



## The Railway Cometh



At the outset of a narrative it is always a benefit and a boost if something dramatic and interesting can be found to set the scene and catch the readers' attention.. With this object which, perversely, is number 55 in the *Kirkcaldy's Heritage in 50 Objects* project we have an ideal starting point.

*The Fifeshire Journal* of Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> June 1847 is the source. It should be explained that the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway Company* had been formed to drive a railway from Edinburgh to Dundee, despite the need to cross both the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Tay with work commencing in 1845. It appears that the line had first been mooted as far back as 1819.

The article reveals that “the previous Saturday, being the payday for the labourers on the Gallatown section of the line, a significant number had gathered in the evening with the intention of creating a riot. It would appear that there had been an earlier squabble between the Highlandmen and the Irishmen – the Highlandmen being the first to proceed to the laying on of hands – and two or three broken heads were the consequence. The police, however, by apprehending some half-dozen of the ringleaders, succeeded in restoring quietness for the night.

“The prisoners were lodged in the lock-up house at Pathhead, and, on Tuesday last, were brought into Cupar, where two of them were sentenced to forty days and two of them to sixty days imprisonment each. The case of the others, being of a more serious nature, is under investigation.

**RIOTING IN GALLATOWN.**—On Saturday last, being the payday of the labourers on the Gallatown (near Kirkcaldy) section of the Edinburgh and Northern Railway, a large number of them assembled in the evening with the intention, as was understood, of creating a riot. Some squabbling ensued between the Highlandmen and Irishmen—the Highlandmen being the first to proceed to the laying on of hands—and two or three broken heads were the consequence. The police, however, by apprehending some half-dozen of the ringleaders, succeeded in restoring quietness for the night. The prisoners were lodged in the lock-up house at Pathhead, and on Tuesday morning were brought into Cupar, where two of them were sentenced to forty days' and two to sixty days' imprisonment each.

“On the Sunday morning, it was evident from the numbers hanging about the streets, that there was a considerable risk of a collision between the Highlanders and the Irishmen; and in the forenoon some of the Highlanders had struck and injured some of the Irishmen. In consequence of this the Irishmen turned out to the number of between sixty and seventy, and sent off a despatch to the Links of Kirkcaldy for a reinforcement of their countrymen

residing there; and about three o'clock, a body of no less than five hundred marched in regular procession, with railing stobs, rails, shovels and pokers, through Kirkcaldy, till they joined their comrades, when the crowd, of one sort or other, might amount to more than a thousand.

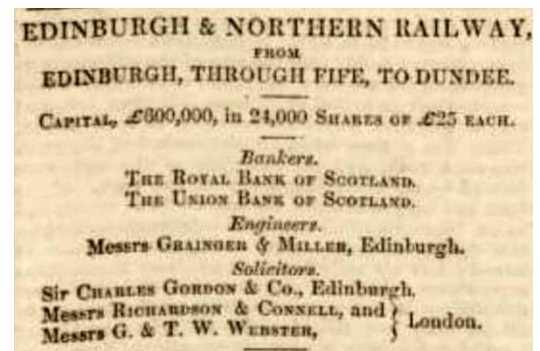
“Against these about two hundred Highlanders, some of whom were armed with dirks and knives, marched up, but, finding their inferiority of numbers, retreated: and hence no collision took place. For a time, the town was completely in the power of these armed men.

“On Monday, at an early hour, Mr Sheriff Douglas and the Procurator – Fiscal, accompanied by a large body of police, proceeded to the place, where the Sheriff met with Mr. Macdonald, the contractor, whose exertions to preserve peace and prevent mischief cannot be too highly praised. The effect of the Sheriff's presence was to induce most of the workmen to resume their labour. The total number of labourers employed on the whole line of the railway is 8,632; 5,000 of whom are strangers from the Highlands and Ireland”.

Hopefully, following on from what must have been a concerning incident, we can move into quieter waters and look at the steps which brought the railway to Kirkcaldy. It was never the intention for Kirkcaldy to be the end of the line, which is why it is nigh on impossible to treat the town in isolation – by definition much of the narrative has to involve and deal with the complete line. Therefore this Object cannot be purely Kirkcaldy-centric. The story will be delivered in two parts with the first being how/why the proposed line came to Kirkcaldy in 1847 – but make no mistake that was not a certainty and the line, at best, may well have been a considerable distance to the north of the town. That said, even today, with the town's significant growth, it could well have been on the perimeter.

At worst, no line might have appeared in 1847 and Kirkcaldy may well not have become the industrial powerhouse it did. The presence of the railway revolutionised Kirkcaldy but it could well have been far different.

Probably the starting point has to be an advertisement which appeared in the *Fife Herald* on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 1844. The advertisement goes into detail on several fronts and indicated that an application will be made to Parliament during the course of the following session. There had been a shortening of the proposed name of the company, effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1844. The change was from *The Edinburgh, Dundee and Northern Railway* to that shown below:



**Edinburgh & Northern Railway**  
From  
**Edinburgh, Through Fife, to Dundee**

It is revealed that the capital being sought will be £600,000 in 24,000 shares of £25.00 each. The Bankers are listed as the *Royal Bank of Scotland* and the *Union Bank of Scotland*. The engineers are revealed as Messrs Grainger and Miller of Edinburgh and the Company have engaged three firms of solicitors – the firm based in Scotland is:-

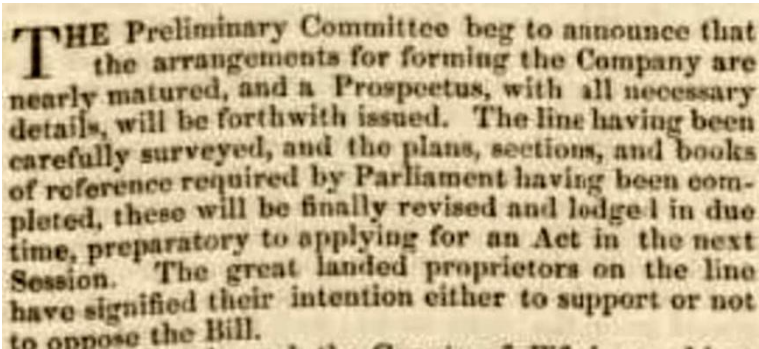
Sir Charles Gordon & Co., of Edinburgh

The other two are based in London, probably to act on the Company's behalf in matters relating to the Parliamentary passage. The firms involved are:-

Messrs Richardson & Connell.

and

Messrs G. & T.W. Webster.



**T**HE Preliminary Committee beg to announce that the arrangements for forming the Company are nearly matured, and a Prospectus, with all necessary details, will be forthwith issued. The line having been carefully surveyed, and the plans, sections, and books of reference required by Parliament having been completed, these will be finally revised and lodged in due time, preparatory to applying for an Act in the next Session. The great landed proprietors on the line have signified their intention either to support or not to oppose the Bill.

There then followed a statement of intent and rationale which is well worth reproducing in full as it very succinctly sets out the vision.

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“A railway through the County of Fife is an object of national as well as local importance. By it, the distance from Aberdeen, and the whole of the east coast of Scotland by Dundee to Edinburgh is shortened above twenty miles, compared with any other line which can be made. The ferry between the low water piers at Granton and Burntisland, the connecting point of the railway on the south, will be opened in the course of the ensuing summer, with large iron steamers now building for passengers and goods, which are intended to pass every hour from either side.

“The terminus on the north will be at Ferry-Port-on-Craig, connecting with the Dundee to Arbroath Railway, or at Craighead, where a floating bridge over the Tay to Dundee is to be placed by the co-operation of the Government.

“The local and through traffic is at present very large and continues to increase by added means of transport being placed on the roads. The traffic has been subjected to a most searching enquiry by a local committee, comprised chiefly of mercantile men and manufacturers of intelligence and great experience. The results show a clear revenue of above £60,000, being fully 10% of the proposed capital of the Company.

“The *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* connects its southern terminus with Edinburgh, where the great lines of railway in Scotland may be expected to centre. By the *Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway* then continued by the Greenock and Ayr lines, it will communicate directly with the great manufacturing city of Glasgow, and the other important depots of trade and manufacturers in the west. By the *North British Railway* from Edinburgh by Berwick, it is in direct connection with the great southern lines on the east, and equally so by Carlisle and Lancaster with Lancashire and the south-west of England.

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“The Committee think it proper to mention that it is their intention to have the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* connected to the city of Perth by a line from a point near the village of Kettle and they had directed the prospectus to be prepared accordingly. But observing that a line of railway has been announced and, as it is in prospect by two different parties, from Perth to Stirling, the Committee defer the Perth portion of their line until it is seen if a line to Stirling shall be carried into effect. In the meantime, they propose by their Bill to take power merely to make a connecting line to Perth, with the intention of carrying it into effect should the line to Stirling not be made.

“The Committee have the satisfaction of adding that both the Proprietors of the Granton and Burntisland piers will give every facility which these piers can afford”.

Chas. Gordon & Co.  
Edinburgh, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1844

The above is the firing of the starting pistol for the project with the promoters now taking to print. Some time can perhaps now be spent on the circumstances which led to the above announcement being made.

The obvious first stage was to get from the heart of Edinburgh to the Firth of Forth and this venture commenced in 1836 when the *Edinburgh, Leith & Newhaven Railway* secured an Act of Parliament in the August. The engineers for the project have already been mentioned and were Thomas Grainger and James Miller. The pair had cut their teeth on the *Monkland & Kirkintilloch Railway* as far back as 1823. They had been involved in other railway projects in the interim and appeared well equipped for the task in hand. Sadly, the company failed to secure sufficient funding and nothing materialised for a number of years.

THOMSON'S DIRECTORY. 25  
**FERRY STEAM-BOATS.**  
SUMMER HOURS.—To Newhaven every lawful day, at 8 morning, half-past 3, and a quarter before 7 o'Clock evening.—Leaves Newhaven, at 6 morning, half-past 1, and 5 o'Clock afternoon.  
WINTER HOURS.—To Newhaven, at half-past 8 morning, & half-past 3 o'Clock afternoon.—Leaves Newhaven, at half-past 6 morning, and half-past 1 o'Clock afternoon.  
FARES.—Cabin, 2s.; Steerage, 1s. 6d.  
Children, under 12 years of age, 1s.; Do. Do., 9d.  
Children, under 4 years, nothing.  
Persons crossing (without landing) for a pleasure sail, pay Single Fare only.  
Sailing Boats ply as formerly.

Newhaven already had a connection with Kirkcaldy which is worth recounting. That venerable publication of yesteryear, *Thomson's Directory*, in its 1834 edition on page

25, carried information on Ferry Steam-Boats. We learn that the Summer Hours from Kirkcaldy to Newhaven were “every lawful day, at 8 morning, half past 3, and a quarter before 7 o'clock evening. The ferry left Newhaven for Kirkcaldy at 6 morning, half past 1, and 5 o'clock afternoon.

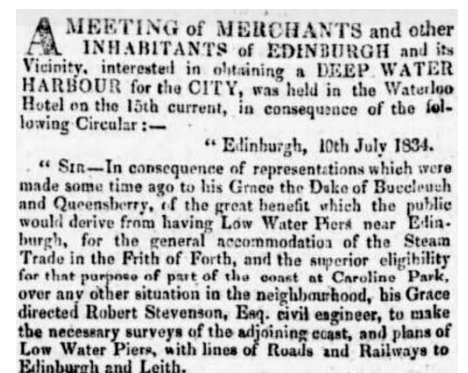
The hours altered in the Winter as follows – to Newhaven, at half past 8 morning & half past 3 o'clock afternoon. Leaves Newhaven at half past 6 morning and half past 1 o'clock afternoon”.

The fares were recorded as Cabin 2/- and Steerage 1/6d. Children under 12 travelled for 1/- and 9d. Children under 4 travelled free. Interestingly, those who only embarked for a pleasure cruise and did not embark paid a single fare only.

It would seem that it was only the steam ferries which altered hours as “sailing boats ply as formerly”.

As the 1840s dawned, the plan was resurrected and, in particular, Newhaven was replaced by Trinity as the harbour of choice. Ironically, despite the name the line was never built to Newhaven – instead, as mentioned, it ran to Trinity, opening in 1842. Trinity, slightly to the west of Newhaven, is an area of North Edinburgh which was once a part of the Burgh of Leith. The line from Trinity ran to Scotland Street in the Cannon mills area of Edinburgh – some way short of the intended terminus which was to be close to Princess Street Gardens. Trinity Station was built, later enhanced and it survives to this day but is now a residential property. *Trinity Chain Pier* had served ferries from 1821 and could well have been the permanent chosen spot, but the harbour was never sufficiently developed. The answer was yet another change of terminus – this time to Granton.

Why Granton? There had been a determined effort to secure a deep water harbour to serve Edinburgh which could be operational, irrespective of the state of the tide. The 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, who owned land in the area, set about having the new harbour built on his estate. He sought advice on the matter from Robert Stevenson – the well-known lighthouse constructor and grandfather of the novelist Robert Louis Stevenson. By great good fortune, a notice placed in the *Caledonian Mercury* of the 17<sup>th</sup> July 1834 was unearthed. The notice advised that Robert Stevenson's survey had been completed and that the Duke was now calling all interested parties to a meeting on the subject in the Waterloo Hotel on the 15<sup>th</sup> at 11.00am.



**MEETING of MERCHANTS and other INHABITANTS of EDINBURGH and its Vicinity, interested in obtaining a DEEP WATER HARBOUR for the CITY, was held in the Waterloo Hotel on the 15th current, in consequence of the following Circular:—**

“Edinburgh, 10th July 1834.

“SIR—In consequence of representations which were made some time ago to his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, of the great benefit which the public would derive from having Low Water Piers near Edinburgh, for the general accommodation of the Steam Trade in the Frith of Forth, and the superior eligibility for that purpose of part of the coast at Caroline Park, over any other situation in the neighbourhood, his Grace directed Robert Stevenson, Esq. civil engineer, to make the necessary surveys of the adjoining coast, and plans of Low Water Piers, with lines of Roads and Railways to Edinburgh and Leith.

Permission was sought from and subsequently granted by Parliament in 1837. On the 28<sup>th</sup> June 1842, the first part to be completed was declared open. This was the middle pier but also known as the *Victoria Jetty* – the simple reason being that it was opened on the day of Queen Victoria's Coronation. The Duke could not do the honours himself

– as he was in London attending the Coronation. It was the Duke's younger brother – Lord John Scott, who declared the pier open. Appropriately, he arrived for the occasion in his yacht - *Lufra*. As an aside, there is a street named Lufra Bank, close by, which has excellent views of the harbour.

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visited Granton Harbour in 1842 in the Royal Yacht – *The Prince George*. This was part of the Queen's first state visit to Scotland. The Harbour remained under construction until 1863. It was said that the stone used in the construction was obtained from the Duke's own *Granton Quarry*. In 1837, the Duke began a ferry from Granton to Burntisland which quickly became an outstanding success and that had potential consequences for the *Edinburgh, Leith & Newhaven Railway*. They anticipated that the traffic from Granton would dwarf that from Trinity and Newhaven and, as a consequence, their railway's income could well fall sharply - as they were not even within touching distance of Granton! There could only be one action taken to correct the anticipated problem and that is exactly what happened.

EDINBURGH, LEITH, AND GRANTON  
RAILWAY.  
TO RAILWAY CONTRACTORS.

**T**HE EDINBURGH, LEITH, & GRANTON RAILWAY COMPANY are prepared to CONTRACT for the Execution of the BRANCH to GRANTON PIER.

The Works consist of an Alteration of the Turnpike Road, Road-Bridges, Retaining-Walls, Bulwarks, and other Masoury, with the Earthwork, Laying of Rails, and other finishing of the way. It will also include the maintenance of the way for one year after the line is opened.

Plans, Sections, and Specification of the Work may be seen at the Railway Office here from Monday the 22d to Saturday the 27th curt.; and sealed Tenders, addressed to the Directors, will be received until the evening of Monday the 29th current.

Farther particulars may be learned at Messrs Grainger & Miller's Office, 16 Castle Street.

By order of the Directors,  
A. G. FIELD, Secy.

35 Scotland Street,  
Edinburgh, 12th July 1844.

The Company sought an Act of Parliament to extend their line to Granton. The Act was titled the *Edinburgh, Leith and Granton Railway Act* which received Royal Assent on the 19<sup>th</sup> July 1844. At this point the railway altered its name to The *Edinburgh, Leith & Granton Railway*. An advertisement taken from *The Scotsman* of the 17<sup>th</sup> July 1844, is reproduced here and was seeking tenders from contractors for the execution of the line to Granton Pier. As part of the scheme – a new/updated station was built at Trinity where the line ran west to Granton and then north to the pier itself.

So far, so good – the line now reached what was the outstanding harbour on the south shore of the Forth, with the added bonus of a ferry service already in operation to Burntisland. On the 19<sup>th</sup> February 1846, the extended line to Granton was partially opened but it was not fully opened until 1847. This was in no small way due to the fact that to reach the heart of Edinburgh it required the construction of a massive tunnel. The tunnel which was 1,000 yards long was driven below Scotland Street, Dublin Street and St. Andrew's Square before reaching Canal Street.

An advertisement taken from *The Edinburgh Evening Post and Scottish Standard* of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1846 gives information on the train times to both Trinity and Granton. The cost of the full journey from Scotland Street is 3d and from Trinity to Granton it is a mere 1d. The line was on a steep incline and was initially worked by rope haulage by means of a stationary steam engine, with locomotives taking over from 1847.

However, 1846 also saw the demise of the *Edinburgh, Leith and*

EDINBURGH, LEITH, AND GRANTON  
RAILWAY.  
SUMMER HOURS.

**O**N WEDNESDAY, the 1st of APRIL, (THIS DAY,) the COMPANY'S Coaches commenced to run as follows, viz

FROM SCOTLAND STREET STATION TO TRINITY,  
From Nine o'Clock till Half-past Ten Forenoon,  
EVERY HALF-HOUR.

From Half-past Ten o'clock Forenoon till Six o'clock Afternoon  
EVERY QUARTER OF AN HOUR.

AND  
From Six o'Clock Afternoon till Nine P.M.,  
EVERY HALF-HOUR.

The above Hours suit the Sailing and arrival of the Ferry-Boats to and from the Chain and Newhaven Piers.

TO GRANTON.

Coaches will run regularly to and from Granton, from Half-past Ten Forenoon till Five o'Clock Afternoon, every twenty minutes. Coaches will also leave Scotland Street punctually twenty minutes before the Sailing of all the Steam-Boats from Granton Pier, and will leave the Granton Station ten minutes after their Arrival.

*Granton Railway Company* as, in that year, they were purchased by the *Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee Railway* and this was agreed prior to the line being completed. It was on the condition that, when completed to Canal Street, the cost of the line would be no more than £310,000. As revealed by the *Daily Revue* (Edinburgh) on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1864, in a retrospective article, the actual price paid had increased by £30,000.

#### EDINBURGH, LEITH, AND GRANTON RAILWAY.

The extensive tunnel on this line of railway having been recently completed, the line throughout was opened on Monday. The tunnel is about three-quarters of a mile in length, extending beneath the city, from Canal Street to the foot of Scotland Street, and sometimes attaining the depth of ninety feet. Its construction has been attended with the most formidable difficulties, both from the nature of the undertaking, and the serious obstacles to be surmounted, these generally arising from the unfavourable character of the soil. It has at length, however, been brought to a successful completion, and is formed in the most substantial manner, every expedient that engineering skill could devise having been employed to secure stability. The original design, we believe, was to work it by means of locomotive power, though the gradient is one in twenty-seven; but the directors, after a full consideration of the matter, adopted the plan of a stationary engine, which has accordingly been erected. Exception having been taken to the chimney-stalk attached to the engine, and apprehensions having arisen of the offensive nature of the smoke, &c., the operations on the works were suspended by interdict, at the instance of the Magistrates and Town Council, and a lengthened litigation was likely to be the result.

With the tunnel completed, the heart of Edinburgh was reached at Canal Street Station which was opened on the 17<sup>th</sup> May 1847. The opening was reported in the *Glasgow Courier* of the 22<sup>nd</sup> May and part of the article is reproduced here. It is interesting to note that the incline mentioned above had resulted in a temporary legal dispute as it was considered that the chimney, of the static engine operating the rope pulley, was too high resulting in an “offensive nature of the smoke etc”.

It could now be truly claimed that the Company had a direct line from the heart of the capital to the Firth of Forth. The primary purpose of the Granton line was to carry both passengers and freight to the harbours on the Firth of Forth where shipping would carry both to Fife and then further afield, which included the east coasts of both Scotland and England.

During that decade three stations appeared over two years, all in close proximity to each other. Close to *Canal Street Station* was built the *North Bridge Station* with its line running from Edinburgh to Berwick-on-Tweed - with the intention of connecting with the English railways at the Border.

At the same time, the *Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway* extended their terminus from Haymarket to join the *North British Railway* at the *North Bridge Station* and very quickly this, jointly operated hub, became known as the *General Station*. The stations were subsequently secured by the *North British Railway* in the 1860s and between 1866 and 1868 the Canal Street Station was demolished with the *General Station* being radically altered with what is now Waverley Station springing up in its place.

The Firth has now been reached and it is time to look at how the next stage unfolded – reaching Fife!. The ferries would play an integral part in the process, initially collecting travellers and goods at Granton before carrying them over the Forth to be deposited in Burntisland. However, the real catalyst came in 1849, when the *Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee Company* commissioned no less a figure than Thomas Bouch (1822 – 1880), who became one of the most eminent Victorian Railway engineers, to design and build what was to all intents and purposes the world's first roll-on-roll ferry.

The commission was to design and build a facility which, irrespective of the state of

the tide, would allow carriages and goods wagons to be both loaded and unloaded onto the ferry between Granton and Burntisland. It transpires that at the time, Bouch was the railway company's Chief Engineer. He later went on to strike out on his own as a consulting engineer.

To carry out this work a specially designed ship – the *Leviathan* – was the answer. The vessel was designed by Thomas Grainger and was built on the Clyde by Robert Napier – a substantial and highly regarded shipbuilding company. The design had an engine mounted over the paddles on both the port and starboard sides. This meant that the main deck had the maximum storage area possible to hold the railway wagons. The vessel had rudders at both the bow and the stern and carried two rail tracks. The second goods ferry on the route was named after Robert Napier – a nice touch – it too covered both passages.

For all of his positive accomplishments – Sir Thomas Bouch will be remembered as the engineer who designed the ill-fated *Tay Rail Bridge*. Opened in May 1878, Queen Victoria travelled over the bridge in June 1879 and Bouch secured a knighthood for his part in constructing the world's longest rail bridge. The bridge collapsed in December 1879 with the loss of 75 lives. It was said that Bouch never recovered from the shock and died in October 1880.

The *Glasgow Saturday Post* of the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1850 carried an article indicating that a reporter had been present on the opening day and had made first trip from Burntisland to Granton. A portion on the article is reproduced here. The reporter was impressed by the efficient loading of 20 railway waggons and a passenger carriage carrying the directors and their friends. Despite a strong wind blowing the report indicated that “the vessel went as smoothly and steadily along as if the sea had been placid and calm, much to the satisfaction of the ladies and others inside the carriage. Indeed, this mode of crossing the Forth, without any changing of carriage, and in so stable a vessel as the floating railway will, no doubt ere long, render this a most agreeable and popular route to and from the North of Scotland”.

**FLOATING RAILWAY ACROSS THE FORTH.**  
It having been announced that the opening of the floating railway between Granton and Burntisland was to take place on Thursday, we took the opportunity of gratifying our curiosity as to how this novel and difficult undertaking was to be accomplished, by being present when all the operations were performed; and certainly the ease and speed with which we saw upwards of 20 loaded railway waggons, and also a passenger carriage, in which were several of the directors and their friends, put on board at Burntisland, ferried across the Forth, and drawn ashore at Granton, far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. The vessel was only about half-loaded, there being no more waggons at hand to put on board. With a strong wind from the N.W., and a heavy swell in consequence down the Forth, we expected to be as unpleasantly tossed and rolled about as we had been about half an hour before while crossing to Burntisland in the Express, one of the fastest of the company's vessels—for then our paddle-wings were several times rolled under water, and the spray sent flying from stem to stern, greatly to our annoyance. In the floating railway, however, none of these discomforts were felt.

It was Sir John Gladstone (1764-1851) who was the prime driver of the construction of the pier at Burntisland to serve the ferry. Although best known as the father of Prime Minister – W.E. Gladstone, Sir John was an interesting figure in his own right. Born in Leith, he became a very successful merchant, slave owner and Tory politician. It is suggested that, after the passing of the *Abolition of Slavery Act* of 1833, at the

subsequent passing of the *Slave Compensation Act* in 1837 – Gladstone and his family are suggested as being the largest beneficiary in terms of compensation. The *Leicestershire Mercury* under an

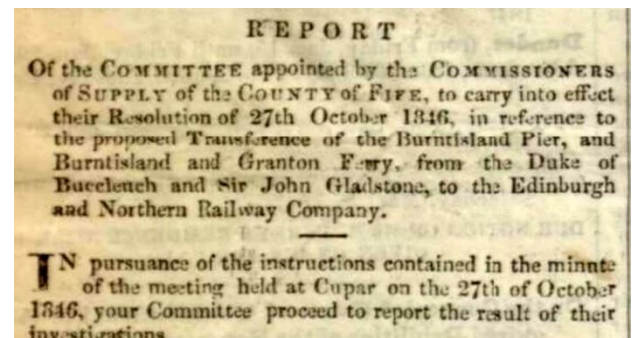
**Blood Money.**—A list of the parties receiving the twenty millions voted by parliament to the slave owners as compensation for the manumission of the slaves, has just been published. Amongst the largest recipients are John Gladstone, Esq., and his family, whose names have appended to them the trifling sum of £8865 18s 10d.

article headed Blood Money suggests that the sum involved was £88,665:18:10d. Twenty Million pounds had been set aside to compensate 40,000 owners for the manumission of their slaves. It goes without saying that nothing in the Act compensated those who had been enslaved – apparently freedom was sufficient! Strangely, in his 1851 obituaries, his connection with slavery was not mentioned – although, in fairness, only a sample of the numerous obituaries were checked.

The construction of the railway from Edinburgh to Granton has now been examined as have the ferries which from 1850 could carry passengers, carriages and goods wagons to Burntisland – without having the necessity of having the goods unloaded to make the journey. It should be explained that the passengers did not remain in their carriages. While the carriages and wagons were carried by the *P.S. Leviathan* – the passengers went by separate ferries. The early ferries used saw some operate only on the Forth – others only on the Tay but most operated on both passages.

- *Comet* – bought by John Gladstone and operated as a ferry from 1844-1853. It was chartered by the *Edinburgh and Northern* from 1847.
- *Granton* – built for Gladstone and Buccleuch – taken over by the *Edinburgh & Northern* in 1847.
- *Burntisland* – again built for Gladstone and Buccleuch and taken over by the railway on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1847.
- *Forth* – originally ordered by John Gladstone and taken over by the Railway on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1847.
- *Thane of Fife* – built for the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* in 1847.
- *Auld Reekie* – again built for the Railway and operated on this route from 1848 – 1880.
- *Express* – built for the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* and operated on the Tay Ferry from 1848 until 1875. It is mentioned here because it was sold in 1878 to John Key of the Abden Shipyard for breaking up. In fact the next two ferries commissioned – the John Stirling (1876) and William Muir (1879) were both built by John Key at his Kinghorn yard.

It can be seen that January 1847 features heavily in the above list and it transpires that this was the date on which the transference of Burntisland pier and the Burntisland to Granton Ferry from the Duke of Buccleuch and Sir John Gladstone to the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* came into effect. A snippet from the *Fife Herald* of the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1846 is reproduced for interest.



It is now time to look at what was happening on the north side of the Forth. Earlier, it was suggested that the advertisement carried in the *Fife Herald* on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 1844 was the starting point but there had indeed been activity prior to that date.

A glance at some of that activity can be examined before returning to the 1844 starting point.

The first serious suggestion of a railway from Burntisland to the Firth of Tay came in 1819. The engineer, Robert Stevenson, designed a proposed line but it went no further

**EDINBURGH, AND DUNDEE RAILWAY.**

**I**N reference to former Advertisements, the Promoters of this Railway beg to announce that the preliminary survey of the line by Messrs Robert Stevenson and Sons, Civil Engineers, is now completed.

The following is the direction of the line:—Commencing at Burntisland, where the new low water pier is in contemplation, the line passes through Kinghorn, immediately to the north of Kirkcaldy and Dysart, crosses the Leven between Leslie and Balbirnie, goes south of the New Inn and Cupar, to the immediate neighbourhood of the Guard Bridge, and thence proceeds northward by the villages of Leuchars and Ferry-Port-on-Craig to its termination at Newport, immediately opposite Dundee.

As this line, independent of its other advantages, affords great facility for a communication with Newburgh, by a branch from the vicinity of the New Inn, it is eminently calculated to forward the views of those promoting a railway from Kirkcaldy to Newburgh.

A lithographic plan is in the course of preparation, and will be published, along with the detailed prospectus, in the course of this week; and until completed, plans of the line will be found with Messrs CUNNINGHAM and BELL, W.S., 84, George Street, Edinburgh; Messrs CHRISTIE and PAGAN, Writers, Cupar; CHRISTOPHER KEAR, Writer, Dundee; and the Subscriber; to any of whom applications may be made for shares.

ROBERT ALLAN,

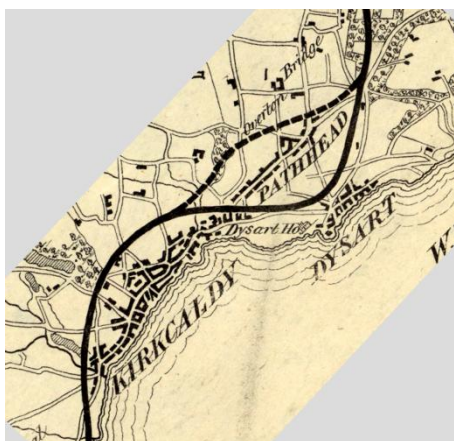
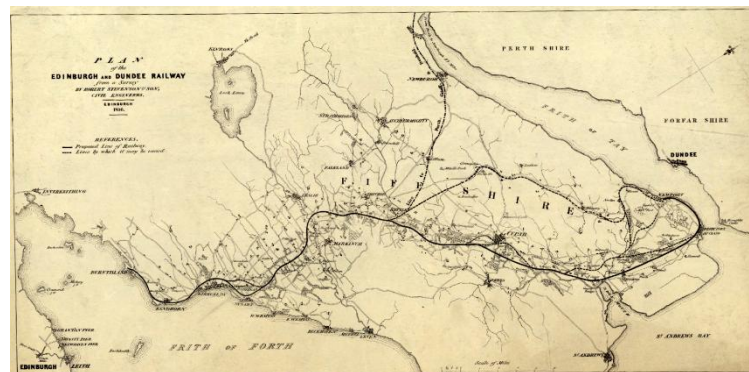
Printer: Fire Office, Royal Exchange.

Edinburgh, 19th April, 1836.

than that. The idea was resurrected in 1835 and 1836 and the *Fife Herald* of the 21<sup>st</sup> April 1836 carried a report on a scheme which was under the auspices of the *Edinburgh and Dundee Railway*. The article advised that the proposed line had been surveyed by Robert Stevenson and helpfully the route was given – Burntisland – Kinghorn – then skirting the north of Kirkcaldy and Dysart – crossing the River Leven between Leslie and Balbirnie – the New Inn – Cupar – Guardbridge – Leuchars and terminating at Ferry-Port-on-Craig. The article advised that a lithographic plan was being prepared and would be available the following week. Meantime, the plans could be seen in the offices of Cunningham & Bell W.S., George Street, Edinburgh, along

with Christie & Pagan W.S., in Cupar. Not one further item could be traced in the *Fife Herald* on the subject during the remainder of the 1830s.

However by great good fortune this 1835 Stevenson Map was stumbled on in the *National Library of Scotland Map Section*. The map is reproduced here and is of great interest. It shows the planned line, which



does go through Kirkcaldy, but also another

option in the form of a dotted line – which would have meant the station could possibly have been close to Overton Farm (Asda today)! It also reveals that Markinch and its iconic viaduct might never have come to pass – as the line appears to follow the old

stagecoach route through Alburne Park.

In 1835 another route was being surveyed by a John Geddes an engineer based in Edinburgh. The *Fife Herald* of Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> December 1835 carried a very full article on what was termed *An Interim Report on the Proposal for a Forth – Tay Railway*. This article carried a substantial volume of information on the population and industries of the county in fine detail. The thrust was



#### FIFE RAILWAY.

INTERIM REPORT on the proposed FORTH and TAY RAILWAY. By JOHN GEDDES, Civil Engineer, Edinburgh, M.W.S.

We had hoped in respect of such an undertaking as the proposed Railway for the county of Fife, to whose success the hearty co-operation of all parties is so essentially requisite, that no political animosities or jealousies would be allowed in the smallest to interfere, but that those taking upon themselves the responsibility of first stirring in the matter would sedulously avoid every possible ground of offence of this sort. We make this observation chiefly in consequence of noticing, in the minute of the meeting of 26th November, published by way of introduction to the report before us, the marked exclusion of the name of the Provost of Cupar from the committee, while the Provosts of Kirkcaldy, Dundee, Perth, &c. are, and of course very properly, included. As it is easy to foresee that the indulgence of any petty feelings of this sort, if persisted in, must prove exceedingly prejudicial, if not fatal to the immediate success of the undertaking, we think proper at once to enter our reclamation, and we do so in the firm conviction that the omission must have been an oversight, so far at least as the chairman, and the majority of those present, were concerned.

the idea of a railway which early 1840. His first thoughts the line had the working name Although nothing definite suggestion was that the line Burntisland, hugging the Kirkcaldy. The route would Markinch and on to Cupar. see a line reach Leuchars and ferry would cross the Tay. In produced a pamphlet on his deliver an address to The Chamber of Commerce in Edinburgh. At this time pamphlets were common currency in attempts to raise awareness, gain attention and hopefully secure financial support from local authorities and chambers of commerce.

The *Fife Herald* of the 25<sup>th</sup> February 1841 carried a report on the content of his address and the headline of the article is reproduced here. It can be seen that the line is now to be known as the Edinburgh, Dundee & Northern Railway+ – although a sister line also appears, which will seemingly skirt the east side of Loch Leven to Glenfarg and then reach for both Perth & Dundee. This will be known as the *Forth-Tay Western Line of Railway*.

+The name was shortened to the Edinburgh & Northern Railway on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1844

to connect Kirkcaldy on the Forth to Newburgh on the Tay, via Cupar. Detailed costings were contained in the article which suggested the annual income of the line would be £19,541 with expenses amounting to £2,541. The weakness was that Geddes had not yet determined what the most advantageous route would be!



Thomas Grainger had first started to take an interest in would run through Fife in were far from detailed and of the *Eastern Fife Line*. had been agreed – the would traverse a route from coast, through Kinghorn to continue through Dysart, Further construction would Tayport, at which point a December 1840, Grainger proposal which he used to

#### THE FIFE RAILWAY QUESTION.

1st, REMARKS on the FORTH and TAY RAILWAY, 1840. Neil and Co., Edinburgh.

2d, OBSERVATIONS, addressed to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Edinburgh, relative to the proposed RAILWAY from the North Shore of the Frith of Forth, by New Inn and Cupar, to the Shore of the River Tay, at or near to Ferry-Port-on-Craig, to be called the EDINBURGH, DUNDEE, AND NORTHERN RAILWAY; with REMARKS on the proposed Line, by the East Side of Lochleven and Glenfarg, to Dundee and Perth, called the FORTH AND TAY WESTERN LINE OF RAILWAY. By THOMAS GRAINGER. Edinburgh: H. and J. Fillans, 1841.

This *Forth-Tay Western Line* is a line proposed by a rival civil engineer – John Milne. This appears to have Kirkcaldy as its starting point – in fact, to be more accurate,

#### FIFE RAILWAY QUESTION.

REPLY to the OBSERVATIONS addressed by Mr THOMAS GRAINGER to the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce of the City of Edinburgh on the proposed Railways through Fife. By JOHN MILNE, Civil Engineer. Edinburgh, Neill & Co. 1841.

TAKING advantage of Mr Grainger's pamphlet on the subject, we sometime ago entered at considerable length on the proposition of Messrs Petty and Milne to carry a line of railway through the west of Fife by way of Glenfarg. These gentlemen, it appears, are not yet satisfied that their scheme is altogether and essentially a chimerical one. In the present production of Mr Milne, an attempt is made to divest it of some portion of its original sin against common sense, and to present it in a somewhat more feasible shape to the eye of the public. As

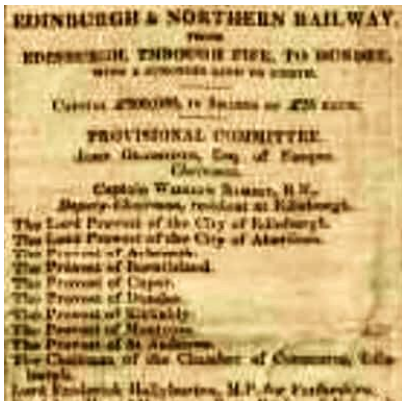
Seafield. It would run inland via Auchterderran and, as mentioned above, to Loch Leven and Glenfarg. At that point, it would head for Newburgh where it would cross the Tay by a bridge. On reaching the opposite bank, it would then branch off for Perth and Dundee. It seems that, once again, the obligatory pamphlet was produced and, again, an address was given to the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce. It goes without saying that the address was covered by the *Fife Herald* in its edition of the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1841 and

the article's headline is shown for interest. It seems that the last of Milne's 62 page pamphlet suggested that his line would produce a dividend of 19% while Grainger's route a paltry 1%.

It is now time to return to the previously reproduced item which had appeared in the *Fife Herald* of the 21<sup>st</sup> March 1844. The newspaper quickly followed up with a further report in their edition of the 4<sup>th</sup> April, where the content covers a meeting held, two days previously, by the promoters in Edinburgh.

*The Fife Railway.*—A meeting of the promoters of the Edinburgh and Northern Railway was, we hear, held in Edinburgh on Tuesday last. The meeting was numerous and influential, and the proceedings most satisfactory. The meeting unanimously and highly approved of the steps that had been taken. The meeting was also unanimous as to the propriety of including in the scheme the junction line to Perth, and it is to be included accordingly. A Provisional Committee, in which Fife is amply and efficiently represented, was appointed, for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions, and taking all other initiatory steps for carrying out the project. The prospectus will appear in the course of a few days. John Gladstone, Esq. of Fasque is to be Chairman of the Company. In the meantime Mr Gladstone acts as Chairman of the London Committee, and Captain Ramsay presides over the Edinburgh one. We rejoice to be able to state that the promoters of the scheme, and especially those who had paid most attention to the subject, were unanimous in the opinion that its success is now certain.

The language of the time tells us that – “the meeting was numerous and influential and the proceedings most satisfactory. The meeting unanimously, and highly approved the steps which had been taken. The meeting was also unanimous as the propriety of including in the scheme the junction line to Perth, and it is to be included accordingly”. We learn that - A Provisional Committee had been appointed and the article was pleased to say that Fife was amply represented in its number. A committee was appointed “for the purpose of obtaining subscriptions and taking all other initiatory steps for carrying out the project”. We learn that the Prospectus will be published over the course of the next few days. John Gladstone is to be the Chairman of the Company. The article finished on the very positive note that - “We rejoice to be able to state that the promoters of the scheme, and especially those who paid most attention to the subject, were unanimous in the opinion that success is now certain”.



The promise of the issue of the Prospectus was certainly kept as the next edition published on the 11<sup>th</sup> April carried it on its front page. The first thing to notice from the portion shown here is that the capital sought has grown from £600,000 to £800,000 although the individual share price remains at £25. To put that figure into perspective - that £25 share would cost circa £4,100 today.

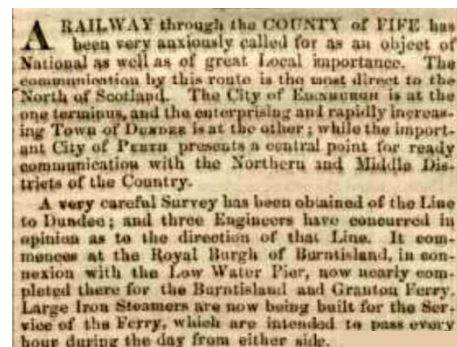
The names of the Provisional Committee were listed – headed by the Chairman, John Gladstone, followed by that of the Deputy Chairman, Captain W. Ramsay, R.N. These were followed by:-

- The Lord Provost of Edinburgh.
- The Lord Provost of Aberdeen.
- The Provost of Arbroath.
- The Provost of Burntisland.
- The Provost of Cupar.
- The Provost of Dundee.
- The Provost of Kirkcaldy.
- The Provost of Montrose.
- The Provost of St Andrew's.

These were followed by a raft of influential persons and positions. It would not be practical to list all, therefore, a sample of the calibre of the individuals involved are given:-

- Lord Frederick Hallyburton – M.P. for Forfarshire.
- Sir Adam Hay of Haystone.
- W.F. Lindsay Carnegie, Esq., Chairman of the Arbroath & Forfar Railway Company.
- George Duncan, Esq., M.P. for Dundee.
- Edward Elliee, Esq., M.P. for East Fifeshire Burghs.
- Colonel Ferguson of Raith – M.P. for South Fifeshire Burghs.
- John Learmonth, Esq., Chairman of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway.
- William Tullis, Esq., – Auchmuty Mill.
- Robert Wiseman, Esq., - Cupar.
- David Yool. Esq., Manufacturer, Blebo Mills.

The rationale followed and, rather than produce the full text – only deviations from the original notice will be detailed.



“The route had been carefully surveyed and three engineers had concurred that the route was by far the best option. It is revealed that the low water pier at Burntisland is now nearing completion and that a number of iron steamers are being built for the ferry service – which is intended to run, during the day, from both Granton and Burntisland on the hour. A branch line will be constructed in Kirkcaldy running to the town's harbour. It is re-emphasised that to reach Dundee from the Fife side, a floating bridge will be constructed with the co-operation of the Government.

“The branch route to Perth will commence just after the village of Kingskettle and will reach the South Inch via – Collessie – Lindores – Newburgh and Abernethy. The length of this branch will be 17 miles. The distance from Burntisland to the Fife terminus at Craighead is 30 miles. The distance between Burntisland and Perth is stated as being 37 miles. In total, all the tracks laid will cover 56 miles with the summit level being recorded as 275 feet above Burntisland pier.

“The gradients were said to be favourable and that there were no engineering difficulties. “The line, whether considered with reference to its estimated cost, its permanent working or the great traffic it will command, is unquestionably the best which could be selected. By it, the distance to Aberdeen, and to the principal towns on the east coast of Scotland, north of Dundee, is greatly reduced, as compared with any line of railway which has ever been proposed:-

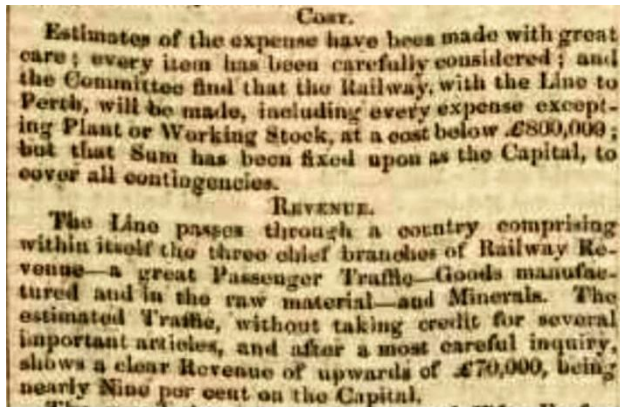
- From Aberdeen to Edinburgh it is shortened by 45½ miles;
- From Perth to Edinburgh by 40¾ miles;
- From Perth to London by 37 miles;
- From Dundee to Edinburgh by 54½ miles;
- From Dundee to London by 54 miles;
- From Dundee to Glasgow by 5½ miles.

The time occupied in travelling from Perth to the centre of Edinburgh will be 2¼ hours; and between Dundee and Edinburgh, including the Ferry and the Floating Bridge will be 2¾ hours”.

The potential of the network was explored with “Railways are already formed, and others are in progress at both termini. At the north there is the railway from Dundee to Arbroath; and in further continuation are the lines to Forfar and to Newtyle. There is also the prospect of the line soon being further extended, in connection northwards, to Montrose, Brechin, Aberdeen, and to the other important towns in the same direction.

“At the southern terminus it will be connected at Granton Pier with the *Edinburgh*,

*Leith and Granton Railway*, which, being carried to the centre of Edinburgh, there unites with both the *Edinburgh & Glasgow* and the *North British Railways*. By the former, continued by the Greenock and Ayr lines, the communication will be extended directly to the great manufacturing city of Glasgow, and the other important depots of trade and manufacturers in the populous counties of Lanark, Stirling, Dumbarton, Ayr and Renfrew”.



There followed a paragraph on the cost - “Estimates of expenses have been made with the greatest care; every item has been carefully considered; and the Committee find that the railway, with the line to Perth, will be made, including every expense excepting plant and working stock, at a cost under £800,000, but that sum has been fixed upon as the capital, to cover all contingencies”.

The final sales pitch offered the opinion that the route had the three necessities for a successful railway - (1) **a great passenger traffic**, (2) **manufactured goods and raw materials** to convey and, lastly, (3) **minerals to transport**. It was considered that the revenue from the project should be around £70,000 per annum or a 9% return on capital.

In terms of **passenger traffic**, the prospectus calculated that the population which it termed was “immediately connected with the line was 605,250 plus it was suggested that areas which “were not yet immediately connected” amounted to another 474,750 souls allowing the claim that the area within striking distance of the track was 1,080,000. It would seem that, included in the figure, were the inhabitants of Fife, Forfar, Edinburgh and Perth.

Turning to **manufactured goods and raw materials** – great play was made of the fact that “the line passed through a country studded with manufactories. It is distant not more than a few hundred yards from the mills on the Eden, and approaches many of the most important manufactories on the River Leven – a stream which embraces a great number of works and affords an ample and uniform supply of water power.

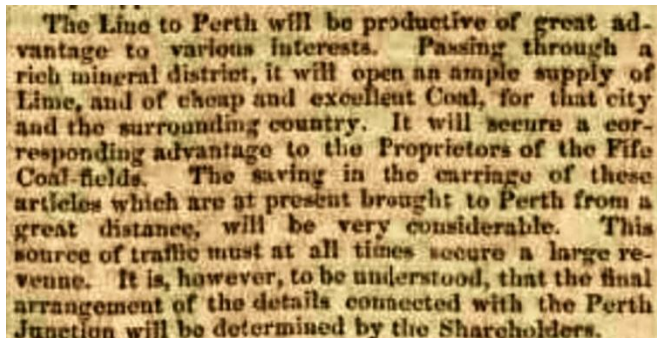
“The number and importance of the manufactories at Dundee, the northern terminus, are well known. The traffic between Edinburgh and Dundee alone, by Leith and Granton, is very great, and continues to increase by additional means of transport being placed on the roads”.

**The minerals** were said to “consist of coal, lime, freestone and ironstone. The line intersects the great East coalfield of Fife to the extent of about 11 miles and approaches the great coalfields in the parish of Auchterderran, which are the most northern in Scotland. Limestone of the best quality is in great abundance in many places contiguous to the line; and rich black-band ironstone abounds which is wrought for

export”.

In addition to minerals it was suggested that - “as an agricultural district Fife, Forfar and the adjoining counties are amongst the first in Scotland. Grain and cattle are largely raised and very extensively supplied to the southern markets”.

“The line to Perth will be productive of great advantages to various interests. Passing through a rich mineral district, it will open an ample supply of lime, and of cheap and excellent coal, for that City and the surrounding country. It will secure a corresponding advantage to the proprietors of the Fife coal-fields. The savings in the carriage of these articles which are at present brought to Perth, from a great distance, will be very considerable. This source of traffic must at all times secure a large revenue. It is, however, to be understood, that the final arrangements of the details of the Perth junction will be determined by the shareholders.



The Line to Perth will be productive of great advantage to various interests. Passing through a rich mineral district, it will open an ample supply of Lime, and of cheap and excellent Coal, for that city and the surrounding country. It will secure a corresponding advantage to the Proprietors of the Fife Coal-fields. The saving in the carriage of these articles which are at present brought to Perth from a great distance, will be very considerable. This source of traffic must at all times secure a large revenue. It is, however, to be understood, that the final arrangement of the details connected with the Perth Junction will be determined by the Shareholders.

“The traffic has been subjected to a searching enquiry by a Committee, the members of which are individuals of much experience and are mainly connected with manufacturing and mercantile interests. Perhaps in no previous instance have greater facilities been available for obtaining complete information in regard to the existing traffic”. The information mentioned above was then provided in tabulated form for both passenger and goods traffic. The explanations for each segment were full and it would be time-consuming and possibly tiring were it all recorded here. Instead, only a synopsis is given here :-

#### **Passenger Traffic.**

- The Committee estimated that the number of passengers using coaches to travel between Edinburgh and Dundee was 30,576. This figure, as was apparently the normal case, was doubled to 61,152 and at 5/- per journey brought out - **£15288.**
- The steamboat passengers between Granton and Dundee were estimated to be in the region of 40,000 per annum and at 4/- per trip brought out income of **£8,000.**
- Coach travel between Edinburgh and Perth was suggested to be 20,160 which was again doubled to 40,320 and at 5/- gave an income of **£10,080.**

This gave a total assumed income from through passengers totalling **£33,368.**

- To this was added coach traffic between St. Andrew's and Edinburgh which was taken at 6,912 and when doubled and calculated at 4/- per journey gave **£2,765.**
- The lowest anticipated traffic from station to station on the line rather than from

terminus to terminus was computed at **£17,168**.

This gave a total assumed income from non-through passengers totalling **£19,933**.

This meant that the anticipated passenger income in the prospectus totalled **£53,301**.

### **Goods Traffic**

Parcels and for carrying the Mail	£2,000
Goods from shore to shore 40,000 tons at 6/-	£12,000
Goods from Perth to Burntisland 20,000 tons at 6/-	£6,000
Goods on local traffic 32,000 tons at 2/9d	£4,400
Farm Produce 15,000 tons at 2/-	£1,500
Minerals, mainly coal, ironstone and Limestone 170,000 at 2/6d	£21,250
Minerals on the Perth line 50,000 tons at 2/-	£5,000
Wood – 10,000 tons at 2/-	£1,000
Materials for buildings – bricks tiles, Pavements and slates	£4,000
Carriage and horses, cattle and other livestock – lowest calculation.	<u>£3,000</u>
Total for Goods Traffic	<b><u>£60,150</u></b>

These figures brought out a total income from all sources of **£113,451**. They were certainly only estimates but the Committee, as mentioned above, claimed it was the “most complete information on existing traffic”.

There was far less information on the costs involved, in fact far less is something of an exaggeration – the whole rationale was restricted to “From which deduct the annual

expense of working the line and for the interest on the first cost of plant". The figure quoted was £42,816 which after being deducted from the income left a surplus of **£70,634**, which was stated to be close to a 9% return on capital.

In making the above estimate, it is to be observed that the average rate of fares for Passengers has been taken under 1½d. per mile, the Goods under 2d. per ton per mile, and the Minerals at a little more than 1½d. per ton per mile; and no credit is taken for any increase in the amount of Goods at present carried. Keeping this remark in view, and other important articles not stated, the Committee have every confidence that the estimate is below the amount which will be realized.

The principal Landed Proprietors on the line have signified their intention to support, or not to oppose the Bill; and the Committee have the satisfaction of being able to state, as regards the Capital required, that Subscriptions to a large amount are promised as soon as the books are opened.

The summing up read as follows:- In making the above estimates, it is to be observed that the average rate of fares for passengers is 1½d per mile, the goods under 2d per ton per mile and the minerals at little more than 1½d per ton per mile; and no credit is taken for any increase in the amount of goods presently carried. Keeping this remark in view, and other important articles not stated, The Committee have every confidence that the estimate is below the

amount which will be realised.

The principal landed proprietors on the line have signified their intention to support, or not to oppose the Bill; and the Committee have the satisfaction of being able to state, as regards the capital required, that subscriptions to a large amount as promised as soon as the books are opened.

The standing orders of the House of Commons provide that ten per cent on the sums subscribed shall be deposited before a Railway Bill can be read a second time; and a deposit to that amount will therefore be required before applying to Parliament. A deposit of 10/- per share is to be paid as the shares are awarded. The amount of the calls to be payable at such time as the Committee may direct. The shares of parties failing to pay the calls, when required, will be forfeited, along with any sums they may have previously paid. No subscriber will be liable beyond the sum he has subscribed.

The Act will provide that not more than £2:10/- per share will be called for at any one time and that there shall be an interval of not less than three months between calls. After the Act is obtained, four per cent interest will be allowed on the calls from the date of payment until the line is open for traffic. If the Act is not obtained, the payments, deducting expenses, will be returned.

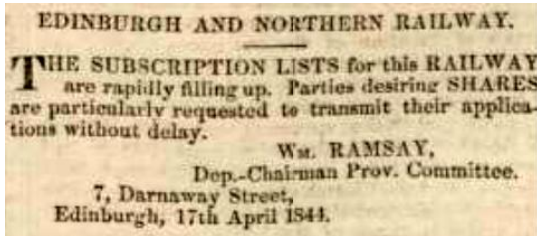
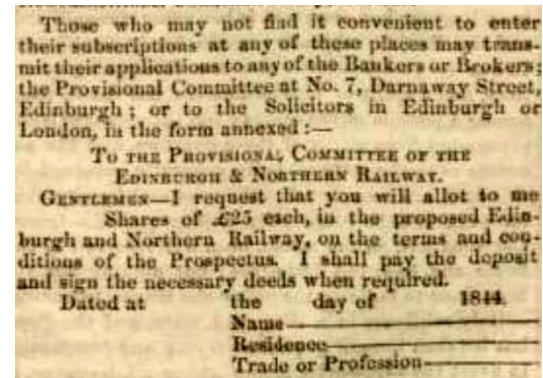
Edinburgh, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1844.

The two final items contained in the Prospectus were, firstly, details of where subscriptions for shares could be made and also where copies of the Prospectus could be obtained. There was certainly a wide range of cities and towns to arrange the completion of the subscriptions and some had more than one broker/bank available

Edinburgh – 4	Offices able to transact subscriptions
Glasgow - 3	“
Dundee - 4	“
Cupar - 1	“

Perth -	1	“
Montrose-	1	“
Aberdeen –	2	“
London -	2	“
Manchester-	2	“
Liverpool -	2	“
Newcastle-	1	“
Derby-	1	“
Leeds-	1	“

If there was no local office or bank available then the Prospectus carried a pro-forma application which could be completed and submitted to the Provisional Committee or to the solicitors acting for the promoters in Edinburgh or London. For interest the form to be used in these instances is reproduced here.



An advertisement from the *Fife Herald* of the 25<sup>th</sup> April is reproduced here – it claims that the Subscription Lists are rapidly filling up and intending purchasers should complete their applications without delay.

In the same edition there is a piece under the heading:- “The Fife Railway and its Perth Opponents”. This article which is written in a jocular, knockabout style is clearly aimed at the *Perthshire Advertiser* – which it is suggested is campaigning on behalf of the *Central Scotland Railway* – which had almost simultaneously issued its own prospectus. The plan being a railway from Perth to Stirling and then joining the Edinburgh – Glasgow line. The article appears to be attempting to prevent the branch from Kingskettle to Perth going ahead, which would give two benefits – firstly, protecting the investors of the *Central Scotland Railway* and secondly, giving a monopoly to that railway.

This ignored the fact that the Fife line would carry cheaper coal and limestone into Perth and its local area. It is also, without question, that the Fife line would get goods, such as slate and wood, from Perth to Edinburgh far faster and cheaper than the alternative. It is hard to believe that it could be suggested that, to travel from Perth to Edinburgh with a detour over 40 miles via Stirling, would be a viable and acceptable option. It is best, in the interests of clarity, to reproduce a map from 1848 which clearly shows the two lines and it is difficult to accept that the Perth objection was not based on protectionism. The *Perthshire Advertiser* article had made two claims – firstly, that a “line of railway interrupted by



two arms of the sea can never be a successful speculation” and secondly, “that Perth will not let us give them a branch to their city and that the Town Council and community will petition against it to a man”. The first claim had nothing to do with access to Perth, more it was a dig at the fact two firths had to be crossed over the course of the main line.

*The Witness (Edinburgh)* of the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1844 carried an article on railways currently under consideration which had first been published in the *Dundee Warden*. The first to be mentioned was the *North British* whose object was to connect Edinburgh to Berwick on Tweed, before connecting with a trunk line to Newcastle. We are told that the capital has been subscribed and the Bill was before Parliament. The writer had no doubt that it would proceed.

Next discussed was the *Caledonian Railway*, quoted as a rival to the *North British*. Here the object was to connect Edinburgh to Carlisle and Glasgow. This substantial undertaking was looking at capital of £1,800,000 with the suggestion that a third had already been raised. The writer was again quite confident that this line would also proceed.

The next to be considered was the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* through Fife to Dundee. No mention was made in that initial paragraph of the branch to Perth. “The low water piers at Granton and Burntisland are progressing rapidly towards completion and large and powerful iron steamers, for the conveyance of goods and passengers, which are intended to pass every hour from either side, are in progress, and expected to be on passage in the course of the ensuing summer.

3. The Edinburgh and Northern Railway from Edinburgh through Fife to Dundee. The low water piers at Granton and Burntisland are progressing rapidly towards completion, and large and powerful iron steamers for the conveyance of goods and passengers, which are intended to pass every hour from either side, are in progress, and are expected to be on the passage in the course of the ensuing summer. Burntisland is to be the terminus on the south, and Ferry-Port-on-Craig, or Craighead, where a floating bridge is about to be placed by the Government, on the north.

“Burntisland is to be the terminus for the south, and Ferry-Port-on-Craig, or Craighead, where a floating bridge is about to be placed by the government on the north. The capital is fixed at £600,000; and, although the fact is not advertised, it is generally known to be promoted by the Duke

of Buccleuch and Gladstone of Fasque, the latter of whom and his family are alone reported to have taken shares to the extent of £50,000. There is, therefore, we think there is little doubt that it also, under auspices so powerful and influential persons will be proceeded with. The original plan contemplated a branch to Perth, diverging about the village of Kettle, but this, in the meantime, is suspended, until it shall be seen if the rival line we are about to mention shall be proceeded with.

Immediately following was a paragraph on the *Scottish Central Railway* which, as we know, was intended to run from “Perth to Stirling and joining the *Edinburgh – Glasgow Railway* at or near Falkirk, which may be regarded as an opposition line to the *Edinburgh & Northern* which we have just noticed. This railway is brought forward under the auspices of the Marquis of Breadalbane, and a powerful body of the proprietors throughout the whole central region, through which it is intended to pass.

It is also in a special manner the favoured of our neighbours of Perth, whose municipal authorities propose becoming shareholders to the extent of £5,000 on behalf of the “common gude”. We see no room to question, therefore, that the estimated capital for it (£700,000), will also be promptly procured, and that it will be proceeded with without delay.

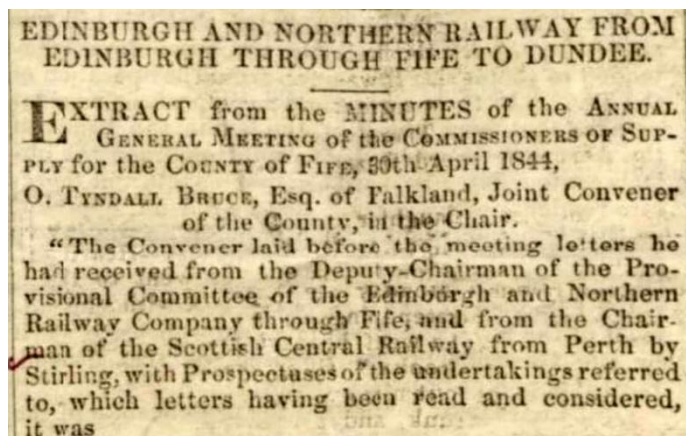
While other railways also featured, the *Dundee – Perth line* was probably the most significant in that this line proposed to run from Dundee, through the Carse of Gowrie, but then, due to the terrain, as it closed in on Perth was to cross the Tay and approach Perth from the southern side.

Without question there were a number of errors in the text but it was the first mention that the branch to Perth has been suspended. *The Fife Herald* certainly did not know about this possibility in its article on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. Could this be correct or simply an attempt to support the Perth line by causing concern to potential investors? – let us see.

*The Fife Herald's* edition of the 9<sup>th</sup> May 1844 carried the outcome of part of the discussions at the Annual General Meeting of the Commissioners of General Supply for the County of Fife, which had been held on the 30<sup>th</sup> April, with the extravagantly named, Onesiphorus Tyndal Bruce, of Falkland, in the chair as the Joint Convener. In reality, this was the follow-on to the situation outlined above and, without question, was a very important meeting with a significant outcome in terms of the Kingskettle-Perth branch line.

Two letters had been received by the Commission, one from the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* and another from the *Scottish Central Railways*, who, as previously mentioned, were championing a proposed line from Stirling to Perth. Included with the letters were the two prospectuses of the proposed lines. It would seem that had the vote gone in favour of the *Scottish Central Railway*, today's route to Perth may well have been at best delayed and at worst never constructed. However, the eventual construction of the Moncrieffe tunnel in 1848 by the *Central Scotland Railway* allowed them to charge for the use of their tunnel – a cost which *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* gladly paid to reach Perth. As will be shown later in the narrative, there was an intermediate step via the purchase of the *Strathearn Junction Railway*. The conclusion of the meeting was:-

“With the letters having been read and considered, it was moved by the Earl of Leven and Melville, seconded by Henry Stewart Esq., of St. Fort, and unanimously agreed to, that the meeting are of the opinion that the proposed railway through Fife will afford by far the most direct line of connection betwixt Edinburgh and the most populous districts of the North of Scotland; and while it thus offers the best extension of the leading lines of



railway from England for the general traffic of the country, it will at the same time confer very great benefits on the important districts through which it passes, and therefore merits the warm support of this County". The notice was extracted from the General Minutes of the meeting by the Clerk, Thomas Horsburgh.

No mention either way of the proposed branch to Perth and as yet nothing has been unearthed to support the claim.

Moving on, we find in the *Morning Herald (London)* of the 14<sup>th</sup> May 1844, a notice issued by the Company suggesting that the number of shares applied for has greatly exceeded the number available. This means that no further applications will be accepted and the allocation of the shares is proceeding, with as little delay as the number of applications will allow. Investors were warned that deposits must be paid within the time specified.

Three days later, this information was reported in the *Montrose Standard* of the 17<sup>th</sup> in article form with the writer adding;- "we are not surprised at this, being satisfied, from the very great traffic this railway will have, of its being a good investment for capitalists, as well as of the greatest advantage to the public".

*The Fife Herald* of the 23<sup>rd</sup> May carried another article on the spat between itself and the *Perthshire Advertiser*. The content is interesting from several points in that we learn that the projected cost of the line from Kettle to Perth is £250,000. It is also revealed that the *Scottish Central Railway's* idea of a line from Perth to Stirling is no longer the intended route. Rather, the line will not touch Stirling but will join the Edinburgh – Glasgow line at one or more points. Greenhill Junction turned out to be the connecting point. The line had been estimated at costing £700,000 which had been the sum included in the Prospectus which was also issued in April 1844.

A WORD AT PARTING WITH THE  
PERTHSHIRE ADVERTISER AND SCOTTISH  
CENTRAL.

Our contemporary the Perthshire Advertiser, whose self-complacency never forsakes him under any circumstances, has again inflicted upon his readers another column of his dull and senseless flippancies on behalf of that most hopeless hobby of our western neighbours, the Scottish Central Railway. Having obviously nothing to say in reply to the facts and arguments brought forward by us, establishing the superior eligibility of the Fife line in all its relations as a practical undertaking, he attempts to get over the difficulties of his task by pretending feats never accomplished by him, and reiterating fallacies and statements which have been again and again refuted. This species of effrontery, it will be seen, is the weapon which the Advertiser now chiefly relies upon.

*The Fife Herald* leader-writer was having none of it pointing out that "it is perfectly plain and obvious that the bulk of passengers from the north of Scotland, from Dundee and Aberdeen and the intermediate towns, will in passing to Edinburgh always continue with the present route through Fife, as no possible inducement can be imagined that could persuade travellers to go so far out of their way as to proceed by Stirling or one or other of our "friend's" points. In the next place all the Perth passenger traffic to Edinburgh must equally go by the Fife line as providing a saving in both cost and

time, to say nothing of the privilege of getting their limbs stretched for half an hour in the course of their journey on the deck of a steamer, to the disadvantage of being kept cooped up for some four hours together in a railway train, will equally determine the people of the "Fair City" on that point. Given the *Herald* is reporting that the Perth line

is costing £250,000 and again championing its advantages, can the suggestion that is being suspended be true?

Strange to relate, when determining their route the *Scottish Central Railway* had assumed friendly terms with the *Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway* would give it access to Glasgow over their line but, in reality, the *Edinburgh and Glasgow* opposed the *Scottish Central Railway Bill* in Parliament as they had their own designs on reaching Stirling. For a spell it looked as if the newly incorporated *Scottish Central Railway* might have to ally itself with the also newly incorporated *Caledonian Railway* which proposed to reach Glasgow from the south.

The *Glasgow Chronicle* of the 31<sup>st</sup> May reported that - “it is stated, in a local paper, that Mr Gladstone, of Fasque, (father of Mr Gladstone of the Board of Trade) has subscribed not less than £25,000 towards the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*; of the Provisional Committee of which he is Chairman”. The item was credited to the *Doncaster Gazette*.

The *Perthshire Advertiser* is back in action on the 25<sup>th</sup> July, although the headline is in relation to the *Dundee & Perth Railway* and a meeting of its Provisional Committee which had taken place the previous Thursday at Inchtute. The item had been reprinted from an earlier edition of the *Dundee Advertiser*. At this meeting a proposal was discussed which came from Mr Gladstone and the committee of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*. The proposal was to cross the Tay at Inchyra and then make a connection with the *Dundee & Perth Railway* - “which was entertained, and a Committee was formed to meet with the *Edinburgh & Northern* Committee and the *River Commissioners*. This proposed junction is of the greatest importance to the public as it will form a continuous line of railway communication between Edinburgh and the north-eastern counties of Scotland”.

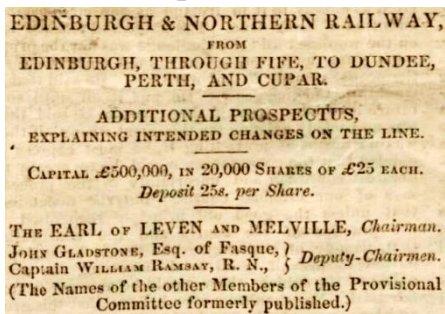
DUNDEE AND PERTH RAILWAY.  
A meeting of the Provisional Committee of this Railway was held yesterday at Inchtute, which was numerous attended by the Proprietors of the district, and by the members of Committee in Dundee. Sir Patrick Murray Threipland, Bart. (in the absence of the Chairman Lord Kinnaird), was called to the chair. Mr Miller, the Engineer of the Line, was present, and stated his views in regard to the Line and character of the works; all of which are of the most favourable description. The Meeting had under consideration a proposal from Mr Gladstone of Fasque, and the Committee of the Edinburgh and Northern Railway, to form a junction with the Dundee and Perth Railway by crossing the River at Inchyra, which was entertained; and a Committee was appointed to meet with the Edinburgh and Fife Committee, and with the River Commissioners. This proposed junction is of the greatest importance to the public, as it will form a continuous line of railway communication between Edinburgh and the north eastern counties of Scotland. The Committee directed the Parliamentary plans to be proceeded with, and all the other necessary preparations to be made for bringing in a bill into Parliament next session.

The piece was immediately followed by the *Perthshire Advertiser* not mincing its words:- “In reference to the preceding paragraph, we take leave to repeat a statement that we have more than once made already, namely, that neither the Town Council, nor the Harbour Commissioners of Perth, will ever consent to the erection of any bridge across the Tay, for any purpose whatever, at a point below the Quays. Of this, our Dundee friends may be thoroughly assured, that all the labour and negotiations for such a purpose will be spent in vain. The free and safe navigation of the River is a point of paramount importance to Perth, which the community cannot allow to be interfered with in any respect. To all such plans, as that in the paragraph quoted, the Council and Harbour Commission will therefore interpose the utmost possible opposition, and without the concurrence of parties so primarily and deeply concerned, any application to Parliament would prove utterly futile”.

So what is to happen now? Pointers are available in the *Scottish Guardian (Glasgow)*

in its edition of the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1844. The article had been lifted from an earlier edition of the *Sentinel*. A meeting had been held by the Provisional Committee of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* with Mr Gladstone in the chair “and various other influential parties present, when it was resolved to proceed energetically with the modified plan, by issuing a new prospectus, and completing the necessary survey, preparatory to applying for a Bill in the next session of Parliament”. So just what has gone wrong – it had been suggested that the capital had been raised and yet here we are with a new prospectus, a modified plan and a survey being required!

The answer followed when it is disclosed that “the line now adopted is, as we formerly explained, to proceed by Kettle to Newburgh, thence to Perth, and to be connected with the *Dundee & Perth Railway* by a bridge over the Tay, in the neighbourhood of Newburgh. The capital for this reduced plan is £500,000, and we are glad to be informed that a large number of the shares not taken up by the subscribers to the former line, were disposed of at the meeting. The Earl of Leven & Melville has been elected Chairman of the Committee and his Lordship is known to take a deep interest in the undertaking; we have no doubt that all the preliminary arrangements will be promptly completed. That seems a huge reduction in the cost – has something else been



altered/omitted? It would also seem that the failure of the original Prospectus has possibly cost John Gladstone the chairmanship.

The amended prospectus duly appeared in the *Fife Herald* of the 12<sup>th</sup> September – although much of the details remained unaltered, the prospectus was now headed as;-

## Edinburgh & Northern Railway

### Edinburgh, through Fife, to Dundee, Perth and Cupar.

The Earl of Leven & Melville was shown as the Chairman with John Gladstone joining Captain William Ramsay as Vice-Chairs.

The reason for the amendment was then set out;- “in consequence of the difficulty and inconvenience which it is apprehended would attend the crossing of the River Tay, from Craighead to Dundee, by a ferry nearly two miles in length, and the heavy estimated expense – not less than two hundred thousand pounds – which would be required to make the proposed line of road from Cupar to Craighead – the intention of crossing the river opposite Dundee has been abandoned. It has now been ascertained, after a particular survey by Mr Grainger, the Company's engineer, assisted by other professional persons, that the river may be crossed immediately above Newburgh, opposite to the island of Mugdrum, where the navigable channel is only about 400 yards wide at high-water, and 150 yards at the low water of the spring tides. It has accordingly been resolved that the southern channel of the river, from the shore to the

island of Mugdrum, shall be crossed by means of a swing-bridge, which, it has also been ascertained is quite practicable. This bridge can be made of sufficient strength to carry over the trains with perfect safety, without delay, and without any interference with the navigation of the river. The remaining part of the channel of the river between Mugdrum and the north shore being dry at low water, will be passed by a causeway or road, formed on piles so far apart as not to interfere with the salmon-fishings. It has been further ascertained that the whole works necessary for the passage of the river, may be executed at a very moderate expense.

“It is intended that, on the shore, the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* shall join the railway proposed to be made between Dundee and Perth, which will be about 14 miles in length. *The Edinburgh & Northern Company's* trains will have a permanent right to pass over the latter's railway to and from its own terminus at Dundee, upon paying to the Dundee Company a reasonable toll – that Company to pay one half of the expenses of the works involved for the crossing of the river.

“By this course, the Dundee Ferry will be avoided, and a considerable saving in point of time effected, while only a small addition will be made to the distance. The whole line will also be formed at a greatly reduced expense.

By this course, the Dundee Ferry will be avoided, and a considerable saving in point of time effected, while only a small addition will be made to the distance. The whole line will also be formed at a greatly reduced expense.

“It will be seen, by reference to the plan, that the railway will be in all respects the same as formerly proposed, with the omission of the line between Cupar and Craighead. The road, with the exception of the part between Perth and Newburgh, will be made with a single line of rails, but a sufficient quantity of land will be purchased to allow a second to be added here-after, if required. The part between Perth and Newburgh will be constructed with a double line of rails at the joint expenses of the *Edinburgh & Northern* and of the *Dundee & Perth* companies.

The proposed changes will be attended with a reduction in the cost of £300,000, and a capital of £500,000, divided into 20,000 shares of £25 each, will therefore be sufficient to accomplish the execution of the whole works, while the principal sources of traffic contemplated in the first Prospectus will be retained.

“The proposed changes will be attended with a reduction in the cost of £300,000, and a capital of £500,000 divided into 20,000 shares of £25 each, will therefore be sufficient to

accomplish the execution of the whole works, while the proposed sources of traffic contained in the first prospectus will be retained. The following is the estimate upon which the reduced capital has been fixed:-

The Line, with land and buildings from Burntisland to the crossing of the Tay.	348,000
Half do. From the point of crossing the river to Perth.	45,000
Branch to Kirkcaldy.	10,000

Branch to Cupar, five miles.	55,000
Half expense of crossing the river.	15,000
Extra fund for contingencies.	<u>27,000</u>
	£ <u>500,000</u>

“A large portion of this capital has been obtained and the remainder is now offered to the present shareholders and the public. A still more particular and searching investigation of the probable traffic on the road has been made by a respected professional person (Mr. Marshall) who has been employed for this specific object, as he has been by other companies for the same purpose, and he is prepared to prove the results before the Committees of both Houses of Parliament in the usual manner. The Provisional Committee have received Mr. Marshall's detailed report of the traffic, which is most satisfactory. It is thought sufficient, without going into detail, to state the following items of revenue viz.” -

Through passengers	31,000
Local or intermediate distances	<u>21,903</u>
Total for passengers	£ 52,903
Goods between the ports on the Forth and Tay	6,250
Local traffic, farm produce etc.	4,687
Minerals	18,000
Carriage, mail and Parcels	3,500
Carriage of livestock	<u>2,000</u>
Total Revenue	£ <u>87,340</u>

A glance at the above figures show they have been broken down in far less detail than in the original prospectus. That said, when compared to the format of the expenditure they are a beacon of clarity. The expenditure was covered by:- “From the above estimate of £87,340 there falls to be deducted the toll to be paid to the *Dundee & Perth Company*, and the interest on the money necessary for the purchase of engines, carriages, wagons etc., and the expenses of working the line. The first two items are estimated at £7,000, and the last at £30,000, there is left a sum sufficient to secure dividends to the shareholders of the probable amount of 10 per cent on the capital”.

The article ended in the same manner as the initial prospectus, quoting costs per mile for passengers and freight with the distances to major destinations shown.. In terms of time taken, Perth to Edinburgh was suggested as 2¼ hours and from Dundee 2½ hours. It does seem that 15 minutes from Dundee to Perth is perhaps ambitious!

There we have it – despite the claim that the shares were insufficient to meet the demand, this was certainly not the case! The idea of a ferry from Craighead to Broughty Ferry was always a challenge and so it had proved. Cupar is now a terminus and the

Tay is to be crossed by a bridge at Newburgh. Suggesting that this route to Dundee will only create a small addition to the distance seems a stretch of the imagination. This whole concept seems to hinge on the ability to secure permission to build the Newburgh/Mugdrum bridge. Little wonder we are seeing a cost reduction given that the greater part of the line will now be single track!

*The Railway Times* of the 14<sup>th</sup> September carried an article praising the link which the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* would provide in the great chain for east coast communication. The *Edinburgh & Northern*, the *Dundee - Perth*, the *Dundee - Arbroath* and the *Arbroath - Forfar* would all play their part. The writer however had the line running from Kettle to Cupar and then to Perth – they clearly did not pay great attention to the Prospectus! – but the excitement of direct and unbroken communication from the border to Aberdeen was praiseworthy and the further hope was that, in time, Edinburgh could be connected to Inverness via Perth.

More was to follow from the *Railway Times* of the 21<sup>st</sup> September. The article was in the form of an announcement from the *Dundee - Perth* directors, that their line was to join with the *Dundee- Arbroath Railway* close to the Dundee Docks. The sum of £200,000 in £25 shares was to be raised for this purpose. It was then announced that the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* had indeed abandoned their scheme to cross the Tay at Craighead and had now resolved to join the Dundee to Perth line at a point close to Mugdrum Island. It was further confirmed that the line from the south bank of the Tay to Perth, a distance of 7 miles, and the cost of the bridge itself, would be shared between the two Companies. “It should be executed at mutual expense for the mutual benefit of both”. The main benefit for one was that they would now attract all the Edinburgh traffic onto their line and, for the *Edinburgh & Northern* – it effects a very great saving on the cost of their line, and obviates the disadvantage of a ferry across the Tay.

It was also mentioned that the crossing of the river had been examined by engineers of both companies and also other eminent engineers, “and all were satisfied that it could be effected in a safe and commodious manner, and at a moderate cost, without injury or interruption to the navigation.

Again the newspaper returned to the constant theme that;- “the communication by railway from Edinburgh to Perth, Dundee, Arbroath and Forfar will thus be completed; and by the *Scottish Central Railway*, Dundee will be connected to Glasgow and the West Coast”.

The next milestone appears to be an item contained in the *Railway Times* of the 16<sup>th</sup> November 1844. This took the form of a notice to the shareholders of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* which revealed that “The Provisional Committee of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*, hereby intimate that the Subscribers' Deed of Agreement, and the Subscribers' Contract required, by the Standing Orders of Parliament, to be entered into preparatory to an application for an Act, are now ready to be executed and that copies will lie for the signatures of the subscribers from the 15<sup>th</sup> until the 30<sup>th</sup> at the following places - Edinburgh, London, Liverpool, Cupar and Aberdeen were the chosen sites.

**NOTICE TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF THE EDINBURGH AND NORTHERN RAILWAY.**—The Provisional Committee for the Edinburgh and Northern Railway hereby intimate that the Subscribers' Deed of Agreement, and the Subscribers' Contract required by the Standing Orders of Parliament to be entered into preparatory to an application for an Act, are now ready to be executed, and that copies will lie for the signatures of the Shareholders, from the 15th to the 30th of November instant, at the following places:—  
 In Edinburgh, at the Company's Office, No. 20, Queen-street.  
 In London, at the Office of Messrs. Richardson and Connell, 21, Finsbury-street, Westminster.  
 In Liverpool, at Messrs. Gladstone and Co.'s.  
 In Cupar-Fife, at the Office of Messrs. Carstairs, McGlashan, and Douglas.  
 In Aberdeen, at the Office of Messrs. Adam and Anderson, Secretaries of the Aberdeen Railway Company.  
 Scrip notes in exchange for the banker's receipts will be issued to the shareholders on their signing the deed of agreement. And notice is hereby further given, That no Shares beyond those already applied for will be issued.  
 GEO. BAKER, Int. Sec.  
 Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company's Office, 20, Queen-street, Edinburgh, 9th Nov., 1844.

A welcome piece of confidence in the Fife line was reported in the *Fifeshire Journal* of the 19<sup>th</sup> December 1844 when we learn that the shareholders of the *North British Railway* have agreed to invest £25,000 in the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*. The main reason being that the branch line to Lochgelly would stimulate business via the Fife coal field as Dundee had little coal of its own. The vote was carried by 1452 for and 209 against. Everything appears to have been fast moving but where did the idea of this investment spring from and also the mention of a Lochgelly Branch line? Without question, as will be seen later, the investment probably sprang from the mind of John Learmonth – the Chairman of the *North British Railway*.

EDINBURGH AND NORTHERN RAILWAY.  
 EXCERPT FROM MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MAGISTRATES AND TOWN COUNCIL OF KIRKCALDY, 14<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 1845.  
 THE CLERK stated that Notices had been served on him by the Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company, in regard to the Property belonging to the Town through which the Railway is to pass; the Council, considering that the Railway will be very beneficial to the whole Country, and to the County in particular, RESOLVE TO PROMOTE IT BY ANY MEANS IN THEIR POWER; and without, at present, entering into any consideration regarding details, in which, however, they are necessarily deeply interested, they resolve to give their general assent to the undertaking, which they request the Clerk to notify.  
 (Signed) JOHN DRYSDALE, Town-Clerk.

Another issue is dealt with by a notice published in the *Fife Herald* on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1845. This relates to a meeting of *Kirkcaldy Town Council* which had been held on the 14<sup>th</sup> January. *The Edinburgh & Northern Railway* had served papers on the Council in relation to the property owned by the town through which the railway is to pass. The Council determined that the line would be good for both the county and the country, and resolved to both promote the line, in any way they could, and also gave their general consent to the project. John Drysdale, the Town Clerk, was asked to alert the Railway Company to their decision.

*The Fife Herald* of the 20<sup>th</sup> March 1845 brought a further interesting notice on its front page - this time it was St. Andrew's Town Council petitioning Parliament in favour of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*. This was obviously written to support the Bill on its journey through the Commons. What is interesting is that, at this stage, the railway was still terminating at Cupar but St Andrew's was delighted that the line would be less than 10 miles away! The Council's view was that this line would greatly facilitate travel both to and from Edinburgh, the south of Scotland and the west of the country.

They argued that the bulk of the goods and passengers, carried between the north and the south of the country, passed through Fifeshire and “a more rapid conveyance than now exists would prove not only a local but a great national advantage”.

A very illuminating article was unearthed from the *Dundee Courier* of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1845. Here it is revealed that the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* have purchased from the Magistrates of the Burgh of Kinghorn, their rights to the harbour of the burgh and the pier at Pettycur. The cost was £4,000 which included a considerable portion of land required for the line. The reasoning was given as “with a view to providing against unreasonable dealing at Burntisland”. This can only be a contingency in case there were any issues with the Granton/Burntisland ferry – which was of course in the private hands of Buccleuch and Gladstone and not the property of the railway. It should be explained here that previously to the formation of the railway a company was formed and two of their number Buccleuch and Gladstone were appointed Ferry Trustees – private enterprise in action.

KINGHORN.—EDINBURGH AND NORTHERN RAILWAY.—  
This Railway Company, we understand, have purchased from the Magistrates of Kinghorn their rights to the harbour of the burgh and the pier of Pettycur, with the view of providing against unreasonable dealing at Burntisland. The sum to be paid is £4000, which includes the price of a considerable quantity of land required for the line. The arrangement is said to be very favourable for the Company. Settlements with landowners have been effected to a considerable extent, so that no delay will occur after the passing of the act in proceeding with the works, and much money usually expended in law expenses will be saved.

**PUBLIC MEETING AT KIRKCALDY**  
IN FAVOUR OF THE  
EDINBURGH AND NORTHERN RAILWAY.  
A public meeting of the inhabitants of Kirkcaldy was held in the Town Hall on the evening of Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> current.  
Provost Swan having been called to the chair, stated the object of the meeting, and took notice of a hand-bill which had been that day circulated by a promoter of the Western Railway, in which he was accused of leading the van in sacrificing the interests of Kirkcaldy to the interest of Burntisland. This charge did not give him the least annoyance, as it could be easily refuted. It was quite true that Mr Gladstone was an active promoter of the Edinburgh and Northern Line; but it was absurd to imagine that he had originated it for his own selfish purposes in connexion with Burntisland ferry. It might be said that the same scheme had been projected years ago, and before Mr Gladstone had any connexion with Burntisland ferry at all.

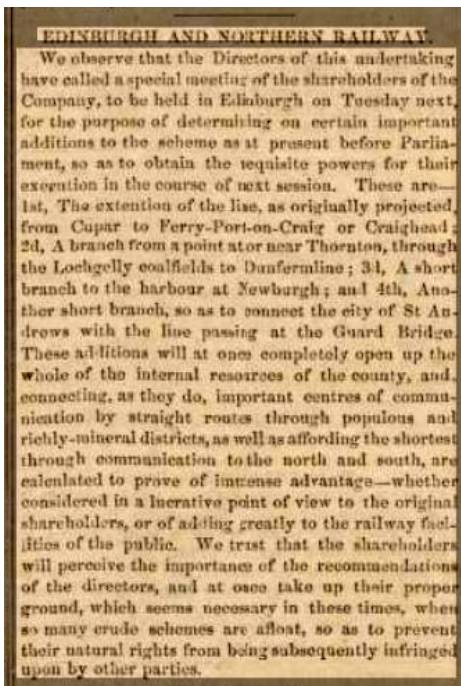
Kirkcaldy Town Council were slightly later in organising their petition of support. The public meeting took place in the Town Hall on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> April 1845. On the motion of William Oliphant, the Dean of Guild – Provost Swan was invited to take the chair. Ultimately there were three motions put forward and they were as follows:-

- *Motion 1* - was proposed by David Landale, he of the last duel fame and seconded by Robert R. Duncan that “this meeting, aware of the great benefits arising from railway communication, are of the opinion that a railway through Fifeshire would prove not only a local but a great national advantage”.
- *Motion 2* - was proposed by Alexander D. Ferrier, Corn Merchant, with the seconder being Samuel Davidson, Banker, that “in the opinion of this meeting, the line of railway through Fifeshire, projected by the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway Company*, is the most natural and eligible, and is best calculated to secure advantages as it passes through the heart of the manufacturing and trading districts of the county, and not only connects them and gives them speedy communication with each other, but also with Edinburgh and the South on one hand, and Perth, Dundee and the Northern districts on the other – affording, at the same time, to the agriculturalists of the county the means of transporting their produce to a ready market”.
- *Motion 3* – was proposed by Thomas Russell, Engineer and seconded by Andrew

Currie, a Merchant, that “as the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* is to be connected by a branch with Kirkcaldy Harbour, the meeting is of the opinion that this connection will add very substantially to the improvement of the Port and the prosperity of the Burgh – provided the Station is situated at a convenient place near the harbour, so as passengers and goods may be readily transmitted therefrom; the meeting would strongly recommend the measure to the support of the community.”

Finally, on the motion of Robert Stocks, of Abden and seconded by George Elder, Merchant, it was unanimously resolved that they request their Chairman to sign a Petition to both Houses of Parliament founded on these resolutions, and also to communicate the same to the Member for the Burgh, and the Directors of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*; and as the Meeting has full confidence in the

Magistrates who have been appointed a Committee by the Town Council, the meeting request them also to act as a Committee on their behalf, and to attend to the general interest of the inhabitants”. The notice was signed by Provost Swan. The above report was found in *The Scotsman* of the 12<sup>th</sup> April 1845.



A turn-up for the books appeared in the *Fife Herald* of the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1845. It was not unexpected, given the route of the railway today, but this major change appears to simply spring out of the paper's pages without any prior warning. We learn that the Directors of the *Edinburgh & Northern* have called a Special Meeting for the following Tuesday – its purpose - “determining on certain important additions to the scheme as at present before Parliament, so as to obtain the requisite powers for their execution in the course of the next session”.

There were four items mentioned and they were:-

- The extension of the line, as originally projected, from Cupar to Ferry-Port-on-Craig.
- A Branch from a point at or near Thornton, through the Lochgelly coalfields, to Dunfermline.
- A short branch to the harbour at Newburgh.
- Another short branch to connect the City of St. Andrew’s with the line passing at Guard Bridge.

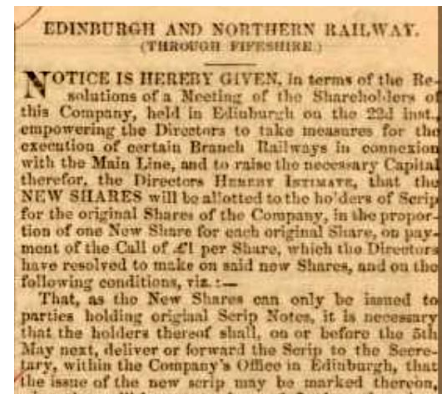
The limited comment was restricted to - “would, once completed, open up the whole of the internal resources of the county, and, connecting, as they do, important centres of commerce by straight routes though populous and richly- mineral districts, as well as affording the shortest through communications to the north and the south, are calculated to prove of immense advantage – whether considered in a lucrative point of

view to the original shareholders, or of adding greatly to the railway facilities of the public. We trust that the shareholders will perceive the importance of the recommendations of the directors, and will at once take up their proper ground, which seems necessary in these times, when so many crude schemes are afloat, so as to prevent their natural rights from being subsequently infringed upon by other parties”.

Without question, the only possible reason for the line from Cupar again being taken forward has to be that the bridge over the Tay, at Mugdrum, has not been authorised. The line from Thornton to the Lochgelly coalfields explains the £25,000 investment by the *North British Railway* which was mentioned earlier.

*The Fife Herald* of the 24<sup>th</sup> April 1845 was “gratified to observe that the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* Bill was read a second time in the House of Commons on Monday last. It would now go to the committee stage.

*The Fife Herald* of the 1<sup>st</sup> May carried a notice of major interest to the shareholders on the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway*. A meeting of the Directors had taken place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the previous month (as previously mentioned) and it had been agreed “to take measures for the execution of certain branch railways and to raise the necessary capital therefor”. This was to be done by a script issue – which is when companies issue new shares but only initially offer them to the existing shareholders. In this instance one new share was being offered for every share held. The holders of the script notices had until the 5<sup>th</sup> May to accept the new shares or they would be disposed of by the Directors. The Form of Acceptance was attached to the notice and as a matter of some urgency the forms had to be signed and returned to the Company’s offices along with a £1 call on each share. This is clearly a step towards meeting the costs of the lines mentioned above.



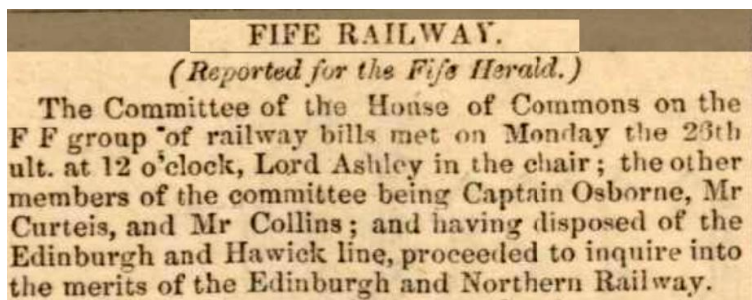
In fact, the edition carried another notice from the Directors which again reiterated the proposed lines although we now learn that the branch to Lochgelly could be made from anywhere between Thornton and the New Inn. The notice also reveals that the amount to be raised is £330,000 and to do this a script issue will involve 22,000 shares at a price of £15 per share. It is emphasised that shareholders must act quickly if they wish to take advantage of the offer.

The Bill to secure the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway Act* was scheduled to make its first appearance in the House of Commons on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1845 but this was postponed until the 4<sup>th</sup>. As previously mentioned the *Fife Herald* was able to report in its edition of the 24<sup>th</sup> April that the Bill had been read for a second time in the Commons.

A fly in the ointment had appeared in the shape of a proposed *Edinburgh and Perth Railway* which intended competing with the *Edinburgh & Northern* for parliamentary

authorisation in 1845; they put forward a route via a ferry at Queensferry, through Dunfermline, Lochgelly, Kinross and then to Newburgh from where they intended to reach Perth. The real issue for the *Edinburgh & Northern* was the stated intention to drive a line from Lochgelly to Kirkcaldy; such a branch had the potential to wipe out the lucrative mineral traffic from the Fife coalfields which the *Edinburgh and Northern* had hoped to secure.

In the Committee stages, the *Edinburgh & Northern* had to hastily prepare modifications and additions to its earlier plans as the opposition from the *Edinburgh and Perth* proposal was expected to be fierce although it will be seen that they were using agents to carry the fight as they had no legal capacity. All that said, as we examine the Committee reports, if both schemes had been passed by Parliament - then the *Edinburgh & Northern* may well have been mortally wounded.



The Bill reached the committee stage on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> April 1845 and from Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> June the *Fife Herald* carried a detailed report on the proceedings. The Chairman was Lord Ashley with the other three members being Captain Osborne, Mr Curteis and a

Mr Collins. It would be almost impossible to provide a full detail of the proceedings so it will be restricted to trying to give a flavour of the events but also adding in some of the witness statements which give a vivid picture of transport at the time. It seems impossible in today's environment to appreciate just how much moving of goods was carried out by horse and cart.

The opening remarks for the Promoters contained nothing exceptionally different from what has already been covered. It has to be kept in mind, however, that all through the hearing, conversations were taking place and agreements being made, often in the background – it was an ever changing landscape! The bottom line was assumed to be that the proposed *Edinburgh and Perth Railway* would be determined to do all they could to prevent the *Edinburgh & Northern* project being approved – but the opponents to the Bill were, in fact, a collection of landowners and other interested parties – and we will see what their motives were.

The first witness called was Kirkcaldy's Provost Patrick Don Swan who indicated that linen was the principal industry in the county and the bulk of the raw material arrived via Kirkcaldy Harbour. Carting was the only method available to distribute the material and his firm alone had 6 carts in constant use making journeys of between 6 and 20 miles. The previous year 6,475 tons of flax and tow had been imported into Kirkcaldy. Industry was heaviest on the two major rivers – the Leven and the Eden – given the then necessity of water to drive the machinery. Spinning and, in particular, bleaching also required the raw materials of production, such as ashes and salt, which again required the use of carts. The raw materials and the finished goods could only be moved

by cart and it was felt that the railway would make a huge difference both in terms of speed and cost. He ended by stating that, in his view, the public, in the main, supported the line.

Robert Wiseman, a surgeon in Cupar and the town's Dean of Guild, was the next to be examined. He stated that both goods and passenger numbers through Fife were on a strong and significant upward trend. Travelling via Fife was the route of choice in travelling to Aberdeen, Dundee, Arbroath and Forfar, amongst other destinations. The shortest route from Edinburgh to Dundee was via Fife. He revealed that from Cupar, 6 coaches per day travelled to Edinburgh with 4 leaving for Dundee. It was interesting to note that a daily coach also travelled from Cupar to Largo from where a steamboat travelled to Newhaven. It was suggested that the fare by public conveyance from Cupar to Edinburgh was between 8/- and 10/-.

Mr Robert Wisemann—Is a surgeon in Cupar. Has been Dean of Guild for nearly two years, and has taken an interest in the affairs of the burgh for a considerable time past. Is aware that the connexion of Perthshire with the mineral districts of the county of Fife has long been desired. Knows there is a large goods and passenger traffic through Fife, which is decidedly on the increase. A great deal of passenger traffic goes through Fife to Aberdeen and other parts north, such as Dundee, Arbroath, Forfar, &c. The shortest route betwixt Edinburgh and Dundee is through Fife, and, as such, is preferred, notwithstanding two ferries to be passed on the way. Besides the through traffic, there

Significant amounts of grain grown in Fife were, in the main, shipped from Newburgh and Kirkcaldy, to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, London with, once again, carting being the only option to reach the harbours. Wiseman spoke about the ironstone at Balgonie and Lochgelly along with limestone quarries which lay along the proposed route of the railway which would be of immense benefit in terms of transportation. There were quarries producing high quality stone in the vicinity of Cupar and one moved 7000/8000 tons per annum between 1 and 14 miles, again by carting. Above all, the use of the railway should produce far cheaper coal.

He accepted that the idea of a bridge over the Tay at Mugdrum had had to be abandoned but the hope was that, even if the railway did not get further than Newburgh – coal could still be brought there via the Lochgelly branch line for onward shipping to Dundee/Perth. It was again mentioned that an Act of Parliament had given the right to ferry between Granton and Burntisland to the Duke of Buccleuch and John Gladstone – which many had been opposed to, as they believed that the railway company should also control the ferry. (Note – An Act of Parliament in 1844 had established that goods and passenger being ferried between Granton & Burntisland were in the sole hands of Buccleuch/Gladstone.

It was only in 1847 that the railway secured control of the ferry. Wiseman had no doubt that Burntisland was the premier station as a ferry terminus – not Queensferry. It would appear that the two ferries, Burntisland and Queensferry, were both working hard to catch the eye of the mushrooming railway mania of the mid-1840s.

Peter Cameron operated a significant carting business covering all the principal towns in Scotland but especially with Dundee, Perth, Cupar, Kirkcaldy and Edinburgh disclosed that he had originally used Queensferry as the route to Perth but now operated via Burntisland and he closely followed the proposed route of the line. He had on average 13 fully loaded carts per week operating in Fife which he averaged out at 104

per month. The journeys between Edinburgh and both Dundee and Perth were 44 miles and took between 20/24 hours with a cost set at £2 per ton.

He confirmed that the proposed route would be of huge benefit to the spinning mills, paper mills and bleach fields along the route. With his knowledge of farming, given he farmed 300/400 acres in Fife, he saw the railway as a huge advantage in transporting sheep and cattle – which at the moment had to be driven on foot. This in Cameron's words “led to some deterioration in the animals which should be eliminated by the use of rail”.

Mr Anderson, a Newburgh banker, gave more perspective on industry at the time. There were 1,800 tons of flax imported annually into Newburgh harbour which all had to be carted to works on the Leven and the Eden. Carting costs were around 8/6d per 10 miles. When spun, the completed material had to make the same journey in reverse. Newburgh had 900 handloom weavers producing goods to the annual value of £120,000 to £130,000! Once again he saw only benefit in the proposed route.

Mr William Tullis, a paper manufacturer in Markinch, was the next witness.—Had been in business for about 20 years. On the banks of the Leven there were 12 spinning-mills, six bleaching-fields, three paper-mills, one flour-mill, and three saw-mills. In 1837, about £40,000 was expended in improving the water power, and putting these mills in a state of efficient repair. About 1000 tons of rags were carted annually from Kirkcaldy along the line of the proposed railway. Very large quantities of freestone, at present carted from Cupar to Markinch, would be sent along this line. On the river Eden there were nine spinning-mills, four bleaching fields, 21 corn-mills, two distilleries, and six saw-mills. All these were situated within a mile of the proposed railway.

Mr William Tullis, a Markinch paper-maker, was the next witness. His insight into local industry is eye-opening. On the River Leven there were 12 spinning mills, 6 bleach fields, 3 paper mills, one flour mill and 6 sawmills. It was a similar story on the River Eden which boasted 9 spinning mills, 4 bleach fields, 21 corn mills, 2 distilleries and 6 sawmills! It appears that 1,000 tons of rages were carted annually from

Kirkcaldy for the use of the paper mills.

Large quantities of freestone were carted annually from Cupar to Markinch which would be done quicker and more efficiently by the railway. His final comment was that he calculated that 10,000 tons of raw material would be carried each year, via the line, with a further 6,000 tons of manufactured goods to be added to that figure resulting in 16,000 tons being carried by rail rather than cart.

A Fife farmer, Robert Ballingall gave an insight into agriculture at the time. He indicated that in the county 100,000 'quarters' of grain were grown annually and he anticipated half of this would be moved by rail rather than cart. It was also suggested that 1,100 cattle and 15,000 sheep were sent annually to the London and Edinburgh markets. Without doubt, in his view, the railway would allow a “cheaper and more expeditious” mode of transport.

Further support for the line was provided by, John Lowe, a Perth Merchant. He reported that 2,000 tons of Scottish coal and 6,000 tons of English coal were sold annually in Perth. The Scottish coal, although superior, was more expensive due to the costs of carting – despite the fact that, on average, the Fife coal fields were only 25 miles from Perth. Very few large ships could reach Perth due to the shallowness of the water. Grain

grown in the area was often shipped from Dundee which once again involved carting to that port. It was stated that, in winter, the river was often affected by ice which meant that Newcastle vessels could not always land their cargoes of coal. Witness indicated that Perth's 3 spinning mills and 4 bleach fields were dependent almost entirely of Fifeshire for their raw materials. He was also convinced that this line of rail could only benefit Perth and the local area.

Next to be examined was James Baird who was a farmer as well as having a brickworks and tile making business in Newburgh. He testified to producing 700,000 units per annum thanks to the abundance of clay in the area. He used 480 tons of coal per annum and could easily increase production if more coal were available. It was not always easy to get local coal and bringing it from Lochgelly was time consuming and costly. He saw the opportunity to get coal from the Balgonie Pits "which would suit him very well" if the proposed line were built. The line would also provide a faster and cheaper method of transporting the finished bricks/tiles.

Next up was Robert Philip, a Director of the *London & Leith Steam Navigation Company*. His view was that the planned route "was better than any other communicate with the principal manufacturing districts of Scotland". He thought that a route to Perth from Queensferry was an absurd idea as the pier at Queensferry was totally inadequate for the traffic to Fife. "From his intimate knowledge of the traffic betwixt Leith and Dundee, he would say the proposed line is best for the County of Fife".

It was back to a Kirkcaldy man in the shape of Thomas Russell of A. Russell & Sons who operated an iron founding business in the town. The witness was also a Magistrate in Kirkcaldy and fully supported the statements given by Provost Swan. "He could testify as to the undoubted advantage the proposed railway would be to his neighbourhood and knows that the proposed line is generally popular in these parts".

The Superintendent of Granton Pier was the next to be called. Sir W. Baine was also a Master in the Royal Navy. From his evidence we learn that since the previous September 150,000 passengers had used Granton. He had sent or received during this period 34,575 passengers to/from Dundee, 5,675 tons of goods along with 2,894 cattle and 270 dogs, The ferry takes between 30/35 minutes and the Granton pier can take shipping of all sizes almost no matter the position of the tide, He believed that Granton and Burntisland were the best points for railways to terminate at. He, when cross examined, vigorously denied the suggestion that the weather could be very difficult at times outside the Granton pier saying that he had never seen weather which would stop the crossing, "if good boats were being used". He had never had a fatal accident during his time as Superintendent and "could not agree that the pier could be supposed to be the cause of any accidents".

Sir W. Baine, examined by Mr Serjeant Bellasis-- Is a master in the Royal Navy. Is superintendent of Granton Pier, which accommodates vessels of all sizes at almost all periods of the tide. The ferry from Granton to Burntisland, from pier to pier, is 2000 feet short of five miles. The passage across is now accomplished in from 30 to 35 minutes. Thinks, with more powerful boats, the passage may be accomplished in from 20 to 25 minutes. Has had nearly 150,000 ferry passengers since September last. Can state that they have received at or sent from Granton Pier from or to Dundee, during last year, 34,575 passengers, 5675 tons of goods, 2894 cattle, and 270 dogs. Considers sea passage from Granton to Dundee a bad one. Thinks

Mr R.W. Hamilton, Manager of the *General Steam Navigation Company* for 25 years, deponed that to his mind the proposed route was the best for the Country. He had wide experience of shipping corn, cattle and butcher meat from many parts of Fife for onward shipping to London. He believed that Queensferry facilities were much inferior to those at Burntisland.

James Wright, who managed the Duke of Buccleuch's collieries was very familiar with the Fife coalfield reported that Kirkcaldy produced 15,000 tons per annum, as did Balgonie, with Lochgelly touching 27,000 tons. Perth imports 33,000 tons per year and he saw a huge saving in transporting coals to Perth. He believed that an income of close to £8,000 would be obtained from transporting coal to Perth and a further £2,300 from carrying lime.

Mr Balfour of Balbirnie added to the support for the proposed line. He farmed 10,000 acres of arable land and had both coal and lime resources on his estate. Much of the building work in the area used stone from Cupar and some from Burntisland – each of these three facets, the land, coal and lime would benefit from the line.

The article ended with “ the general impression in the committee room, however, is, that the case of the promoters of the line is abundantly proved.”

Mr. Whateley, Q.C., on behalf of certain landholders in the county of Fife, appeared to oppose the bill, and addressed the Committee at great length.

Mr. Sergeant Wrangham, on the part of the inhabitants of Perth and other parties interested, also addressed the Committee against the bill; and intimated that those for whom he appeared had projected a different and better line, which was to cross at Queen's Ferry, instead of the long and uncertain ferry from Grantown to Burntisland. They were prepared to expend on it 800,000l. or more if necessary. The shares had already been allotted, and the shares subscribed for. His line would not only accommodate the county of Fife, but also that of Kinross, besides becoming a great trunk line, connecting the north and south of Scotland. It was a strong objection to the Edinburgh and Northern that there was a long and dangerous ferry of five miles to be crossed, which must occasion delay and uncertainty; whereas the line his clients were proposing had only to cross a safe ferry of one mile; and they had succeeded in inventing a contrivance, by which the train could be carried over bodily, thereby obviating all the difficulties arising from a ferry being on the line.

Having attempted to give a flavour of the testimony supporting the line we now reach the crux of the matter. For this we are able to quote from the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *Globe* of Friday the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1845. Having heard the evidence supporting the line we come to the opposition where Mr Whateley, Q.C., and others, appeared on behalf of certain landowners in the County of Fife who were opposed to the Bill and he addressed the Committee at length.

This was followed by a Sergeant Wrangham, on the part of the inhabitants of Perth and other interested parties,

who also addressed the Committee against the Bill and “intimated that those for whom he appeared had projected a different and better line, which was to cross at Queen's Ferry, instead of the long and uncertain ferry from Grantown to Burntisland. They were prepared to spend £800,000 or more if required. Shares had already been allotted and subscribed for. The line would not only accommodate the County of Fife but also that of Kinross, besides becoming a great trunk line, connecting the north and south of Scotland. It was a strong objection to the *Edinburgh and Northern* proposal that there was a long and dangerous ferry of five miles to be crossed, which must occasion delay and uncertainty; whereas the line his clients were proposing had only to cross a safe ferry of one mile”.

David Douglas, the Agent for the Company proposed by Sergeant Wrangham's clients, and to be known as the *Edinburgh and Perth Railway*, was about to be called when Sergeant Ballasis, acting for the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* objected. These individuals Wrangham and Ballasis did not share the same Christian name – a Sergeant in Law was a prestigious title in the English legal system, representing an elite order of barristers with the exclusive right to plea in the *Court of Common Pleas* – one of 4 superior courts in Parliament.

**Mr. David Douglas, agent to the Company proposed by Mr. Sergeant Wrangham's clients, and called "The Edinburgh and Perth Railway."**

**Mr. Sergeant Ballasis objected to the witness on the ground, first, that they had had no opportunity of seeing the plans and sections of the proposed line, while their opponents had months to examine them; but, above all, he objected that evidence should be adduced for a line not before the Committee—not before the Board of Trade—not a line, as far as the Committee can judge, which is intended to oppose this line, or, at least, that it was ever intended to be carried out.**

His objection was on the grounds, “firstly, that they had no opportunity of seeing the plans and sections of the proposed line, while their opponents had months to examine them; but, above all, he objected that evidence should be adduced for a line not before the Committee – not before the Board of Trade – not a line as far as the Committee can judge, which is intended to oppose this line, or, at least, it was ever intended to be carried out”. It was clear that the Sergeant intended to establish if this proposed *Edinburgh to Perth* railway had any factual base.

A Mr Clarke (for the opposition) who had intended to question Mr Douglas contended that “he was perfectly enabled to show a better line could be made; and, in fact, a company had been formed for carrying out such a line and that it would positively be carried out”.

Mr Talbot (for the promoters) “urged the Committee upon the injustice and unfairness of admitting evidence with respect to a company which, to say the most of it was only an embryo”. At that point, strangers were asked to withdraw from the room. On their re-admission they learned that the Committee were of the opinion that Mr Douglas could be examined.

Mr Clarke then started to examine Mr Douglas and it was revealed that there was a company formed to carry out the work with capital sought of £800,000 broken into 30,621 shares of £25 each. It was stated that £1.10.00d had been paid on each share and that had garnered £45,391. It was also revealed that 20,000 of the subscribers were domiciled in Scotland.

At this stage Sergeant Ballasis wished to know if the Committee were to enter into the merits of this other railway?

The Chairman responded with “we shall not receive any evidence the accuracy of which you cannot test”.

The Chairman—We shall not receive any evidence the accuracy of which you will not be able to test.

Cross-examined by Mr. Sergeant Ballasis—There are members of the Committee of the Edinburgh and Leith in London. Attends the consultations of the opposite parties. Their engineer is Sir George Rennie—their other engineer is Mr. John F. Bateman. They have the same railway agents as the opposing landowners. The Edinburgh and Perth Company pay the expenses of the witnesses in town. Mr. Bateman and others occasionally attend the consultations. His company will pay the expenses of the opposition—they have agreed to do so.

Mr. Sergeant Ballasis said that this admission was sufficient. The Edinburgh and Perth Company were the real opponents—fighting in the name of the landowners—and he, therefore, submitted that this examination could not be pursued farther.

This allowed Sergeant Ballasis to produce some telling points during his cross examination of Mr Douglas. It certainly appeared that it was the case that the landowners were little more than a front for the real opposition to the line. They all appeared to be attending each other's meetings and shared the same engineers and agents. It was also very clear that much of the costs and expenses of the witnesses were being paid by Mr Douglas's firm. These admissions allowed Sergeant

Belasis to claim that “ the *Edinburgh and Perth Company* were the real opponents – fighting in the name of the landowners and he therefore submitted that this examination could not be pursued further”.

Mr Clarke tried to maintain that “it was a matter of no consequence whether the company did or did not pay a part of the opposition”.

Mr Aytoun, another member of the opposition's legal team, declared “that he was appearing for his brother, Captain Aytoun, and he had nothing to do with the rival company. He has received no money from them, and he, therefore, submitted that he was not in the same position as his learned friend Mr Clarke”.

Then Mr Whateley Q.C., addressed the Committee on behalf of Lord Rosslyn and other landowners. This certainly appears to suggest that Lord Rosslyn was against the proposed line. The question now was, would these revelations about payments/expenses being made to the opponents have any effect on the Committee? The room was again emptied of strangers (presumably journalists and spectators),

“On our re-admission the Chairman announced that no further evidence can be taken for the Queensferry Company, and that the counsel for the opposition be confined to opposition against the line. The Committee then adjourned”.

**On our re-admission the Chairman announced that no further evidence can be taken for the Queensferry Company, and that the counsel for the opposition be confined to an opposition against the line. The Committee then adjourned.**

It now appears that the Committee were accepting that some/most of the objectors were actually working for or being paid by the *Edinburgh – Perth Railway* if not in name but certainly in intention. The inability to use the alternative line in the arguments had a major impact and certainly handicapped the objectors.

The opposition was now entirely dependent on individuals and presumably the Magistrates of Perth. In fairness some of their statements should also be included and a sample is given below. For this we return to the *Fife Herald* and its edition of the 17<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

Mr Alex. Nasmyth, examined by Mr Aytoun—Is a partner in, and manager of, collieries about Dundonald, and is well acquainted with the coal districts of Fife generally. Heard Mr Goolall's evidence yesterday, and agrees with what he said as to the extent of the coal fields. Is aware of the existence of some private railways through the pit districts in the western parts of Fife, but they are inadequate to the traffic of the districts. Knows that the coal masters of those districts have petitioned in favour of a direct line from those western parts to Perth.

Mr Alex Nasmyth, who managed collieries around Dundonald did not accept that the proposed line would be best for these Fife coalfields, He did not accept that the Lochgelly branch line would ever be made as it would make coal for Edinburgh and Perth more expensive. He believed that the Queensferry line to Perth would be far more cost effective as

it was much closer to the coalfield and the coal masters were petitioning for such a line. This was heavily objected to as the sitting was to determine if the line was to go ahead or not and had nothing to do with an alternative route.

Mr Waldie, a Leith coal merchant, also claimed that the line did not reach the heart of the coalfield where the most suitable coals for Edinburgh were mined. Again, there was an attempt to promote an alternative line – which again was held to be inadmissible. This witness believed that Edinburgh people were not in favour of the proposed line. On being cross-examined Mr Waldie was seemingly not aware that *The City Council of Edinburgh*, the *Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce* and the *Edinburgh Company of Merchants* had all petitioned in favour of the line.

James Graham, a partner in a Perth coal and lime business claimed that the best coals for Perth were from Lochgelly and that they would be too costly if brought in by the branch line and then the main line. He claimed that the Dysart and east of Fife coal does not sell well in Perth and added that in his view, traffic for Perth did not come through Fife in the way of the proposed railway and, if it came to pass, it could be more hurtful than beneficial to Perth. He claimed that Perth was against this line. On cross examination he could not confirm the position of the Magistrates of Perth were taking on the line and could not refute the calculation that coal being carried in the manner suggested from Lochgelly would not reduce Perth prices by 2/- per ton.

The next witness was something of a surprise as it was in the shape of John Drysdale, a landowner and, possibly more importantly, the Town Clerk of Kirkcaldy. Mr Drysdale claimed that the bulk of Kirkcaldy's revenue came from its harbour. He felt that the *Edinburgh and Northern Railway* would take away trade from the harbour which he felt would only be for the private benefit of the Duke of Buccleuch and John Gladstone. Drysdale believed that many in Kirkcaldy felt the same way which is certainly a diametrically opposite view to that of Provost Swan. He also believed that there was little trade between Kirkcaldy and Perth and that the weaving population's connection was to Dunfermline and Glasgow. He had looked

Mr John Drysdale, landowner, examined by Mr Clerk—Is Town-Clerk of Kirkcaldy. Witness states the amount of customs and traffic of that town. Mostly all the revenue is derived from the Harbour, and witness's opinion is that the proposed Edinburgh and Northern Railway will take away a great part of the present trade of the town to benefit a ferry, the private property of Mr Gladstone and the Duke of Buccleuch. A great many of the inhabitants of Kirkcaldy are of the same opinion as witness. There is very little traffic between Kirkcaldy and Perth. The principal traffic of the weaving population in the central parts of Fife is with Glasgow and Dunfermline. Looked upon the line when proposed to be taken to Dundee as feasible, since that was given up thinks it hopeless.

upon the line as feasible when it was intended to reach Dundee but when that was abandoned he felt it hopeless.

He then went on to suggest that “he knows Dysart House well and that it is a place fit for any nobleman. He believed that the proposed railway would damage it to an extent which no money could be compensation for. Had heard Lord Rosslyn say that if the railway was to follow the proposed line he would pull his house down and never come near the place again”. On cross examination he had to admit that he had not spoken to The Earl since he arrived in London and therefore could not be certain of the Earl's current thoughts. Drysdale also seemed unaware that in terms of petitions – three times as many Antonians had signed one of favour of the line that the one against it!

Major- General Morrison, the M.P. for Kinross and Clackmannan, believed that the majority of his constituents were against the *Edinburgh & Northern* line and would prefer one from Queensferry to Perth.

Frederick Adam, the younger son of Sir Charles Adam, claimed to know Fife well and did not think that the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* will open up the great coalfields of Fife.

Andrew Waldie, Innkeeper and Postmaster at Falkland, testified that he secured his coals from Lochgelly and that this proposed line would not benefit him. He also suggested that when the wind was in the north-east the mail from the Burntisland ferry was more or less received late.

Robert Douglas testified that Dunfermline had 20,000 individuals involved in weaving and allied trades and that the proposed line was not in any way beneficial to them and so opposed the Bill.

Mr James Dick Miller, solicitor in company with his father, Perth, examined by Mr Clerk—Gives the same evidence as foregoing witnesses with reference to Lochgelly coal, Queensferry road, traffic through Fife to Perth, &c. Witness has been told by partners in the firm of Cameron and Co., carriers, that they would never have withdrawn their carts going between Edinburgh and Perth from the Queensferry road, and sent them through the centre of Fife, as they now do, if the tolls on the Queensferry road had not been so high. Witness was aware that the road trustees in the central parts of Fife compounded with Mr Cameron, which the trustees on the Queensferry road would not do.

Cross-examined by Mr Talbot, Q.C.—Witness is professionally retained by the talked-of Queensferry Railway Company, and looks to them for payments of his expenses, &c., in being here.

Mr James D. Miller, a Perth Solicitor who was in partnership with his father, claimed that he had been told by the carting company *Cameron & Co* that they would never have stopped using the Queensferry route when operating between Perth and Edinburgh had not the rise in toll fees forced them to switch to going through the proposed railway route. However, on cross examination it was revealed that Mr Miller was another who was professionally retained by the proposed '*Queensferry Railway*' and was looking to them to

pay for his expenses in being in London!

Patrick Wallace, a coach contractor and a Magistrate of Perth, thinks and believes it to be the general opinion of the people of Perth that the *Edinburgh & Northern* line will not benefit them.

Last to be examined was a Mr Ainslie and the article suggests that he was related to the Earl of Murray and “having the management of his estates in Fife.” He lived in Burntisland and considers the Burntisland ferry to “be a very bad one”. He indicated that if he had ladies travelling with him in a carriage he would travel to and back from Edinburgh by Queensferry. He “thinks that the proposed *Edinburgh & Northern* will only be a local line; it will not accommodate the western parts of Fife”.

Mr Ainslie, related to the Earl of Murray, and having the management of his estates in Fife, examined by Mr Aytoun—Resides near Burntisland. Considers that ferry a very bad one, and with ladies in a carriage witness always goes round by Queensferry when going to Edinburgh. Thinks the proposed Edinburgh and Northern will only be a local line; it will not accommodate the western parts of Fife.

Cross-examined by Mr Talbot, Q.C.—Lord Murray's estates lie in the western parts. Witness is interested in promoting the proposed western line. Will not undertake to say that he would advise not going on with a western railway from Queensferry northwards; if this were carried, thinks the proposed Lochgelly branch of the Edinburgh and Northern would answer Lord Murray's purposes, so far as transport of his coal was concerned.

Cross examined, he had to admit that the bulk of the Earl's estates were in the western part of the Country and that he would probably be more interested in a line heading into the west. He did however “seem to agree that if the Lochgelly Branch was completed, then that could well answer Lord Murray's purposes, so far as the transport of his coal was concerned”.

This brought the evidence of the opposition to a conclusion but as the time was close to 4.00pm the Committee would take until the morning to decide on whether they needed to hear from the Counsel for the Promoters, or give their decision at once – for or against.

The next day the Committee were informed that Mr Walker C.E. who had superintended the construction of the Granton Pier would like to speak, as the Duke of Buccleuch felt that assertions had been cast by the opposition on some aspects of its suitability. He spoke at some length and appeared to satisfy the Committee that the build-up of silt was not a major factor – in fact, on the west side of the pier, the accumulation of silt in 4 years was just over 8 inches.

It then fell to Sergeant Belasis to speak the final words for the promoters and he hammered home the importance and extent of agriculture, manufacturers and mining in the Kingdom of Fife. He was simply repeating what the *Herald* had been repeating time after time in its columns – that there had been no attempt to dispute that 5 times more traffic was using the proposed route of the railway than the Queensferry route. He believed that this line through much of rural Fife would give “all the advantages of being in a big city without the evils”.

He spoke on the popularity of the scheme based on the number of petitions which had been submitted in its support. He pointed out how many small shareholders in the project lived in the County. He praised the “great capitalists” who had interested themselves in the line with the proven fact that the transportation of coals by rail would bring about a fall in prices, especially when the Lochgelly branch was completed. “In conclusion he paid a rather sarcastic compliment to Mr James Aytoun for the

“perseverance at least” with which he had sustained the opposition, and commented on the conduct of Lord Rosslyn and Captain Wemyss, in consenting to fight the battle of a rival company, under the pretence of this one doing or meaning to do them any harm; on the attempt of Mr Drysdale, town-clerk of Kirkcaldy, to exaggerate the case of Lord Rosslyn, so preposterously as to make his own statement absurd; on the exaggeration harped upon every day since they had begun proceedings, as to the injury to be done to Dysart church and graveyard, when the fact was, that neither one nor other would be injured in the slightest; on the attempts to throw discredit on the Burntisland Ferry, which had so signally failed and on the power of the Railway Company over the ferry charges, which were in fact complete. The learned counsel’s address was felt by all present to be an extremely judicious one, and the case for the company to be well put before the committee”.

Ashley went to the House and asked and obtained permission for the committee to sit till five. Before that hour arrived, however, suspense was put an end to. The public were admitted, and his lordship announced the unanimous opinion of the committee to be, that the preamble of the bill had been proven, but that they were also unanimously and decidedly of opinion, that they must begin to work with double lines of rail.

Mr Crawford, on behalf of the company observed, that they were quite prepared to act on the direction of the committee.—Adjourned to Friday.

The room was cleared at two o' clock. Three o'clock came and went and there was no appearance of a decision. The friends of the *Edinburgh & Northern*, notwithstanding the goodness of their case, began to feel uneasy. Four o'clock arrived and there was yet no decision. Lord Ashley went to the House and asked and secured permission to sit till five.

Before that hour arrived, however, suspense was put an end to. The public were admitted, and his Lordship announced the unanimous opinion of the Committee to be, that the preamble of the Bill had been proven, but that they were also, unanimously and decidedly, of the opinion, that they must begin to work with double lines of rail.

Mr Crawford, on behalf of the company observed, that they were quite prepared to act on the direction of the committee. At this stage, with victory seemingly secured, the committee was adjourned until Friday.

The Friday brought about the following information from the newspaper's pages:-

“The several clauses of the Bill were discussed and settled after trifling amendments. The capital of the company is to be increased from £550,000 to £650,000, in consequence of the injunction to have double instead of single rails. Mr Grainger gave evidence that this additional sum would cover the increased expense, and the Provisional Secretary (Mr Lees) that the necessary deposit of 5% on the larger sum was already lodged with the Royal Bank of Scotland, and a subscription contract for more than three-fourths of the enlarged capital already entered into.

“The question of cutting up the Inches of Perth, and mode of junction with other lines terminating in that place, was to be left to the decision of the Board of Trade.

“The Heritor’s and Kirk-session of Dysart are to have £2,000 granted to them by the

Act to build a new church, if such should be found necessary, after the line has been six months in operation. If they should choose to have the sum immediately they may get it, and allow the church to be razed at once, the rails could then be laid some feet still further from the churchyard than was proposed.

“The Earl of Rosslyn has taken nothing by his appearance. Mr Ayton and his western friends have all fled, and the Bill will no doubt now pass through its stages towards enactment by the legislature with little delay”. *The Edinburgh and Northern Railway Bill* was passed on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

Moving forward to the edition of the *Fife Herald* of the 24<sup>th</sup> June a copy of the report of the Select Committee is found but it does not contain the Appendixes which are mentioned in the text. Again, rather than reproduce every element a flavour is given below:-

Lord Ashley reported from the Select Committee that in the case of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway (No 2) Bill*, they had examined into several matters required by the Standing Orders to be enquired into by the *Committees on Railway Bills*, and had agreed to the following report.

- The proposed capital is £650,000 and the amount allowed to be raised in the form of loans is £216,666.
- The amount subscribed is £492,750 and the amount of deposits paid £24,787.10/-.
- The number of shareholders who could be considered as having a local interest is 320 and the amount they have subscribed is £277,530.
- The number of other parties is 118 and the amount they have subscribed is £218,450.
- The number of shareholders subscribing £2000 and above is 66 (apparently their names and addresses were contained in an appendix)
- The amount of income expected is £73,863 with £39,708 from passenger traffic and £34,155 from goods.
- The railway is a complete and integral line between Burntisland and Perth; but the same is part of a more extended plan, now in contemplation, and hereafter likely to be submitted to Parliament for carrying the branch to Cupar onwards to Ferry-Port-on-Craig, on the Firth of Tay, opposite to Dundee and St. Andrew's; and also making another branch line to Dunfermline: but the calculations of revenue do not depend on any such extensions.
- There is one inclined plane on the line being the branch to the harbour of Kirkcaldy, to be worked by a stationary engine. The length is 39 chains 30 links with an inclination of 1:14 for 20 chains, 1:30 for 10 chains and the remainder level.
- There are 3 tunnels planned for the route and their lengths will be 240 yards, 200 yards and 150 yards – all will be 26 feet wide and 18 feet high.
- The estimated charge for running the railway was believed to be 35% of the

I find in the supplement to the votes and proceedings of the House of Commons, delivered this morning, the Report of the Select Committee on your Fife Railway, with the traffic tables, &c. The Report is as follows:—

REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON GROUP (FF) OF RAILWAYS.

EDINBURGH AND NORTHERN RAILWAY BILL.

Lord Ashley reported from the Select Committee on Group (FF) of Railways—That in the case of the Edinburgh and Northern Railway (No. 2) Bill, they had examined into the several matters required by the Standing Orders to be inquired into by Committees on Railway Bills, and had agreed to the following Report:—

First, The proposed capital of the Company is £650,000, and the amount which they are empowered to raise by loan is £216,666.

Second, The amount of shares subscribed for is £492,750, and the amount of deposit paid thereon £24,787 10s.

Third, The names and places of residence of the Provisional Committee, or Directors, with the amount of shares taken by each, are stated in Appendix (A).

Fourth, The number of shareholders who may be considered as having a local interest in the line is 320, and the amount of capital subscribed by them is £277,530.

- receipts and the calculations of this estimate have been sufficiently proved.
- The estimated figures of traffic had been proved to the Committee and they believed that “the revenue is likely to be sufficient to support the annual charges of the maintenance of the railway, and to allow a fair profit for the projectors”.
  - The engineers examined in support of the Bill were – Thomas Grainger, James Jardine and Thomas Hawkshaw. Those opposed to the Bill were – J.E. Errington, Frederick Bateman, George Rennie , George Gunn and Thomas Telford Mitchell.
  - It is desirable that all railways meeting in Perth have a common station and the Committee have inserted a proviso by which the execution of that part of the works, which are to be erected on the South Inch, shall be suspended until the Company shall receive the sanction of the Board of Trade; and that the Committee trust that through the intervention of that Board the question of the terminus will be settled with as little delay as possible.

Lord Ashley further reported from the Select Committee that they had examined the allegations of the Bill and had agreed the Preamble thereof, with an alteration to the effect of striking out the allegation respecting a branch railway to join a proposed Dundee to Perth line, at a place in the Parish of Errol in the Country of Perth , on the grounds that the promoters had abandoned the said branch in consequence of objections having been made thereto by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. That the Committee had found the allegations of the Bill, as amended, to be true and had gone through the Bill, and made several amendments thereto.

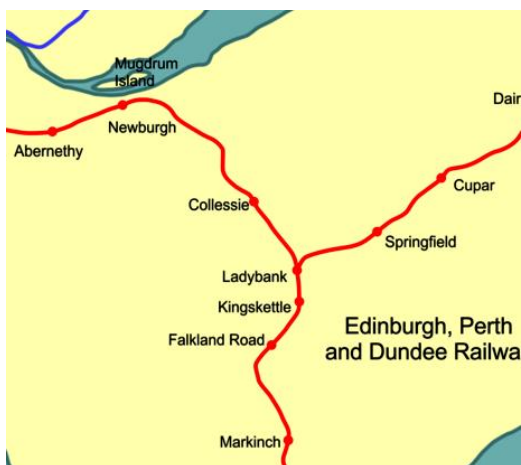
*The Fife Herald* of Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> July 1845 carried an interesting item. It is disclosed that “we are happy to inform all our friends that it is now beyond all doubt that the Bill for establishing a railway through Fife, will pass the House of Lords in a very few days – the opposing company by Queensferry having, at the eleventh hour, offered terms for a settlement, which, having been accepted, the opposition has been withdrawn. The terms on which the settlement has been made are, that the *Edinburgh & Northern* shall take no part in the opposition against the Queensferry company next session, and the latter shall be bound to make the branch from Dunfermline to join the *Edinburgh & Northern* at Thornton, to be worked for the mutual benefit of both companies”.

The *Edinburgh & Northern* secured its act on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1845. Things could well have been different if the line had been defeated. The opposition's weakness was that landowners and other interested parties were in reality a front for the Queensferry project. This as we have seen meant that the *Edinburgh & Perth Railway* were unable to promote their line as a “suggested better option”. That said, make no mistake – The Queensferry passage is the oldest and probably the most famous of the Firth's crossings and it had the benefit of only being a mile wide, The *Edinburgh – Perth Railway Company* was no maverick scheme, being well thought out and its provisional committee boasted the Earl of Moray and the Earl of Zetland amongst its number. The *Edinburgh & Perth* prospectus had appeared as the *Edinburgh and Northern* Bill had been going through Parliament. The harassment of their Bill led the *Edinburgh & Northern* into a truce as previously mentioned.. The Northern promoters stipulated that

the Queensferry group must agree to build a branch from their line at the Lochgelly coalfield to the main line of the *Edinburgh & Northern*, with the branch to be worked by both companies. To safeguard their interests, they claimed the right to lodge a Bill where they could build the Dunfermline Branch themselves, plus, a branch on their own main line to Ferry -Port- on Tay. This was just in case the *Edinburgh – Perth* Bill was not granted – which was exactly what happened – despite the *Edinburgh and Northern* withdrawing its opposition. This altered the whole dynamic of the future shape of the *Edinburg & Northern* which had been seen as a line running from Edinburgh via Burntisland to Perth.

The Queensferry promoters abandoning their proposed branches to Kirkcaldy and Ferry-Port-on-Tay allowed further Bills to be sought by the *Edinburgh & Northern*, including one to extend the Cupar branch to Newport and to build a two mile bridge over the Tay. Once again, Perth and the Admiralty were able to veto the proposal. This in turn forced the railway to seek a terminus at Tayport (Ferry-Port-on-Tay) at which point a ferry operated between there and Broughty Ferry. Acts were also obtained for the construction of branches from firstly, Thornton to Dunfermline and secondly, Leuchars to St. Andrew's.

The *Edinburgh & Northern* management issued a circular on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1845 in relation to the truce:- “The directors have made no concessions adverse to the interests of the company. They have secured a connection with Dunfermline and the western coalfield with both Cupar and Dundee; and they have been able notwithstanding the great efforts made to defeat it, to carry their line to Perth: while they have secured themselves against any branch being run through their own district to Kirkcaldy or Burntisland”.



In its final format therefore the line can perhaps be best described as a 'Y' with the stem from Burntisland to Ladybank. The left line of the Y carried the route to Perth with the right line of the 'Y' heading for Broughty Ferry via Leuchars, Tayport and the Ferry. One result was that Ladybank soon became by far the largest settlement in Collesie Parish – becoming a railway town!

The route which had been authorised by the 1845 Act allowed the Company to build a main line from the harbour at Burntisland by Kinghorn, Kirkcaldy, Dysart, Thornton, Markinch, Ladybank and Newburgh to a point adjacent to the *Dundee & Perth Railway* on the northern side of the Firth of Tay. The Act included branches from Ladybank to Cupar and from Kirkcaldy station to the town's harbour.

The Act being granted was not the end of the story and as mentioned above, in time, the completed line was materially different from that which the Act had authorised.

The company over a short space of time submitted fresh Bills, primarily, after the route along the south bank of the Tay from Newburgh to Perth had to be abandoned after the refusal to allow a bridge over the Tay. The refusal could well have had a major impact but a solution was found. The solution came in the shape of the *Strathearn Junction Railway*. This small company had obtained an Act to build an 8 mile line to connect Newburgh with Hilton which sat on the approach to Perth. The *Edinburgh & Northern* simply bought out the *Strathearn Junction Railway* and, in doing so, secured an entry to Perth and more importantly saved the cost of bridging the Tay.

Without going too deeply into this acquisition, an item appeared in the *Scottish Railways Gazette* of the 24<sup>th</sup> October 1846 which proclaimed that “the difficulties which have hitherto prevented the fulfilment of the agreement between this company and the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway Company*, having now been removed, the affairs of the *Strathearn Junction* will be immediately wound up, and the shareholders will become partners of the *Edinburgh & Northern Company* by the issue of that company's stock in lieu of that of the *Strathearn* company”. An update was found in the *Perthshire Advertiser* of the 21<sup>st</sup> January 1847 – which illustrates the exchange of the Company's script issue for stock in the *Edinburgh and Northern*. It will be noted that unless taken up by the 14<sup>th</sup> February then the shares would be forfeited.

**STRATHEARN JUNCTION RAILWAY.**  
 THE difficulties which have hitherto prevented the fulfilment of the agreement entered into between this company and the Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company having been now removed, the affairs of the *Strathearn Junction* will be immediately wound up, and the shareholders will become partners of the *Edinburgh and Northern Company*, by the issue of that company's stock in lieu of that of the *Strathearn Company*.

**NEWBURGH.—ARRIVAL OF HIGHLANDERS FROM SKYE.—**On Thursday week, there arrived here upwards of 200 labourers from the Island of Skye, having been previously engaged by Mr. Oldham, contractor for the *Strathearn Junction Railway*. On their arrival, they were immediately put to work; but, owing to such an influx at one time, lodgings could not be obtained for the whole in the town. Mr. Oldham, on learning this, procured some barns in the adjacent village of Abernethy, and fitted them up with beds, bed clothes, and other conveniences, free of all charge—

An interesting item was picked up from the *Aberdeen Herald* of the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1847 – which had first appeared in the *Dundee Advertiser*. It revealed that 200 Highlanders from the Isle of Skye had descended on Newburgh. They had originally been contracted by a Mr Oldham to work on the *Strathearn Junction* line. On

their arrival they were immediately put to work but there was a problem in that they could not all be accommodated in Newburgh. Mr Oldham solved the problem by procuring the use of some barns in the nearby village of Abernethy and fitted them up with beds, bedclothes and other conveniences, all free of charge - “thus opening the means of industry for a large number of his destitute countrymen, who otherwise would have depended for their subsistence on the alms of the benevolent.”

Before leaving the *Strathearn Junction Railway* it was a pleasure to find a contemporary piece on Newburgh's railway which was contained in the *Dundee Courier* of the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1981:-

“The Railway system has served Newburgh for a number of years. However, a number

of plans for the “Iron Road” were never implemented. In 1845, the *Edinburgh and Northern Railway* obtained permission to build a railway from Burntisland to Newburgh via Ladybank. The company then intended to construct a bridge from Newburgh to the Carse of Gowrie and the line would either link with the proposed Dundee-Perth line or another set of rails would be laid to give a continuous route from Burntisland to Dundee and Perth. The Admiralty objected to the bridge on the grounds that it would obstruct shipping on the upriver stretches. The objections were upheld and the bridge never got further than the drawing board stage.

In 1846 the *Strathearn Junction Railway* proposed a route from Forteviot to Newburgh with a spur to connect Newburgh Harbour. There is no record of the siding being built, but it would have been an advantage to the users of the piers at the riverside. Documents still exist however, giving details of this lower Strathearn Route and these were originally sealed with a blob of red wax with the impression of a locomotive similar in appearance to Stephenson's *Rocket*”.

It is such an important part of this story. The idea was a railway from Burntisland to Perth and if that was not possible/permitted – what would have happened to the whole route? Would Kirkcaldy have been on a such a valuable line as quickly as it actually happened?

It was now on with the construction of the lines. After securing the Act it was full steam ahead with the first meeting of the *Edinburgh & Northern Railway* directors taking place on the 6<sup>th</sup> August 1845. A copy to the Act was laid on the table and elections of the office bearers then took place. John Learmonth was elected Chairman of the company. A huge figure in the railway industry of the time, he was already the Chairman of the *North British Railway* as well as the Chairman of the *Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway*. This latest appointment personally gave him what was tantamount to an iron grip on the railways of central Scotland.

Henry Lees was appointed to the position of Secretary at a salary of £500 per annum. The directors award themselves an allowance of £600 per annum. Interestingly the most important individual in the design and construction – Thomas Grainger - was only paid for the time he spent working for the company at a rate of £5.5/- per day. This reflected the fact that he had many demands made on his time by other ventures he was involved with.

Exactly one week later, an advertisement for building the section of the line from Burntisland to Abden was placed in the press. A copy, taken from the *Glasgow Courier* of the 16<sup>th</sup> August, is reproduced here for interest and it can be seen that it had been signed by both Learmonth and Lees. This first contract was won by John Orrell & Company who had already been involved in railway construction in Edinburgh. The ground was initially broken at Pettycur, with the contractor working in both directions – west to Burntisland and east to Abden. This allowed raw materials to be brought in by sea to Pettycur Harbour. Orrell submitted the lowest tender which was one of nine and amounted to ££57,285.



It should be explained that in building the 1845 authorised railway, Grainger used methods which had been successful for him in the past. His first step had been to divide the original line into 9 sections. These were as follows:-

- **Burntisland** – 5,000 yards from the low water pier at Burntisland to Abden Farm, east of Kinghorn. (see advertisement above)
- **Inveriel** – 4,400 yards from Abden Farm to Abbotshall Church.
- **Kirkcaldy** – 4,500 yards from Abbotsford Church to Dysart.
- **Ore Mill** – 7,500 yards from Dysart to Coaltown, near Markinch.
- **Markinch** – 5,000 yards from Markinch to the summit of the line near New Inn.
- **New Inn** – 6,000 yards from the summit to Kettle.
- **Kettle** – 8,800 yards to Lindores via Collessie.
- **Lindores** – 5,000 yards to Clatchet Craig near Newburgh.
- **Ladybank** – 8,800 yards to Cupar.

Sometimes an unexpected piece of luck comes into play and this was the case when the *Scottish Railway Gazette* of the 28<sup>th</sup> February 1846 was consulted. An article covered Thomas Grainger's 6 monthly report to the directors – but what is significant is that it also covered the various sections which are outlined above – but providing significant details – sometimes in terms of the contractors – sometimes the more challenging engineering and even the fact that two tunnels had been planned but never came to fruition. One was to be close to Markinch and the other towards Wemyss Castle. The piece is rather too unwieldy for inclusion here but it is contained in the appendix. It is well worth a glance.

Tenders were issued to railway contractors for the above sections but it would seem that some of the winning contractors then sub-divided their sections. This led to 18 separate sub-sections - some of which were for as little as 2½ miles. The contractors tended to

be local men who knew their area with the plant already being located close the route. Another advantage was that these contractors knew where to recruit labour. One of the features of this method was that the working did not commence at Burntisland and then move slowly along the proposed route – rather, each section was being worked on simultaneously. As an example, the contract from New Inn to Kettle was awarded to Kenneth Mathieson Jnr., of Dunfermline at a price of £38,900.

The system must have worked well but there is one 'error' which remains in situ today and which stretches all the way back to 1847. This relates to the Kinghorn Tunnel which runs below Darney Terrace in the town. It is also known as the Pettycur Tunnel and the *Scottish Cave and Mine Database* gives it a third name of the Cryin' Hill Tunnel. In this instance, two different contractors had started tunnelling from either end and a miscalculation resulted in a distinct kink in the middle. Even today there is still a speed restriction – one that has been in place for 179 years!

The *Greenock Advertiser* of the 27<sup>th</sup> December 1860 carried an article on the tunnel. The degree of frost that winter was said to be the worst since 1812 and thick icicles, some 6 feet long, had formed. An engine-man looking over the side of his engine was struck by one and “sustained what is feared will prove a very serious injury to the head”.

Contemporary reports disclose that the railway grew out of the ground with what was described as “gratifying speed” and when on the 8<sup>th</sup> August 1846 Grainger gave his six monthly progress report to the directors he had an impressive tale to tell. William Kinghorn had secured the contract for the 5 miles from Kingskettle to Collessie and, his work was so far advanced, that the section would be ready for traffic by the end of the year. The contract value £18,261.

Work was moving at such a pace that Thomas Grainger could now start to allocate contractors to the lines which had been authorised in 1846 subsequent to the original 1845 Bill.

#### **KINGHORN.**

**FATAL ACCIDENT.—On Friday afternoon Mr William Galbraith, master-mason, was killed by the falling of a crane at the railway bridges here; while another man was very severely hurt, and other three received injuries.—On Saturday one of the men working at the railway had his leg so dreadfully shattered by a waggon passing over it, that immediate amputation became necessary.**

The safety issues at the time were never better demonstrated than an item which appeared in the *Fifeshire Journal* of the 11<sup>th</sup> June 1846 in which we learn that “On Friday afternoon, Mr William Galbraith, master mason,

was killed by the falling of a crane at the railway bridges here; while another man was severely hurt and another three received injuries – on Saturday another man working at the railway had his leg so dreadfully shattered by a wagon passing over it; that immediate amputation became necessary”.

A later report in the *Dundee, Perth and Cupar Advertiser* of the 19<sup>th</sup> June adds that one of the injured had broken his back and was not expected to survive. It seems that the crane was lifting a large stone onto the bridge when a chain broke and all the apparatus

fell to the ground. It has to be assumed that this is the viaduct, given Galbraith was a mason, and that it was a large stone which was being lifted. Galbraith left a widow and three children.

The Board of Trade Inspection of the line was covered by the *Fife Herald* in its edition of the 9<sup>th</sup> September 1847. The inspection itself had taken place the previous Friday. “We understand that his report is highly favourable, and that he has expressed himself fully satisfied with the efficient manner in which the various constructions along the line have been completed. The formal opening of the line will take place on Friday first; and we believe that the railway will be open for general business at the beginning of next week”.



A bonus was provided by Alan Simpson, a friend of this project and a railway enthusiast. We were able to view a copy of the inspector’s report which contained some fascinating facts which included revealing that there were 26 stone bridges over the railway plus two others spanned by iron girders over stone piers.

In another section, we read that “in addition to the bridges there are three handsome and well executed freestone viaducts which reflect credit on both the engineer and the builder; the first consists of four segmental arches of 36 feet span and 12 feet rise and having an extreme height of 40 feet; it is called the Kinghorn Viaduct and extends across a small street of the town of that name and a brook. The second at 5 miles from Burntisland, is formed of nine arches, their extreme height being 79 feet, seven of which have spans of 50 feet and a rise of 16 feet, the two others having spans of 13 feet and are placed at each end and are semicircular. The third, called the Leven Viaduct, extends across the valley and brook of that name, consisting of eight arches of spans of 50 feet nine inches and rises of 16 feet 11 inches and two others, semicircular, with spans of 21 feet; its extreme height is 77 feet. The whole of this masonry appears of excellent quality and of ample dimensions to secure stability, every precaution having been taken to ensure safety”.

The kink in the tunnel was mentioned but nothing more than the need for a speed limit.

Over a moss about 16 miles from Burntisland, the road is laid upon transverse s resting on longitudinal bearers, laid on cross pieces framed to the top of piles dri the moss at distances of 10 feet apart, making a very firm road, and almost over the elasticity of the moss.

The stations are as follow :—

	Ms.	Ch.	
Kinghorn at . . . . .	2	50	from Burntisland
Kirkaldy . . . . .	5	62	..
Dysart . . . . .	7	68	..
Markinch . . . . .	13	12	..
New Inn . . . . .	16	3	..
Kettle . . . . .	18	7	..
Ladybank (Line to Cupar leaves)	18	75	..
Collesie . . . . .	21	44	..
Glenburnie . . . . .	25	0	..
On Cupar branch—			
Springfield . . . . .	22	13	..
Cupar . . . . .	24	29½	..

Another section lists the stations in operation at the time and clearly demonstrates the line to Perth being the main one with Cupar being referred to as merely a branch. The inspector was J.L.A. Simmons, Capt. R.E. A quick search reveals that he was only appointed to the post in 1846 – holding it until 1851. He was obviously a career military man and by

the time of his death, on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1903, he held the rank of Field-Marshal. A surprise was to learn that in 1889, he went to Rome as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Pope Leo XIII!

This is where this first part of the object must conclude, The initial intention was always to show how and why the railway came to Kirkcaldy in 1847 and look at the possibility that it might have missed out. Had that transpired, some considerable time may well have elapsed before the iron rails were laid in Kirkcaldy. There can be no question that the introduction of this mode of transport allowed Kirkcaldy to rapidly transform itself into an industrial powerhouse as its happening dovetailed so well with the almost simultaneous introduction of floorcloth and then linoleum in the Lang Toun.

Part Two will look at the opening of the line and the excitement which was generated in Cupar, Markinch, Kirkcaldy and Burntisland on the 20<sup>th</sup> September 1847. By this stage, Learmonth had been replaced as Chairman by John Balfour of Balbirnie. A forensic look will be taken at the infrastructure of the railway in Kirkcaldy and the branch lines which appeared to service industry – in particular the iconic harbour line. The broad picture had to be painted first but what follows will, in the main, be devoted to the town and the local area.

The last sentence had barely been written when we asked the question - what became of Thomas Grainger – the man who turned an idea into a reality? His partnership with Miller which was run from his home at 56 George Street Edinburgh, was dissolved in 1847. Almost unbelievably and certainly ironically he died on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 1852, as a result of a railway accident in which he suffered a compound fracture of the right leg which turned gangrenous.

What, if anything, could be more ironic is that the accident took place at Stockton – on – Tees, where the first public railway to Darlington had opened in 1825. Grainger was involved with a new line in the area and was travelling there by train when his carriage was struck by a goods train. Grainger was one of two passengers who died from their injuries. The inquest found that, George Wellborne, the driver of what was called the merchandise train, should be charged with manslaughter.

Mrs Grainger had rushed to Stockton on learning of the accident and it was she who took her husband's body home by train to be buried in the family plot in Gogar Churchyard. It seems fitting to end this story with a photograph of the grave of the man who was so inexplicably linked to the content.



It would scarcely have been possible to invent such an ending to a story and there we will leave Part One.

## Appendix

The execution of the work has been divided into the following sections,—

**1st. Burntisland Contract.**—Being that portion of the line from the low water pier at Burntisland to Abden, a property situated immediately east of the town of Kinghorn. This section extends to 5000 yards, besides the branch to Pettycur Harbour, and has been contracted for by Messrs John Orrell & Co. The principal works are the short tunnel at Pettycur. The embankments and walls along the shore, and the viaduct at Kinghorn. The operations on this division of the line have been going on for some time, several of the bridges are built, and considerable progress has been made with the earthwork. The branch to Pettycur Harbour is nearly ready for laying the rails.

**2d. Inveriel Section.**—This section extends to 4400 yards from the eastern termination of the 1st Section to a point near Abbotshall Church. The principal work is the viaduct over the West Burn near Kirkaldy. Messrs Lorimer and Sommerville are the contractors. They are now ready to commence operations if they have not already done so—as the price of the land required for this division was arranged before the act was obtained, no interruption will be offered by the proprietors to the progress of the works on their respective lands, as has been the case in some other parts of the line, which has had the effect of retarding our operations considerably.

**3d. Kirkaldy Section.**—Embraces that portion of the line from the point near Abbotshall Church above referred to, to Dysart, and extends to 4500 yards, and the branch to Kirkaldy Harbour, which will be about 500 yards more. This portion of the line is being marked out, and the working plans and specifications will be in the hands of offerers in the course of next month.

**4th. Orr Mill Section.**—Comprehends that portion of the line from Dysart to Coaltown, in the parish of Markinch, and extends to 7500 yards. The marking out of this Section is nearly completed, and the working drawings are in hand; and it is expected that the works will also be contracted for in the course of next month.

**5th. Markinch Section.**—Embraces that portion of the line from Coaltown to the summit of the country between Markinch and New Inn, and extends to 5000 yards. This work is contracted for by Messrs Ross and Mitchell, who are about to commence operations. The principal work on this division is the viaduct over the river Leven. It was on this Section that the tunnel north of Markinch was intended, but, in consequence of an arrangement with Mr Balfour of Balbirnie, the proprietor of the ground through which the tunnel was to pass, it is now to be dispensed with, and an open cutting substituted, which I have no doubt will be for the benefit of the railway. By the deviation near Dysart, above referred to, the intended tunnel at Wemyss Castle approach is also to be done away with. We shall thus have only one tunnel on the whole line, in length not more than 200 yards.

**6th. New Inn Section.**—This Section embraces that portion of the line from the summit below Markinch and New Inn, referred to in No. 5, and a point a little to the north of the village of Kettle, and extends to upwards of 6000 yards. Mr Kenneth Mathieson is the contractor for the works, which have been about three months in operation, and with which considerable progress has been made.

**7th. Collessie Section.**—This extends to upwards of five miles, and embraces that portion of the line, from the point north of Kettle, above referred to, to the summit of the country between Collessie and Lindores. Mr William Kinghorn is the contractor for this division, and is proceeding with considerable rapidity with the works. The bridge over the Eden is half finished, and a portion of the line is formed, and nearly ready for the permanent rails being laid down.

**8th. Lindores Section.**—This embraces that portion of the line from the northern extremity of last mentioned Section, to Clatchet-Craig, near Newburgh, and is in length about 5000 yards.

## Acknowledgements

This story has been produced almost exclusively through researching newspapers. Most of the individual newspapers used for articles, advertisements and photographs are credited in the text. All the newspaper information was obtained from **Find my past Newspaper Archive** in partnership with the **British Library**.

Mapping – The maps used in the text are reproduced with the kind permission of the Mapping Section of the **National Library of Scotland**.

The photograph which sits astride the article's title is of Balsusney House and also features a steam locomotive. The actual painting is on display in the Local Studies Room at Kirkcaldy Galleries. It is reproduced with the kind permission of **Fife Cultural Trust – trading as On-Fife**.

As always, the extensive and unfailing assistance of the **staff of the Local Studies Room** in Kirkcaldy Galleries is very much appreciated.

Railway enthusiast **Alan Simpson** has been of immense help by providing material from his own researches. Providing us with a copy of the Board of Trade Inspector's Report was very much appreciated and the photograph on page 49 of the stations on the route was taken from the report.

**Alan Simpson** also suggested we refer to the following two books:-

*Burntisland's Railway Port* by Peter Marshall published by the Oakwood Press

**A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain – Volume 15 North of Scotland** by John Thomas and David Turnock. Both were of great interest and used to check some researched items rather than being a prime source.

The photograph of Thomas Grainger's grave was found online in Find A Grave. The picture is attributed to **Charlie and taken in September 2023**.