

# Old Leith Docks: notes

## Highlights.

1. **East Dock:** started 1799. Gates date from Leslie's improvements ca.1846. Curving setts mark route of old railway line leading to former bridge over the river.
2. **Teuchters landing:** the spot from which steam ferry boats plied their coastal trade with Aberdeen, London and numerous small ports in the C19<sup>th</sup> and C20<sup>th</sup>.
3. **Custom House and Bernard Bridge.** Custom house built 1812. The bridge used to be a tilting drawbridge (inc. tram tracks & overhead wires). Zeppelin raid of 1916 caused death and damage at 2 Commercial St.
4. **George IV landing steps.** Also note the nearby old King's Wark & Old Ship Inn buildings.
5. **Timber Bush.** "Bush" derives from the French "Bourse". This open area was long used as an open area where timber was offloaded from ships. Zeppelin bombs (4<sup>th</sup> of 20 explosive bombs dropped) fell on grain warehouse doing considerable damage.
6. **Tower Street.** In 1548 the street Bastion - formed a seawall bastion as part of Leith's defences. Leith's 1<sup>st</sup> railway station 1832 lay at junction with Constitution Street.
7. **Albert Dock.** Site of 1<sup>st</sup> hydraulic crane in Scotland in 1869. Also bombed by Zeppelin raid.
8. **Old Leith Ports Office.** Built 1892. Boasts a rich interior with wood panels, exquisite fireplaces & ceiling ornaments.
9. **Swing bridge.** 1874. A Leith first, it was the longest clear swing bridge span in Britain.
10. **New Zealand Boulder.** Morrison Homes commissioned – student competition in art colleges.
11. **Rennie's Bridge.** (1806). Formally located at East-West link site within East docks. Now Britain's only licenced bridge.

Notes by Roy Thompson, Nov 2023