

Lancaster Civic Vision

Celebrating our Heritage – Enhancing our Environment – Shaping our Future

NEW QUAY

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Lancaster in the eighteenth century was a maritime trading town. Being far up the tidal River Lune, its merchants needed better facilities for moving goods on and off ships and for storing goods.

In 1749 the Lancaster Port Commission was established. Its first task was to build St George's Quay and lease land alongside it for merchants to build secure warehouses for their goods. This work started in 1750. Later that century they began to build Glasson Dock which opened in 1787.

These two schemes are well known. The Port Commission's third scheme – New Quay – is less well known.

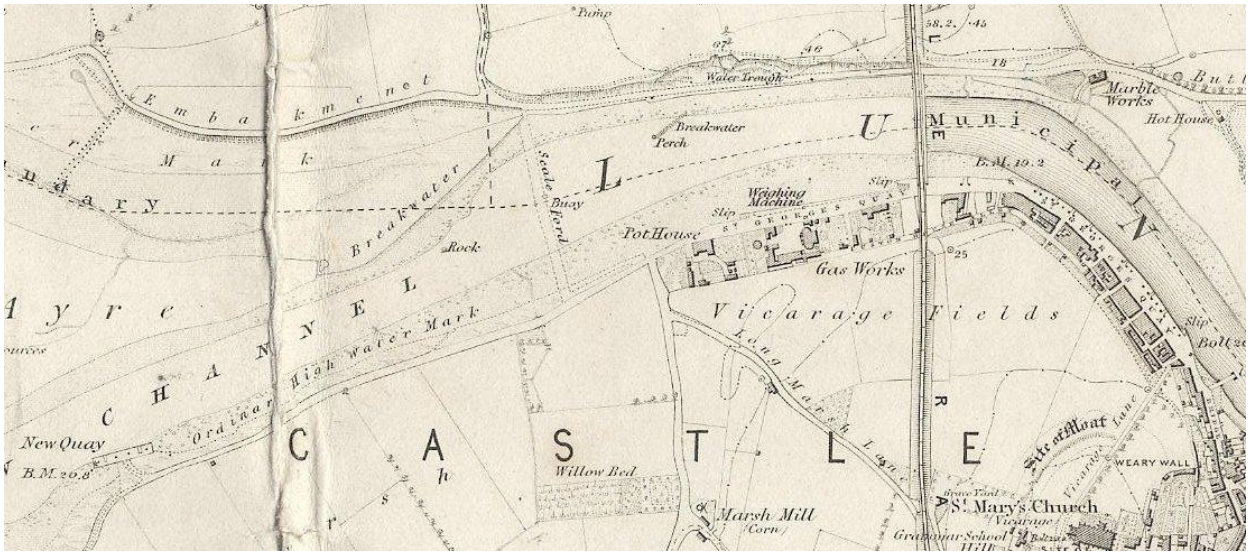
New Quay began to be built in 1767 as part of additional quayside space further downstream from that part of St George's Quay that is today east of Carlisle railway Bridge (built by 1844). Next to what became Carlisle Bridge and near St George's Works was Ford Quay, initially a simple area with mooring posts for ships, then a timber construction and finally re-made with masonry.

This could serve the St George's Works, the town's gas works next door and the Delft Pottery at Scaleford.



A ship unloading at Ford Quay in the very cold days of February 1895. Note the timber construction of the left-hand section of the quay and the masonry used on the right-hand side. The gas works are on the left and Williamson's Lune Mills are in the fog on the right. (Source: Lancaster City Museums and Richardson 2022)

Further downstream still was New Quay itself. Later this came to serve Williamson's Lune Mills for the unloading of raw materials for their floorcovering products.

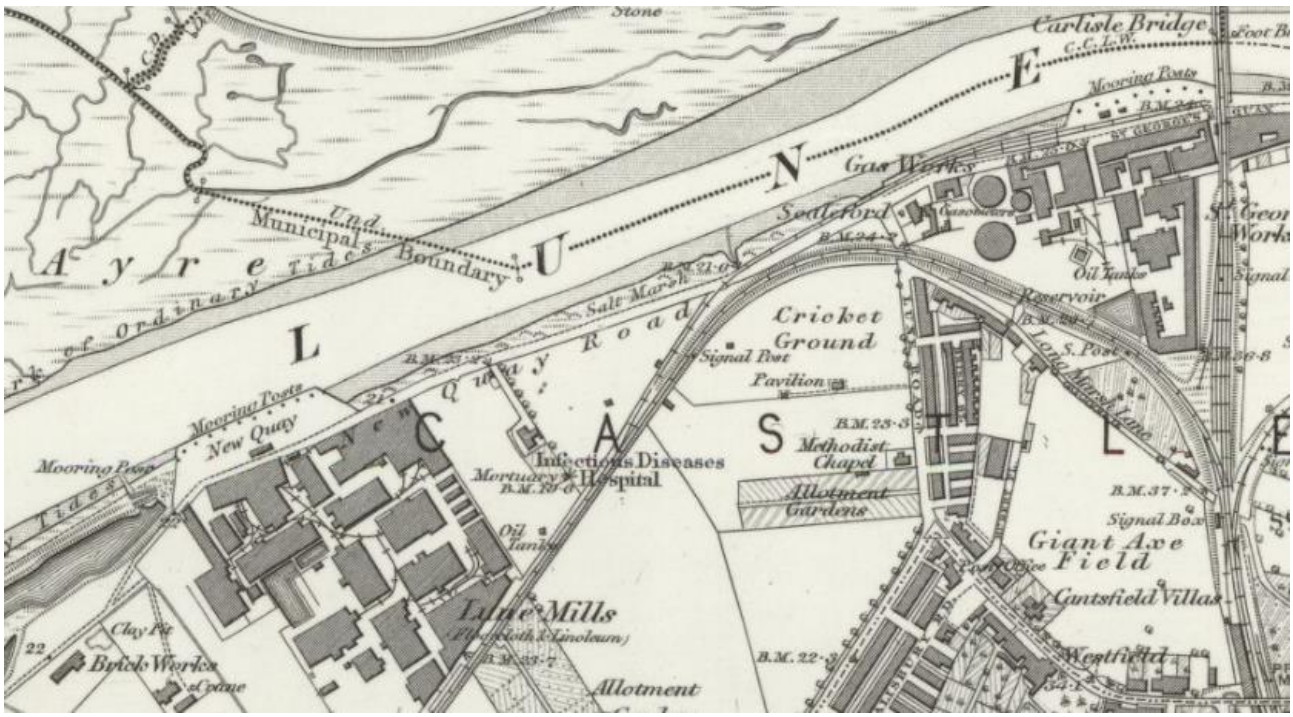


From left to right, New Quay, Ford Quay, the newly built Carlisle Bridge and the original part of St George's Quay, as shown on the OS 6-inch map of 1844.



An enlarged section of the above map, Ford Quay, just west of Carlisle Bridge.

These quays all survive today. Three mooring posts at Ford Quay have been incorporated into the current wall and the new, higher defences to protect the area from flooding. The best view of New Quay is from the north bank of the Lune looking across to it on the south bank.



The New Quay area (on the left) on the OS 6-inch map of 1890. Note extensive railway system between the Quay and the works.



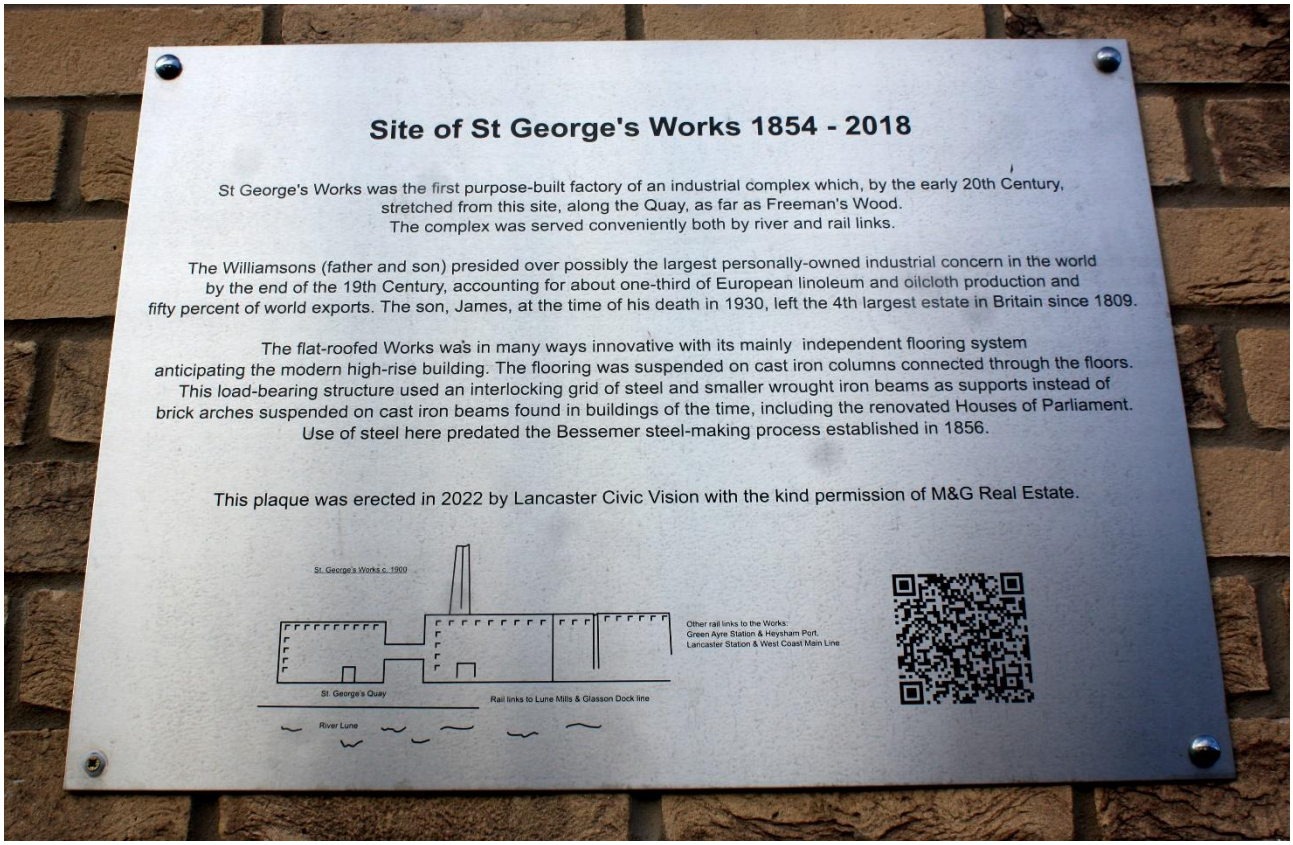
A 1940s aerial view of St George's Works (left) and the gas works, showing the quayside, railway lines and a moored cargo ship.
(Source: Red Rose Collection, Lancashire County Council)



New Quay (left) and Williamson's Lune Mills, 1947
(Source: Red Rose Collection, Lancashire County Council)

Today the Ford Quay area has been built over as part of a student accommodation complex that also includes the area once used by St George's Works. The history of St George's Works, built between 1854 and 1860 and demolished in 2018 after many years derelict, is described on the website of Lancaster Civic Vision at:

http://www.lancastercivicsociety.uk/st-georges-works-st-georges-quay-lancaster-1845-to-2018/



(Source: Gordon Clark)

Inland from New Quay, Williamson's Lune Mills complex has been demolished and the area is now a large housing estate.

Reference

Richardson D 2022 *Lancaster's Line to the Sea: A History of the Glasson Branch of the LNWR.* Cumbrian Railways Association

Text – Gordon Clark.
Published by Lancaster Civic Vision (2023).
Lancaster Civic Vision is the trading name of Lancaster Civic Society, registered charity no. 258434