

CONAN KENNEDY'S

DÚN LAOGHAIRE

COUNTY DUBLIN

MORRIGAN BOOKS

the town (and around) **TODAY**

walks and things **TO SEE**

& some photographs of... **YESTERDAY**



*Unknown girl, visiting Kingstown/now Dún Laoghaire, c 1898
A photograph by Richard Roe.*

This and the other photographs
are all from the Conan Kennedy Collection
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DÚN LAOGHAIRE

"The Royal Fort of Laoghaire."

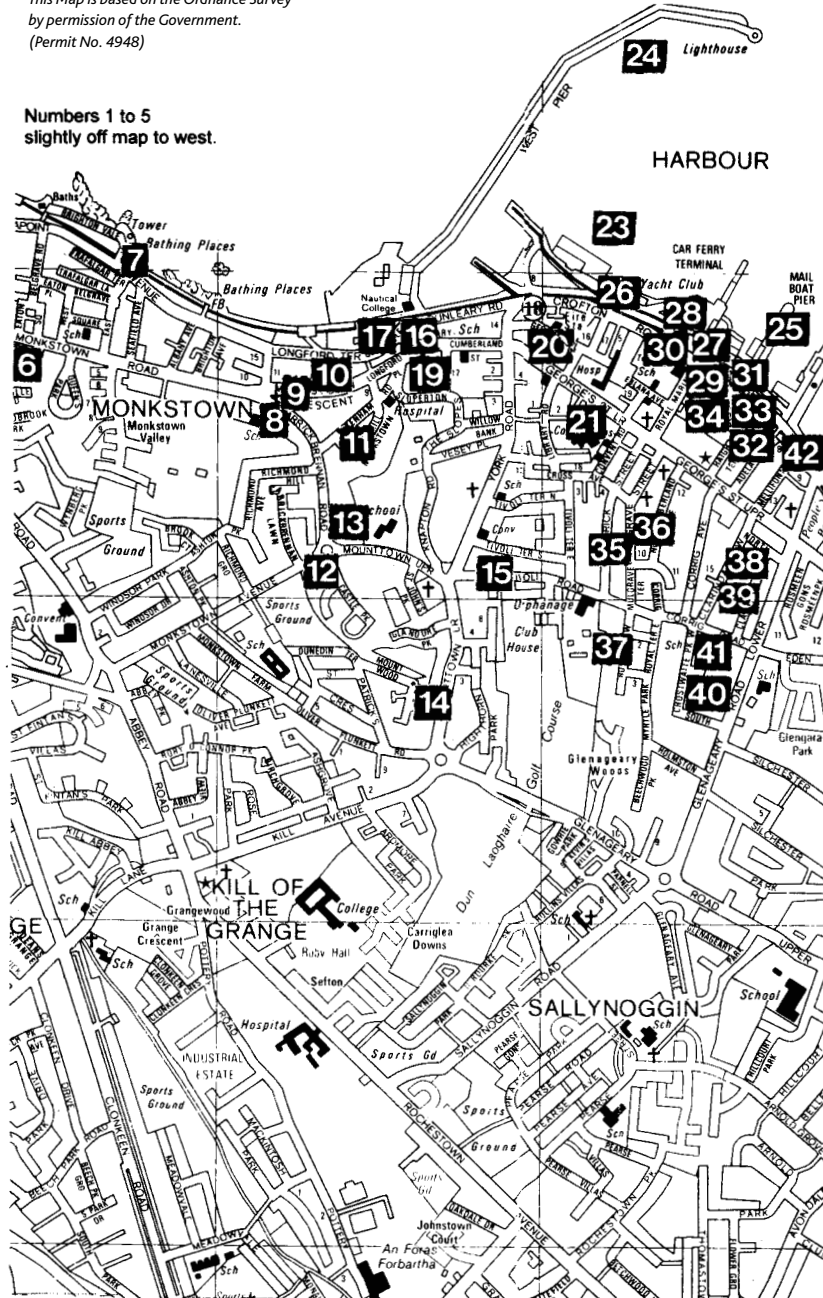
Dún' is the Irish word meaning 'royal fort'. Laoghaire was a king of Ireland in the fifth century. The town traces its origins back to his time. And beyond. The hills around here were sacred to druids. A four thousand year old grave is preserved in the area. 'Holy Wells' still bubble mysteriously...but bubble now in the midst of modern housing developments. Strange carvings on rocks can be seen... their meanings lost in the bustle of the modern town.

And about this modern town?

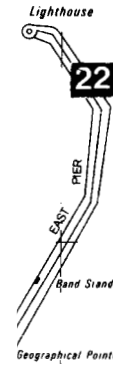
First settled by monks, fleeing here to the safety of the fort from other areas of the coast which had come under attack from Vikings. A small fishing village grew up called DunLeary. Down through the centuries it developed then, each year leaving a new small mark. But not much. Little changed until the eighteenth century. The first small pier was built in 1767. The Martello Towers were built around 1800 to protect the coast from the expected invasion of Napoleon. This never did come, but the long straight roads built by the military to connect their fortifications formed the basis of the streets of the modern town. Soon afterwards the growth of Dublin's trade and influence combined with the British fear of the French to establish a need for a new harbour along this coast. And not long after that the new fashion of sea bathing made the area attractive to the gentry. Dún Laoghaire started to expand rapidly. British warships visited. Bands played ! The nearby coffee-house was a centre of social activity.

This Map is based on the Ordnance Survey
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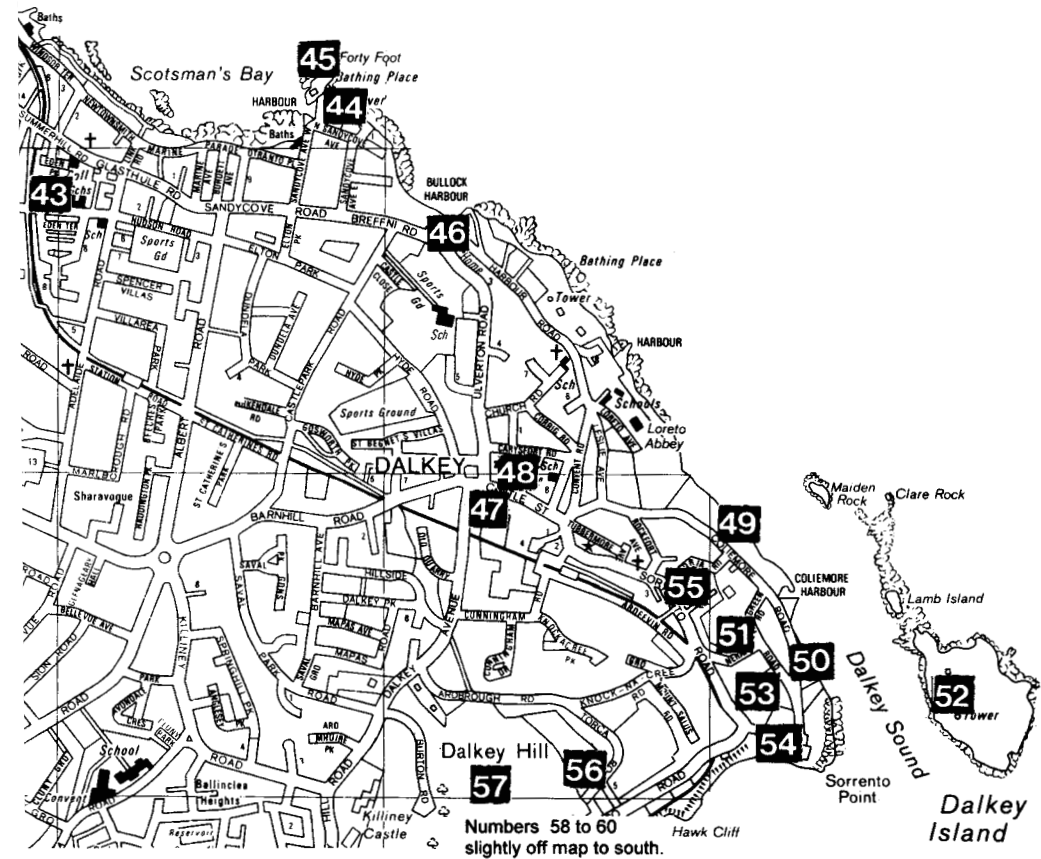
Numbers 1 to 5
slightly off map to west.



This first part of Dún Laoghaire Guide lists places of
interest throughout the town and surroundings.
The numbers here on this map refer to particular locations,
information about which is given on the following pages.



DÚN LAOGHAIRE



Numbers 58 to 60
slightly off map to south.

The harbour

Designed by the great Scottish engineer Rennie, the harbour was started in 1817. Largely completed by 1842, construction work continued for another 20 years. Statistics anyone? Ok, the East Pier is 3,500 feet long, the West 4,950. And the area of water enclosed is 251 acres. Stone for the pier was taken from Dalkey Hill, this given free by the landowners. Nonetheless, construction of the harbour cost the then immense amount of £830,000.

In 1848, when the London to Holyhead rail line was complete, Dún Laoghaire became the port for the Irish Mail and then the main route for passengers between the two countries. (Mails had been carried in fact through Dún Laoghaire since 1826). Below is the RMS Ulster, entering the harbour in the early 1900s. (She was sister ship of the ill-fated Leinster, torpedoed with great loss of life in 1918). The development of the port continued on up to recent years but times they were a changin', and the ferry service is no more. The major shipping lines, both Irish and foreign, now link us with the UK through the growing port of Dublin.



The harbour took forty years to complete properly. Over this period thousands of migrant workers poured in, settling with their families both along the coast and on the hillsides around. The railway from Dublin reached the town in 1834. Businessmen and traders from the city started to settle in the new town. New streets were made, elegant terraces and squares built. These were



George IV Monument

the homes of the well-to-do. The new rising Catholic merchant classes, the Protestant professionals, and the already fading Anglo-Irish gentry.

King George IV visited in 1821, his monument opposite. And the name of the town was changed at that time to *Kingstown*, to remain so until after independence. Queen Victoria visited in 1849 and again in 1900. These monarchs and their titles are still remembered in the major street names of the town. Whilst hidden away in poorer areas nationalist heroes are commemorated. Dún Laoghaire has always been thus, looking one way towards Britain, the other towards Ireland.

MORE (A LOT MORE!) ABOUT THIS LOCATION



<http://dlharbour200.ie/harbour-history/waypoint-1/>

