite of this, Edward Baines, writing in 1825, says : " It (Ulverston) is not now a sea-port, but a creek of Lancaster. There is a considerable coasting

trade." Father West's description of the inhabitants in 1819 is worth recording. "The wealthier inhabitants are polite, the tradesmen civil, and many of them respectable." Ulverston has one lighthouse, which is not a lighthouse. Standing 100 feet high on Hoad Hill, which is itself 435 feet above sea level, though some distance from the coast, it forms a landmark which is visible for many miles. This Barrow Memorial, built early in 1850, was opened on 15 May of the same year. It is built of wrought mountain limestone, in the form of the Eddystone Lighthouse. The upper chamber is reached by a flight of 112 steps. The diameter of this apartment is 19 feet, and is furnished with eight circular openings, which look out on the chief points of the compass: the interior of the lantern is 8 feet 4 inches, but has never shown a light. It cost £1,250 to build, and is a memorial to Sir John Barrow. He was born at Dragley Beck, near Ulverston, on 17 June 1764, and died in London on 23 November, 1848. He was an Eastern traveller, and Secretary to the Admiralty, from 1804 to 1845. He was the principal founder of the Royal Geographical Society in 1830, and spent much time in promoting Arctic discovery, including the ill-fated Franklin Expedition. His name is remembered in Barrow Point, Cape Barrow, etc.

Now we can turn our attention to that fine but shallow natural harbour, between Walney Island and the mainland. The town of Barrow was, in 1819, described as—"a small seaport . . . and a place to which invalids often repair to bathe in summer." But if Barrow has only come into the picture within the last hundred years, Piel Harbour was used before the Roman invasion. It has been said that the remains of towers, thought to be Roman Pharos, have been found on the island, but I have not been able to confirm this. When, as already stated, the Commissioners of the Port of Lancaster obtained leave of Parliament in 1788, to build lighthouses, they lost no time in instructing Mr. Stuart and Mr. G. Gregson to wait on Ulverston merchants, to confer with them *re* lights and light dues. The Commissioners also appointed a committee to survey and find a proper situation, on the south side of Walney Island, and to get plans, and obtain estimates, for building and completing a lighthouse.

Their choice was Hawes Point, as the "properest site," and in February, 1790, the committee produced plans, and reported that

they had decided on a site for the lighthouse, and also on a field belonging to the Rev. Geoffrey Hornby, as "a place proper for opening a quarry". The site for the lighthouse, twenty yards square, with the right to a road to it at all times, was rented from John Simpson and James Hunter, at an annual rent of ten shillings, "and the same John Simpson and James Hunter request a preference to be appointed to attend to the light, on the same terms as the Commissioners would give to any other person". This was agreed to, and Robert Dickinson was appointed to survey and measure all work at the lighthouse and dwelling-house, and the contract was let to Joshua Britton. On 27 May it was resolved that S. Gregson advertise three times in the Liverpool, and three times in the Whitehaven paper, that a lighthouse is erecting on Walney. The building which is of stone from Overton, near Lancaster, is an octagonal platform on a circular foundation 26 feet 6 inches in diameter, diminishing gradually through 57 feet to 14 feet. The lantern is reached by a winding inside staircase of 91 steps, and the total height of the building is about 68 feet. The original lamp and reflector was driven by clockwork on a vertical axle. At the base of the tower is a small dwelling house for the keeper and his family. It was completed by 25 November, and James Hunter and John Simpson were appointed to attend to the lighting, at a salary of £20 per annum.

On 1 December 1790, the light was first exhibited. It was probably a fixed light from an oil lamp, and was far from satisfactory, for on 1 June, the Commissioners were ordered to survey the lights from the sea, so the smack *Bee* was hired for the purpose. On 7 October 1791, Mr. R. Walker produced a model for improving the lighting, by making the reflectors and the lamps revolve round an axis, so that each point of the compass received the benefit of the light in turn. But the whole of the trouble apparently did not lie with the lamps, for on 15 November the keepers were reported for neglecting to light the lamps, by the Captain of *The Three Sisters*. They were reprimanded, and their reappointment made an annual affair. In 1797, collectors were appointed to bring in Walney Light dues, from Ulverston, Poulton, Milnthorp, Rampside, and Millom.

In 1803, there was a fire, which destroyed the lantern and reflectors. There were no more complaints till 1819, when the

lights were again thought to be insufficient. Stevenson, the Engineer to the Scotch and Isle of Man Lighthouses, was written to, and he arranged to visit Walney when on his annual tour to the Isle of Man. In July 1820, the Commissioners were disturbed by complaints being made to Lloyd's and Trinity House, by the Ulverston merchants, that the lights were insufficient. This is interesting as showing that at the time Ulverston was the port, not Barrow. The Commissioners at once took steps to prove that they had always been, and still were, desirous of making the lights as efficient as their means would allow, and stated that they would be happy to attend to any suggestions that the Corporation of Trinity House might be pleased to furnish. In October, Mr. James Murdock, a member of Stevenson's firm, visited Walney, to instruct the lighthouse keepers how to trim the lights properly, and to report to Mr. Stevenson the state of the lights and reflectors. Stevenson's estimate to make the light to conform to his ideas was £782 19s. 2d. The Commissioners had not got so much to spend, so they asked Mr. Swainson to procure three suitable lamps with metallic reflectors, and have them fitted. In February 1821, Stevenson wrote to say that he would procure lamps and reflectors, and recommended the Commissioners to send the keeper from Walney to Bell Rock, to get instruction in his duty. They replied that it was not convenient to send him as he had a family of young children, and not one old enough to take charge in his absence, and suggested that some suitable person should be sent to Walney to instruct him on the spot. By 9 October, Mr. Swainson was able to announce that the improvements were completed, and resulted in a very brilliant light, visible on Castle Hill, Lancaster, a distance of five leagues at least. In 1836 another visit was paid to Walney Island, by the Commissioners and Trustees. They found all in good order and well looked after by Joseph Geldart, who shortly before had applied for an increase of salary, and now received £40 per annum. He was instructed to keep the lights burning from sunset to sunrise. On 11 June 1851, the Commissioners made their triennial survey of the Walney Lights in style, this time in the *Duchess of Lancaster* Steam Packet, when they found everything in order. In 1909, acetylene was installed, and in 1937, it was increased from one flash every 60 seconds, to one flash

every 15 seconds ; the candle power was also increased to about 12,000.

The Pillar Light at Hawes Point was constructed in 1846, to direct vessels using the channel to and from Barrow. In 1911 it was reconstructed, and a year later acetylene was installed. The two lights are now, one revolving once a minute, and one fixed light visible for thirteen miles. As already stated the first keepers were John Simpson and James Hunter. In 1821, Joseph Geldart was appointed, and from that date till 1932, various members of the family held the post, till Mr. Frederick Swarbrick was appointed, assisted by his daughter, Miss Ella Swarbrick.

The present trend towards "mechanisation" is evident, even among these "sentinels of our coasts," and soon lighthouse keeping may be a thing of the past, but a certain amount of romance will still cling to the Bell Buoy, as long as Kipling is read, and in conclusion I should like to quote one verse of his poem "The Bell Buoy". It is describing its life and work compared with that of its brother, one of the peal of bells at the minster, a few miles inland..

I dip and I surge and I swing  
 In the rip of the racing tide.  
 By the gates of doom I sing,  
 On the horns of death I ride.  
 A ship-length overside,  
 Between the course and the sand,  
 Fretted and bound I bide  
 Peril wherof I cry.  
 Would I change with my brother a league inland?  
 (*Shoal! 'Ware Shoal!*) Not I!

I should like to again record my thanks to those whose names appear at the end of the first part of this paper, and also to add those of Messrs. F. G. Blair, G. M. Bland, H. Hopps, the late Mr. P. Kipling, and Mr. J. F. Smith, for much help most willingly given.

I also wish to take this opportunity of correcting a mistake in Part I of this paper, (*Transactions*, vol. xcvi, p. 90). I find that Canon Hume was acquainted with the original of the letter there quoted, and had seen it ; and further the date which he gives (1671) appears to be correct.

Mr. E. B. Royden has made the suggestion, with which I agree, that the rumour that the present Leasowe Lighthouse has been rebuilt originated in the paper, "A Littoral Survey of the Port of Liverpool by Edward Eyes," which was contributed to vol. xxii of these *Transactions* by Mr. Joseph Boulton, the Liverpool Surveyor. See p. 177 of that volume.

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