



View of Cowes from the mouth of the harbour.

1791

Samuel Howitt

IWCMS.2002.156

This view looks straight in at *East* and *West Cowes* from the *Solent*. *East Cowes* is on the left and *Egypt Point* to the far right.



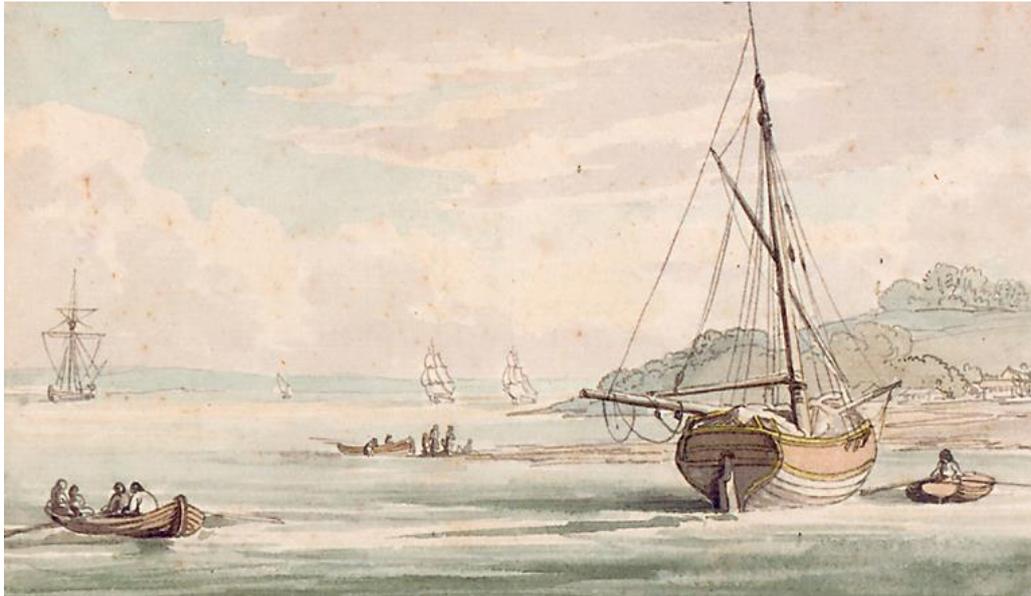
Cowes harbour.

Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s

IWCMS.2002.146

This scene is of interest in showing a variety of boats around the busy harbour of Cowes.



Cowes harbour.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.147

This view shows the east bank of the *River Medina* with *East Cowes* behind.



Cowes harbour; and Egypt near West Cowes.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.144

Egypt Point is just west of *Cowes*.



Egypt near West Cowes.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
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The prominent building in this view is *Egypt House*.

In 1787/8 it had been put up for sale from the *Mount Edgcombe Estate*. The leaseholder was *William Grossmith* who had placed bathing machines on the shore between the house and *Cowes Castle*. The house was substantially altered in the 19th century.



West Cowes landing.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
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View of *West Cowes* landing showing the mouth of the *River Medina* with *East Cowes* in the background.

A small passenger ferry, which ran from *East* to *West Cowes*, can be seen carrying a small number of people. The land between the castle and the landing station belonged to the *Grand Review of Isle of Wight Volunteers*, and this led to the area being named *The Parade*.



The Vine Inn at Cowes.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.148

This view shows what is now the main landing place at Cowes. The *Vine Inn* (centre) was considered the principal inn in the town at this date and it had the best slipway.

Visible in the left of the picture are ships being built – this was the famous *Ratsey shipyard*. It is now home to many modern yachts as it is the site of *Cowes Yacht Haven*.

It was from an enterprise at the *Vine* that Cowes was to develop its reputation as a saltwater bathing place and thus attract affluent visitors. In the 1750's *Mary Taylor* invested £25 in building a bathing house at the *Vine*, so that a poet was able to write in 1760: '*No more to foreign baths shall Britains roam but plunge at Cowes and find rich health at home*'.



West Cowes landing.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.149

This landing slip, shown at high water, may be that situated on what is now *Castle Parade*, alternatively, it may be *Feathers Slip* at the bottom of what is now *Market Hill*. When the market house was built this slip was to be developed as the major landing place for *Cowes*, until local landowner *George Ward* of *Northwood Park*, bought into the steam ferry company and purchased the property on what is now *Fountain Quay*.

Many boatmen made their living from transporting people and cargo to and from the larger ships gathered in *Cowes Roads* waiting for a convoy, for fair wind or fair tide, to clear Customs or to receive orders on where to proceed to sell a cargo. *Cowes*, too, was often the last victualing point for ships setting off from *England*.



West Cowes landing.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.152



West Cowes.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.151

This view shows maintenance work being undertaken on a number of boats and some interesting details of the buildings along the *West Cowes* sea front.



Cowes Harbour, Cowes.
Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.160

This is clearly a view of the west bank of the harbour. Note the fishing nets hanging at the top of the wooden steps.



View on the River Medina from West Cowes.
Samuel Howitt

1791
IWCMS.2002.159

This view looks north east and depicts a ship-building yard at the south end of *West Cowes*. The view predates the arrival of *White's* shipbuilders who established their yard on this site.



Cowes harbour, Cowes.
Circle of Thomas Rowlandson

1791
IWCMS.2002.164

View of boat building at *Cowes Harbour*. The boat is held within a wooden cradle as work is carried out on it.



Cowes Castle with bathing machines and the Grand Fleet. 1791
Samuel Howitt IWCMS.2002.158

This view shows *Cowes Castle* with the bathing machines in the foreground of the picture. *Cowes Castle* was constructed by *Henry VIII* as a fortification to protect the mouth of the *Medina River*, and was manned by an officer and a gunner.

The land on the far side of the castle became known as *The Parade* following a review of the troops in 1798. The area was also popular with bathers around 1800 and was used for reasons of health and pleasure, which is reflected by the presence of the bathing machines.



Cowes Castle. 1791
Circle of Thomas Rowlandson IWCMS.2002.166

A view of *Cowes Castle*, note the winch used for pulling up the bathing machine.



View from Cowes Castle.

1791

Circle of Thomas Rowlandson

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View from *Cowes Castle* looking towards the town. The castle was originally built during the reign of *King Henry VIII*.

The Parade changed enormously in the 1790's. The *Brannon* prints of the 1820's show a handful of villas behind the walkway each lying in a tree filled garden.



St Mary's Church, Cowes.

Circa. 1790s

Thomas Rowlandson

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View of *St Mary's Church* showing the church in its early state before any alterations were made to the building.

At this date the church was a chapelry of *Northwood*, built during *Cromwell's* protectorate. The tower was built by *Nash* in 1816 and the rest of the building altered in 1867.

The gable to the west is *Bellevue*, the predecessor to *Northwood Park*.



West Cowes.

Circle of Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s

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Approaching the town of *Cowes* from the west, *St Mary's Church* can be seen on the left in the distance.



West Cowes.
Circle of Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.111



West Cowes.
Circle of Thomas Rowlandson

Circa. 1790s
IWCMS.2002.153

This view shows *Castle Road*, which runs behind the *Royal Yacht Squadron* in Cowes.