

THE HISTORY OF BRAMLEY-MOORE DOCK

Evertonians are justly proud of their heritage and as it has been with Goodison Park, so it will be with Bramley-Moore. So what are its origins and what is known about the site which celebrates its 170th anniversary this year?

The dock takes its name from John Bramley-Moore, who was born in Leeds in 1800. As a young man he spent time as a merchant in South America, marrying Seraphina Hibernia Pennell, daughter of the British consul-general for Brazil. In 1835 he was in Liverpool, quickly building on his mercantile endeavours. By 1841 he was elected to the Town Council and also became a member of the Dock Committee, subsequently being elected chairman, which gave him considerable power.

The Albert Dock construction scheme was completed under his watch in 1846 and, with powers granted by the Great Dock Act of 1844, plans to develop the North Docks progressed. With dock engineer Jesse Hartley overseeing the project, Bramley-Moore ensured the purchase of the foreshore from Lord Derby, and secured funding through the Town Council. Five docks opened simultaneously on 4 August 1848 - Stanley, Collingwood, Salisbury, Nelson and, the most northerly, at Bramley-Moore. Three months later, Bramley-Moore was elected Mayor.

Initially, the Bramley-Moore Dock served the largest steamships of the period but the opening of larger docks nearby saw it become a coaling station: both bunkering vessels and loading exports. A high-level railway, a spur off the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway line, was constructed on the dockside to enable easy transfer of the coal from the trucks. A new bridge, which could be raised or lowered hydraulically, carried the line over the Dock



The bridge once situated at Bramley-Moore Dock



John Bramley-Moore

Road. This arrangement was amended with the construction of the Liverpool Overhead Railway.

As the dependence on coal for powering vessels diminished, and the export trade also collapsed, the line closed in 1966, and all coal operations had ceased by 1988.

Today, little remains of the structures. The high-level track has gone, as has the road bridge, although the abutment can still be seen above the dock wall. The brick-built hydraulic accumulator tower, which provided power to the dock gates and lifting equipment, is still in situ, as is the dock road perimeter wall, both of which are Grade II listed and should be retained within the new stadium plans.

As for John Bramley-Moore, he spent his later years living in Buckinghamshire and died in Brighton on 19 November 1886, aged 86. He was buried at St Michael's-in-the-Hamlet in Toxteth Park, Liverpool.

By Mike Royden
[EFC Heritage Society]

Don't forget to call into St Luke's Church, next to Goodison Park, to see the Everton Heritage Society exhibitions before every home fixture. Unique pieces of memorabilia are on display upstairs in the church hall, with members of the Heritage Society in attendance to answer all of your questions!

