

CARRICKFERGUS AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



THE WHITE HARBOUR

The harbour is situated about a mile and a half to the west of Whitehead on Belfast Lough. Hidden from the A2 (Coast Road) but can be seen from the railway it can be accessed from the main road down the offshoot to the power station whose pier can be seen on the photograph. The track to the harbour is a short distance on the left. It was built in the 1850s by David Stewart Ker, the owner of the local townlands, to ship limestone from the quarries close by in small vessels to ports in County Down and west of Scotland where limestone was scarce. It was built of limestone blocks cut and shaped locally. The gap in the wall at the western end of the wall was opened to facilitate access to a wooden pier extension to facilitate larger ships and gave greater access. At its zenith up to 23,000 tons of rock would have been shipped annually. The export of limestone from the White Harbour gradually came to an end in the 1880s due to the exhaustion of the supply of stone; the harbour gradually silted up and the walls slowly crumbled.

In 1988 a Mr.W.Murdock bought the harbour and repaired the walls and the base of the piles of the extension was exposed. It is now used as a marina for yachts and other small craft. So after all these years it is still serving a marine purpose.