



WHITEHAVEN HARBOUR.

CP 31 MAY 1824

On Saturday last, previous to the ceremony of laying the first stone at the intended New Pier of this harbour, there was a meeting of the Trustees, when Mr. Peile was requested to place the first piece of masonry in its proper direction, and the Staff of the Cumberland Militia having mustered at the head of Duke Street, attended by an excellent band of music, a large assemblage of gentlemen and tradesmen, followed by the boys of the Marine School, proceeded to the spot from whence the new work is to commence. On this occasion an immense concourse of people, unprecedented, we believe, in Whitehaven, followed the procession. Having arrived at the appointed place, the Trustees, with the exception of Mr. Peile (who remained on the pier) descended by a temporary ladder, placed on the battlement of the New Quay, to a platform erected on the beach for their accommodation; and the crane having been adjusted, and the requisite preparations made, the signal was given, and the stone, with Mr. Peile upon it, was lowered down upon the beach, a distance of more than 30 feet; after which he was invested in marine habiliments. A short interval of time was occupied in fixing the stone in a proper position, which being accomplished, and a case with an appropriate inscription, deposited by the fair hands of a young lady, and containing a variety of coins, was secured under its foundation; when the Rev. A. Hudleston, A. M. pronounced an appropriate benediction in the following words:—

"May that Almighty Being, whom the winds and the seas obey, bless the undertaking in which we are at present engaged; and, through the care of his general and superintending providence, cause it to redound to the safety of our vessels, the extension and improvement of our trade, and to the general prosperity and happiness of the Town of Whitehaven and its neighbourhood."

To this solemn prayer, it is scarcely necessary to say, that *Amen* responded from every heart.

Upon the conclusion of this benediction, a discharge of cannon from the adjoining fort, and volleys fired by the regimental staff announced the termination of the ceremony, which during its progress was accompanied by music playing the best national airs. Upon the heights which immediately overlook the harbour, thousands of spectators clad the dangerous precipices, and prompted by a natural and laudable curiosity witnessed the commencement of a work, which in the lifetime of the youngest person living will not in all probability be paralleled again in this county—invasion Neptune's dominion by a bold and adventurous inroad, not hitherto attempted within the limits of the Solway Frith. The memorable day, on which this great undertaking was thus happily commenced, being the anniversary of the restoration of King Charles the Second, the children of the marine school were distinguished by small branches of oak in their hats. Every necessary arrangement having been previously made, every possible precaution taken to prevent accidents, and the most proper arrangement of the officers of police having been attended to, we are happy to say that the whole proceeding was marked by strict propriety, regularity, and decorum, and that no circumstance occurred to disturb or damp the happiness of those present. After the ceremony, the gentlemen proceeded to the Golden Lion, where the Cumberland Staff was dismissed by Captain Bennett, their commanding officer, and the party spent the evening with the greatest hilarity. John Harrison, Esq. in the chair. The numerous assemblage of work people who attended on this happy occasion were not forgotten.

Ten barrels of strong ale were given to the labourers, who were soon as happy as their betters could possibly be, and we rejoice to say that their harmony was not disturbed by any civil wars occasioned by the capricious government of that King of good fellows—Sir John Barleycorn.—We cannot dismiss this article without observing that every possible accommodation has been granted by the Earl of Ronalds, to facilitate the work, and that Mr. Peile (his Lordship's agent) has uniformly manifested the utmost anxiety and diligence in promoting the great object.—The inscription on the plate deposited below the foundation stone is as follows—

WHITEHAVEN HARBOUR.

NEW WEST PIER.

THE FIRST STONE LAID ON THE 29th MAY,

1824.

V GEO. IV.

And the names of the Trustees, engraved on the reverse of the plate, viz.

- 1 William, Earl of Lonsdale, K. G.
- 2 William, Lord Viscount Lowther.
- 3 Thomas Hartley, Esq.
- 4 Milham Hartley, Esq.
- 5 Joseph Bell, Esq.
- 6 Henry Birley, Esq.
- 7 John Littledale, Esq.
- 8 John Harrison, Esq.
- 9 Mr. Henry Jefferson.
- 10 Mr. Isaac Littledale.
- 11 Mr. John Brocklebank, Sen.
- 12 Mr. Peter Hodgson.
- 13 Mr. Joseph Robinson.
- 14 Mr. Joseph Watson.
- 15 Mr. Richard Barker.
- 16 Mr. William Bower.
- 17 Mr. Wilson Fisher.
- 18 Mr. Edward Johnston, Jun.
- 19 Mr. Thomas Manley.
- 20 Mr. William Miller.
- 21 Mr. John Peile.

This event, so interesting to the community of Whitehaven and its vicinity, was celebrated today, by a very numerous party of Gentlemen who dined together at the Black Lion—Milham Hartley, Esq. in the chair. It is unnecessary to say, that the entertainment provided on this festive occasion was of the choicest description, as it is well known that good dinners and excellent wines are always associated with the name of Mr. Jackson. After having drunk the health of our illustrious Sovereign, the worthy chairman rose and premised a very appropriate speech, by observing that

He was not an orator, and therefore would not detain them long, but as the undertaking which had occasioned their meeting together was one of great importance to the town and trade of Whitehaven, it was necessary for him to say a few words on the subject—particularly as it was one on which some diversity of opinion had been expressed. The necessity of an extended pier had been long felt, and had consequently engaged much of the attention of the Trustees. A Rennie and a Whitby were sent for, and these gentlemen were of opinion that it was necessary to extend the pier on the South West side of the Harbour so as to procure a greater depth of water for the convenience of the shipping. This plan was generally approved of by the Trustees, and the Committee, and he was happy to say, that he perfectly coincided with them. It was convinced that the undertaking was one of the greatest importance to the town and trade of Whitehaven. Upon a moderate calculation it would require six or seven years to complete the work; and as the operative mechanics who had to execute it, would have many a long and strong pull, he hoped that the present meeting would assist their endeavours by a long and strong pull also. He concluded by calling upon the meeting to drink success to the New West Pier, which was accordingly drunk with three times three.

Several other toasts were then drunk, and when our paper went to press, the party was in the midst of enjoyment. The band of the Cumberland Militia, assisted by the band of Mr. Powell's Company of Equestrians, (who are now here) attended on the occasion, and played several national and appropriate airs.