



HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF STEAMER POINT

➤ *What is the real story behind the naming of Steamer Point?*

When Lord Stuart de Rothesay decided to build a new mansion, to become Highcliffe Castle, he built it partly using ancient and exquisitely carved stonework recovered from ruined monasteries and grand houses in France.

The stone was brought across and landed in possibly 12 of Napoléon Bonaparte's former invasion barges and was likely towed across the English Channel by the steamship 'Arrow'. It is probable that a jetty was constructed to land these materials just in front of Steamer Point. Upon completion of building work, the steamer was then wedged into 'Lord Bute's Gap'.

We know that at one time after this, the old steamer was used as a beach house for Lord Stuart to entertain guests and watch horse & carriage racing along Friars Cliff beach. At other times the steamer was used as a canteen, and in the 1830s it is recorded that a boatman named Williams lived there with his family, as well as a fisherman.

These records of the steamer, boatman and fisherman, along with further recent evidence from 1963, all reinforce the belief that some form of jetty or landing point existed at Steamer Point.