



TRANSFORMED BY WAR 1939 - 194

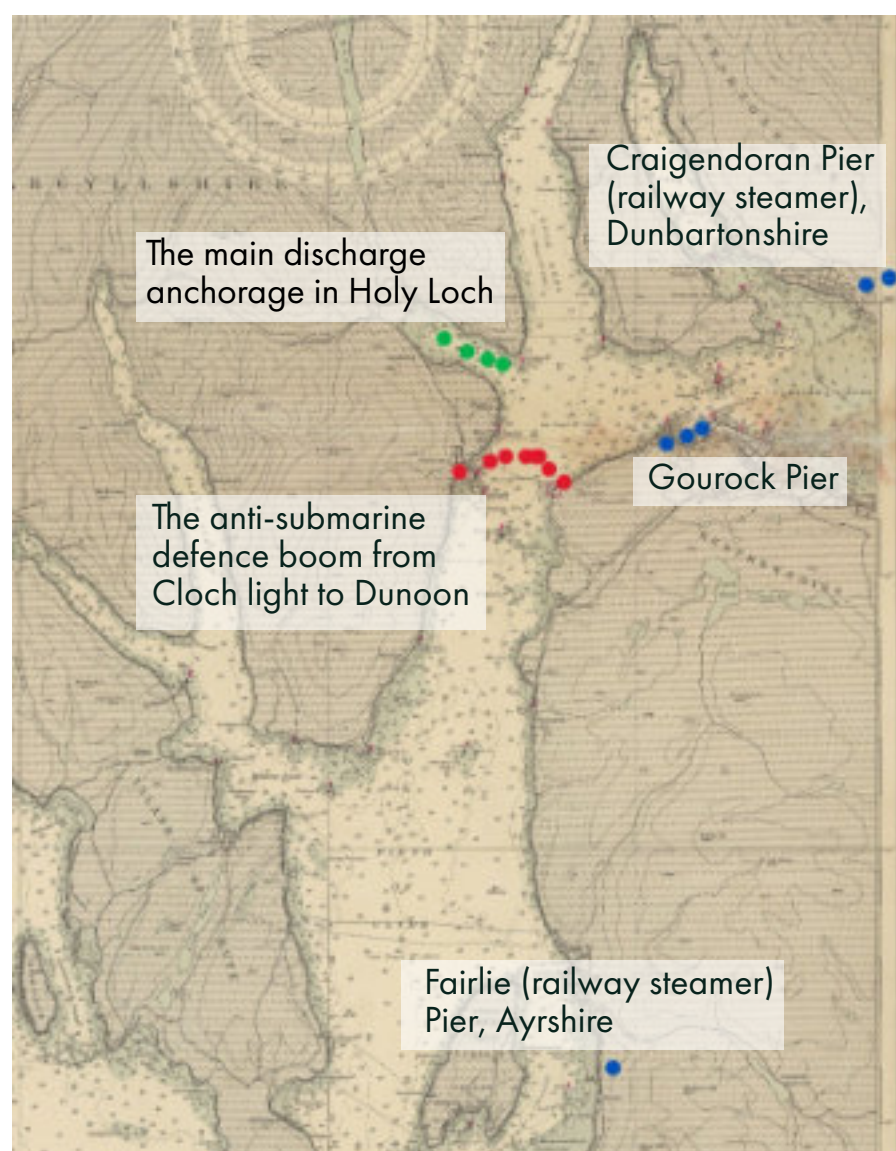
The Clyde Anchorage Emergency Port – wartime ingenuity?

Large areas of deep, sheltered water made the Firth of Clyde a great naval asset. For the anchorage emergency port it could accommodate 50 ocean going vessels above the defensive boom from Cloch Light to Dunoon. However devising an operational plan for the new port was more challenging.

It had been intended that most cargo from the Atlantic convoy ships using the anchorage would be offloaded by ship's gear to coasters for onward distribution around the UK. This would release the ocean going vessel back into convoy duty as quickly as possible. However, insufficient coasters were available and large numbers of barges would be needed to offload within the Clyde for onward rail movement.

The existing Clyde ports of Greenock and Glasgow were already under great pressure handling additional cargoes. They had little experience of overside discharge and operated independently with different labour agreements. Even finding quayside space for barges bringing offloaded cargo ashore was a challenge.

Using wartime legal powers a new port was created based on the anchorage area and offloading facilities in the Clyde which were "not within the control of an existing port". The plan was to use some railway passenger steamer piers, which, with minor works, could be used to offload barges.



Admiralty Chart No.2131 1956
Firth of Clyde & Loch Fyne.



Minesweeping in the Clyde
Photo: IWM A6009



Arrival of Queen Mary
Greenock 30 June 1943
Photo: IWM A1765