

# GRANTON HARBOUR

EDINBURGH



OFFICIAL  
HANDBOOK



GRANTON HARBOUR, EDINBURGH

# CENTENARY

1837 — 1937

History and Development  
of the Harbour of Granton

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1937

# GRANTON HARBOUR, EDINBURGH

## CENTENARY

1837 — 1937

**T**HE granting by William IV. upon the 21st day of April 1837, of his Royal Assent to "an Act to enable the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry to make and maintain a pier at Granton, in the Parish of Cramond, and a road therefrom to join the road leading from Leith to Queensferry, in the County of Edinburgh," marked the culmination of many years of preliminary discussion and investigation into the possibilities of improving Edinburgh's connection with the sea and, at the same time, officially constituted Granton as a Harbour.

### EARLY HISTORY

Although this marked Granton's official recognition as a Harbour and landing place, its history stretched back through the centuries, and was as varied and colourful as that of any other place in the Forth. The rugged coastline of Granton, notwithstanding the comparatively sheltered situation, was the scene of several notable shipwrecks, recorded in early times. Bower mentions that in October 1425 a great "carrick" of the Lombards was shattered on the rocks at a part where, about fifty years ago, some ancient Italian guns were discovered. The Leith ship *Jonas*, then regarded as a leviathan of commerce, met a somewhat similar fate during a storm in 1579. In 1844, when excavations were being made for the foundations of a bridge at Granton railway, supposed relics of an ill-fated Armada galleon were found in the form of several coins of Philip II. of Spain.

When the English army marched on Leith under the Earl of Hertford in 1544, they landed at the exact spot where the harbour is now situated. On the night of the 3rd of May the English fleet came to anchor near Inchkeith, and the following day the landing was effected, practically without opposition. In the terse language of "an account of the late



expedition in Scotland sente to the Ryght Honorable Lord Russell, Lord Privie Seale, from the King's armye there by a friend of hys," the landing at Granton is thus described: "The place where we anchored hath long been called the English Road. The Scots now take this to be a prophecy of the thing which has happened. The next day, fourth May, the army landed two miles bewest the town of Leith, at a place called Grantaine Cragge, every man being so prompt that the whole army was landed in four hours."

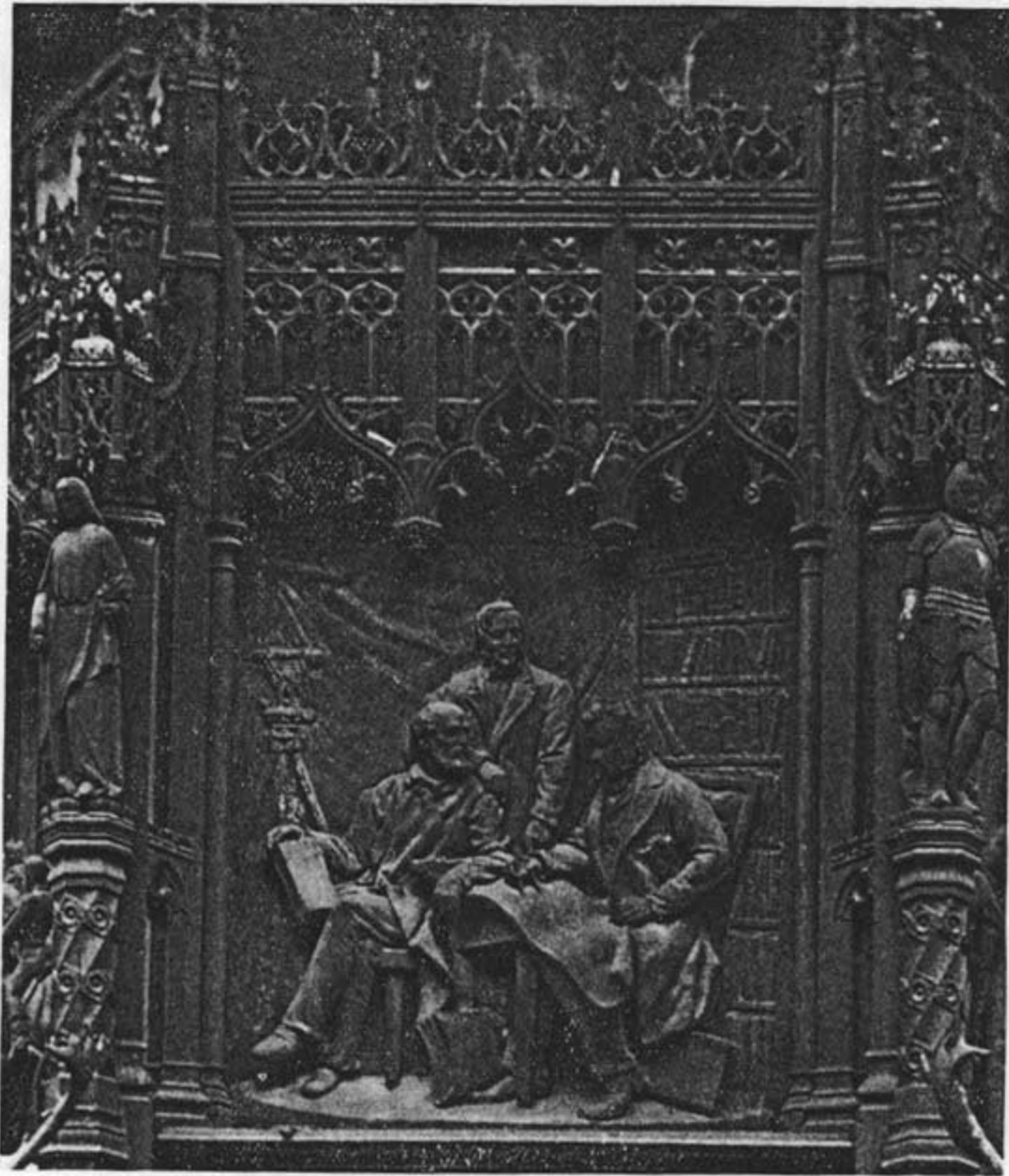
Granton's stone quarries also appear to have been of ancient origin, for it is recorded that for licence to "wyn stanes on his lands of Granton to the schoir for the hale space of a year," half an ell of velvet was in 1552 paid to the Laird of Carube.

The lands of Wester Granton were disposed in 1636 by Charles I. to Sir Thomas Hope of Craighall, with right and privilege of free harbour and shore, and of founding and building a harbour thereon, which charter was renewed in 1643. These lands, along with Easter Granton, subsequently came into the hands of John, Duke of Argyll and Greenwich, and were inherited by his eldest daughter, Lady Caroline Campbell, Countess of Dalkeith, thereby becoming an adjunct of the lands of the House of Buccleuch.

## INCEPTION AND COMMENCEMENT

It was, however, during the years prior to and immediately following the suspension of payments by the City of Edinburgh in 1833, that interest in Edinburgh's maritime connections was at fever pitch throughout the city. At that time the city owned the Port of Leith, but through heavy dues, inadequate facilities, and the large sandbanks at its entrance, Leith was unable to supply Edinburgh's needs, and owing to the financial difficulties in which the City was placed, there did not seem to be much prospect of improvement in those facilities, or the removal of the sandbanks to a sufficient extent to make navigation possible, had the means by then been invented.

Many rival schemes were proposed for the improvement of Edinburgh's Harbours, amongst them one for providing a new entrance to Leith Docks from the west, a second, the constructing of an entirely new Harbour at Trinity, and the third, originally proposed by Mr R. W. Hamilton, Manager of the General Steam Navigation Company, to construct an entirely new Harbour in the deep water at Granton. At that time vessels had to lie in the roads and send their passengers ashore in small boats, but in view of the great increase in the number



WALTER FRANCIS, 5TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH CONSIDERING PLANS FOR GRANTON HARBOUR  
WITH HIS ADVISERS

This group forms one of the panels on the plinth of the statue of the  
5th Duke which is situated opposite to the West Door of  
St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh

of passenger steamers plying to the Forth, a landing place at which passengers could disembark at all states of the tide was urgently required. Mr Hamilton's views were communicated to the Duke of Buccleuch, who held, along with property at Granton, the rights of foreshore and harbour. His Grace evinced immediate interest in the scheme and gave instructions for the necessary estimates and reports to be prepared, and upon the 22nd day of May 1834, Robert Stevenson & Son, Civil Engineers of Edinburgh, presented a



report recommending the construction of a tidal harbour upon His Grace's lands.

The opposition between the rival factions already referred to was extremely strong, and Mr Thomas Telford, first President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, had been commissioned by the Government to report upon the position, and in April 1835, he expressed the opinion that if "steamboat piers were made convenient and safe for landing and embarking at all states of the tide, and the road from Burntisland through the county of Fife put into a proper state for a mail-road, there can be little doubt that the intercourse with the populous east coast of Scotland, including the towns of Cupar, Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose, Stonehaven, Aberdeen, Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Cullen, and Banff, would be by Dundee and Burntisland to Edinburgh, avoiding the present circuitous route by Perth and the Queen's Ferry." At Granton there was, at a short distance from the shore, a depth of water considered at that time ample for all purposes, and Granton was the closest point to Burntisland, the recognised place upon the Fife shore for communication with Edinburgh.

His Grace, however, "having no intention of undertaking a measure unless it could be shown to be consistent with . . . the general interests of the district," first called upon Mr James Walker, F.R.S., President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, to report fully upon the various schemes of Harbour improvement which had been proposed by the many persons interested. Mr Walker decided that after a consideration as full and impartial as he had been able to give the subject, he could see no way in which a remedy to the present difficulties could be applied so economically, so expeditiously, and with so little interference with existing interests and rights as the construction of a Harbour at Granton.

The whole of these reports and estimates were submitted to and approved of by a meeting of "Mercantile and Nautical Gentlemen" held in Edinburgh under the Presidency of Admiral Sir David Milne, and His Grace, convinced of both the practicability and necessity of the proposed undertaking, intimated that he himself would bear the entire expense of the works.

The promoters of the Trinity scheme first brought their Bill before Parliament, but it was rejected by the House of Commons in 1835. The Granton Bill was introduced in 1836 and, after many delays, finally received the Royal Assent in the following year.

# CONSTRUCTION OF THE HARBOUR

## THE MIDDLE PIER

**H**IS GRACE, being impatient to get on with the works once his mind had been made up, did not wait until formal Parliamentary sanction had been obtained, as he was satisfied that in view of the terms under which the original grant of the lands had been made from the Crown, such sanction was unnecessary. He decided to adopt a scheme for a low-water landing pier situated upon the Oxraig rock, to the designs of Robert Stevenson & Son, Engineers of Edinburgh, the well-known Lighthouse Engineers of the period, and at the beginning of 1836 the Contract was placed in the hands of George Johnstone & Company of Craigleith Quarry. From the start, considerable difficulties were experienced, and after the lapse of a few months, and before any real progress had been made with the works, Messrs Johnstone requested to be relieved of their obligations. To this request His Grace agreed, and at the same time he decided to entrust the design and supervision of the works to Messrs Walker & Burgess of London, and the Contract for the construction of the Pier to their new design was placed in the hands of Messrs John Orrell & Company, Contractors of Liverpool, on the 16th November 1836, the formal Contract being entered into on the 24th February 1837, when the works were actually commenced, the Royal Assent to the Act being given two months later.

The section of the Harbour which now comprises the Middle Pier was the first to be built. It was carried out in sections, and the first section was completed and formally opened upon the 28th June 1838, the date of Queen Victoria's Coronation, and named the Victoria Jetty in her honour. Two further sections were completed in turn until the Middle Pier was finished at its present length of 1700 ft. in October 1844.

The Pier, and for that matter, both the breakwaters, were almost entirely constructed from sandstone from His Grace's quarries upon the Granton Estate, although a certain number of the larger facing blocks were brought over from Fife.



The foundations and under-water work were all carried out by means of a diving bell, the masonry blocks at the shoreward end being keyed to the rock itself, and, at the seaward end, founded upon the boulder clay.

At the present time the pier is 1700 ft. long and 200 ft. wide on the average, and has a depth of water up to 13 ft. below Low Water of Ordinary Spring Tides. The New Works which are presently under construction are a further continuation of this Pier.

### THE BREAKWATERS

Although admirably suitable for berthing the vessels of that period at all states of the tide, it was discovered that the Middle Pier was not sufficiently well protected from storms, particularly when the prevailing westerly winds were blowing strongly. It was therefore decided to enter into a much more ambitious scheme of providing, not only a landing pier, but a Harbour of refuge as well.

The Act for the construction of this Harbour was obtained in 1842, and the work was commenced shortly after. The Western Breakwater was the first to be formed owing to the greater prevalence of the westerly gales in the Forth, and the liability of the ebbing tide to form deposits of sand at the pier, carried from the beach and sandbanks higher up. This Breakwater was undertaken in two contracts. The first projected in a nearly straight line from the shore in an east-by-north-east direction, almost parallel to the pier, and about 750 yds. to the westward of it. The first section—about 1500 ft. in length—was finished in 1849, when the contract for the second section was taken up. The second section, which is the longer, after turning an easy curve, runs east-by-south-east, forming a slightly obtuse angle with the first section. The total length of the Western Breakwater is about 3100 ft., or nearly three-fifths of a mile. The breadth of the Breakwater at the level of high tide is 24 ft., but at the base (about 31 ft. deep) it is in some parts no less than 140 ft.

The Eastern Breakwater was commenced in 1853, and was begun from its seaward extremity. The outer portion, about 1000 ft. in length, was taken first in order to complete the protection to the western part of the harbour, which was still exposed to the north-east gales. A temporary timber bridge was carried from the extremity of the West Breakwater, across which the building materials, from the quarries on the Granton estate, were conveyed to the site of the works. During the construction of this part of the Breakwater, vessels had to take the



shore end of it, and on its being finished, the bridge was cleared away, and the proper entrance to the Harbour was opened. The remaining portion of the East Breakwater, about 2170 ft. in length, was carried out from the shore, and this large and final portion of the work was completed by the end of 1863. This Breakwater was slightly larger in cross section than the Western Breakwater, being 25 ft. wide at the top and 150 ft. wide at the base at the deepest part, where the height is 33 ft.

The first section of the East Breakwater was carried out by Alexander Wilson, Contractor, of Edinburgh, and the second section by Taylor Shipley Hunter of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

It is interesting to note that since the time of their construction, these Breakwaters have stood firm and have required no maintenance or repairs whatsoever.

Much of the stone was taken from quarries situated on the adjoining Granton estate. The first quarry was that next to Caroline Park gate, but the stone obtained there was not found at the time to be very suitable. The big quarry on the shore at Granton point was then opened and continued to be worked for a long series of years, and from this most of the materials were obtained until it was inundated by the sea on the morning of 26th October 1855. The heavy sea breaking on the rocks which formed the protection of the quarry, together with an unusually high tide, overthrew the barrier and filled the vast basin of the quarry, most of which was below water level, in the space of five minutes. Fortunately the occurrence did not take place in working hours, so there was no loss of life, although had the breach occurred a few hours later, at least sixty men would certainly have lost their lives. At the time of the accident the quarry had been wrought to a depth of 80 ft. below low water, and a basin of about five acres in extent was formed by the sudden and irreparable breach. The line of the old quarry can still be clearly seen upon the foreshore, looking like a derelict harbour, although it has now been partially filled in with ashes from the Edinburgh Gas Works. Another of the quarries, after it had been worked out, was converted into a reservoir which supplied the Granton district with water until a few years ago.

## THE FERRY

On the 30th June 1842, the Royal Assent was given to an Act for constructing a low-water pier and the necessary works at Burntisland



in the County of Fife, and establishing a Ferry between the same and Granton. This pier was built and the Ferry operated by the joint enterprise of the Duke of Buccleuch and Mr, afterwards Sir John, Gladstone of Fasque, the father of the famous Prime Minister. The Act authorised the transference of the Fife and Midlothian Ferry from Newhaven and Pettycur to Granton and Burntisland, the new route shortening the sea journey to Fife by about two miles. Two "excellent steam boats" were put upon the passage, and the service continued to be run under the superintendence of a Mr Peter Work until the end of 1846, when the direct interest of the proprietors in the undertaking was transferred to the Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company. The opening up of the railway system throughout the country and the establishment of railway connections on both sides of the Forth, affected Granton like other harbours in a double way. It, of course, greatly augmented the importance of Granton Pier as a Ferry because Granton became an important link in the East Coast route to Aberdeen, as, until the construction of the Tay and Forth Bridges, the East Coast route ran from Edinburgh to Granton, by ferry to Burntisland, through Fife to Tayport, by ferry to Broughty Ferry, and on to Aberdeen. It is not our place to trace the development of the ferries, but it is interesting to note that the first train ferry service in the world in which trucks were run on to rails laid upon the steamers, was instituted upon the Granton/Burntisland ferry in the year 1849 with the introduction of the paddle ferry steamer *Leviathan*.

The growth of the railways naturally led to a considerable diminution of the coasting traffic and the cessation of some of its branches altogether, but it appears that, in spite of this, the trade of Granton steadily increased, as the following quotation from the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of Wednesday, 25th November 1863, shows:—

"The splendid steamers of the General Steam Navigation Company had now to compete not merely with their old rivals going out from Leith port, but with a new system of transit of unparalleled and almost undreamt of speed, and of infinitely greater certainty as to the time of the journey. The steamers to Dundee, Montrose, and other ports then sailing from Granton kept up the competition for some time with the 'Edinburgh and Northern Railway' as it was then called, but gradually the railway so absorbed the Fife and Forfarshire traffic that the vessels were one by one withdrawn from the passage, to the no slight detriment of the public, however, in the matter of cheap fares. But the sea trade with the northern peninsula and islands of Scotland has to



this day been left almost intact by the iron-horse, and the greater expense of railway transit will probably always secure a large traffic, especially in heavy goods, on the London sea-passage. In spite of the railways, therefore, and in some respects helped by them, Granton Pier is as busy as ever, and its wharves and warehouses are as crowded; and, in connection with the other parts of the undertaking which we have still to notice, the port is year by year taking an increasing share in the commerce of the country."

The Ferry at this time was one of the main sources of the prosperity of the Port, the numbers of passengers carried amounting to nearly 400,000 in a year.

## RAILWAY DEVELOPMENT

The completion of the Middle Pier led to the revival of the powers and provisions of the Edinburgh, Leith, and Newhaven Railway Company's Act, and in 1844 a Bill was introduced to Parliament to alter, explain, etc., the provisions of that Act, and to enable the Company, when formed, to construct two branch railways, one of which was to Granton, diverging from the main line near Trinity Station, and terminating at or near Granton Pier. The Bill was successfully passed in that year and the railway line was duly completed about two years later. In 1845 the Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company were authorised to make a Railway from Burntisland to Perth, and soon after the passing of that Act, negotiations were begun with a view to purchasing the Ferry undertaking between Granton and Burntisland, and also the system operated by the Edinburgh, Leith, and Newhaven Railway. These negotiations were satisfactorily completed in the year 1846, and later ratified by Act of Parliament.

Ten years later, in 1857, the Caledonian Railway promoted a Bill to grant it permission to make a connection with Granton Harbour, and by 1863 a branch had been brought to the head of what is now the Middle Pier, "both Railway Companies having immediate access to the lines of rails laid down by His Grace upon the whole length of the Pier and connecting with all the jetties and berths."

It is interesting to note that a contemporary record mentions that some of the vessels frequenting the Pier were of 1000 tons.



## THE PATENT SLIP

During the latter half of last century a very important adjunct of the Harbour was the Patent Slip, situated near the head of the West Breakwater. The Slip, which was built about 1850, was capable of taking up vessels of 1200 to 1300 tons. Ships were put on the Slip by means of a cradle, 220 ft. long and 44 ft. wide, and drawn up a gradient of one in eighteen by a steam winch.

The Slip was extremely popular in its early years, and it is recorded that during the first ten years of working, nearly four hundred vessels were repaired upon it.

On the west side of the Slip was the building yard of Messrs Menzies & Company, from which several beautiful timber vessels for Australia and other destinations were launched, while on the other side, a branch of Hawthorn's Engineering establishment used to operate for the manufacture of iron from scrap. It is reported as having installed two of the earliest steam hammers, and enjoyed a period of great prosperity, but, like the Slip, portions of which can still be seen at low tide, and Messrs Menzies' timber ship-yard, it has now passed out of existence.

## THE WESTERN WHARVES

With the development of the Lothian Coalfield, a considerable trade in the shipment of coal was developing. To provide adequate accommodation for this new trade and give it every encouragement, the Duke of Buccleuch constructed a timber wharf 800 ft. long, in the angle of the West Breakwater, to provide a berth for the shipment of coal. Two steam cranes, each capable of moving a load of 20 tons, had been erected on masonry foundations in 1860, the method of operation being to lift the loaded railway wagons, hold them in suspense over the ship's hold, and tilt up so as to at once empty their contents. It is recorded that with one of these steam cranes about 700 tons of coal could be shipped in a day of ten working hours, the crane and capstan being the most up-to-date appliance then known, and the first of its kind in Scotland. The crane was actually in use at Granton with a reduced load as late as 1927, a striking tribute to the excellence of its workmanship.

Coal Exporting, as is well known, is at the present time Granton's principal trade, but it is interesting to note in passing, however, that in former times Granton was a coal-producing centre. The "Old



Statistical Account" records that there were appearances of coal on the seaside in the western part of Royston, and the adjacent lands of Wardie, both above and below the tide mark, and that when other fuel was not plentiful the people of the district did not hesitate to draw upon these native supplies. In the links of Royston there were traces of ancient pits; and in 1788 a pit was sunk in Pilton Wood, but was abandoned owing to the inferiority of the coal.

The work of lining the Western Breakwater with timber wharves was continued until the whole of the Western Wharf had been constructed in this way, giving a total length of over 2000 ft. of deep-water quay space. By progressive dredging, the depth of water was steadily improved until the existing levels of river bed were reached, which enable depths of from 16 ft. to 23 ft. below L.W.O.S.T. to be maintained.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the history of Granton Harbour was somewhat uneventful, the general trade of the Harbour increasing steadily throughout the period. The event which had the greatest significance was, of course, the opening of the Forth Bridge in 1890. As the result of this the Railway Company ceased to carry any of their railway traffic over the Ferries, and the services were reduced to the minimum necessary to cope with the requirements of foot passengers and road traffic between Edinburgh and Burntisland.

152 Annual Abstract of Granton Pier Imports and Exports From 31<sup>st</sup> December 1839 to 1<sup>st</sup> Janry 1841. 153

Name of Companies	No of Vessels	No of Tons	Total Tonnage	paying	B. B.	D. B.	No of Casks	No of Cases	No of Hops	No of Bags	Coal	Stow	Pipes	No of Tiles	Bayle	Other	Other	Total Amount
Kennel Steam Navigation Company	3	28	37,160															£566 0
Gordon Leith & Glasgow Company	3	27	16,925	76,925	76,661	10,277	13	30	631	8								361 3 5/2
Aberdeen & Leith Shipping Company	41	16	76,925	76,925	76,661	10,277	55	1320	6494	1443								160 11 5/2
Canada Passage	2	255	35,440		2,949	262	32	146	210	154								277 2 7/2
Shipping Passage	3	255	17,519						15									45 10 10
Montrose Passage	1	215	2,160		35	72	1	112	360	1								35 3 9
Fish Fisheries	3	9	2,440	2,440														13 3 2
Largo Passage	1	19	1262															5 9 6
Coal	4	267	7,910	7,910							10,794							77 19
Stow	4	94	6,965	6,965							2,837							5 11
Woad	6	6	853	853									10,81					61 2 10
Pipes	5	5	160	160										42,000				2 16 8
Stonings and other Stone															11,607			15 14 7/2
Wool																		17 20 7/2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>162,595</b>	<b>268,579</b>	<b>268,579</b>	<b>15,276</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>1612</b>	<b>9146</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>10,794</b>	<b>2,837</b>	<b>10,81</b>	<b>42,000</b>	<b>11,607</b>			<b>287 42 17 3/2</b>
Add. last Quarter's Pen Quies & due by Kennel Steam Navigation																		
Add. last paid by Canada Company. Quies of 1839. 2000 and 53 not included in the above																		
<b>Grand Total</b> £ 2821 7 3/2																		



## THE PRESENT CENTURY

**D**URING the present century the first landmark of importance was the opening in 1909 by the Anglo-Saxon Petroleum Company of a Depot at Granton, which brought a new import to the Harbour, and which now ranks second to the Esparto Grass in magnitude.

The Great War profoundly affected Granton, as, at the outbreak, part of the Harbour was immediately utilised by the Government as a base for Minesweepers. The many facilities afforded by the Port, and the advantage of a Harbour which vessels could enter and leave at practically any state of the tide, were quickly recognised, with the result that the Admiralty requisitioned portions of the Harbour in ever-increasing areas to accommodate the large concentration of Minesweepers, Patrol Vessels, Submarine Destroyers, and other auxiliary craft, until almost the whole Harbour was under its control. After the cessation of hostilities the Admiralty Staff was withdrawn, and the Port resumed its customary commercial activity, though some trades remained permanently in the channels to which they had been diverted.

Yet another landmark was passed early in 1932 when the Harbour undertaking was converted into a private limited Company, of which the 7th Duke of Buccleuch was the first chairman. An ambitious programme of repair and reconstruction was immediately entered upon, and at the present date almost three-quarters of the whole of the timber wharves lining the Western Breakwater and Middle Pier have been completely reconstructed.

Granton Harbour, under the Chairmanship of the present Duke of Buccleuch, is marking the commencement of its second century by the construction of further extensions and improved facilities to assist the coal trade, to the designs and specifications of the General Superintendent and Engineer, Mr J. H. Hannay-Thompson, B.Sc., B.Com., Chartered Civil Engineer. The 17th September 1937 has been chosen as the date when the Centenary of the Harbour will be celebrated, when His Grace, Walter John, 8th Duke of Buccleuch, will inaugurate the new works by laying the foundation stone of the new Reinforced Concrete Jetty, 450 ft. long, which will carry a Belt Coal Loading Plant of the latest design. This plant, which will have a capacity of 600 tons per hour, will be generally similar to that installed by the Tyne Improvement Commission and opened two years ago by His Majesty The King, when Duke of York, and will comprise all the latest features for the rapid handling of coal with the minimum of breakage, special features to overcome the difficulties of breakage being incorporated in the design. The plant has been designed for the two-fold purpose of loading shipments of coal and the bunkering of trawlers and other small vessels with the minimum of delay. The contract for the Reinforced Concrete Jetty is in the hands of the Yorkshire Hennebique Contracting Co., Leeds, while the Conveyor is being built by F. Turnbull & Co. of Heaton, Newcastle-on-Tyne. The preliminary dredging has been carried out by K. L. Kalis, Sons & Co., London. It is hoped that the whole of the plant will be in operation in about two years' time.



## GRANTON'S SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

### OPENING OF THE PIER

**T**HE first section of the Pier was opened upon the date of Queen Victoria's Coronation, 28th June 1838, the occasion "being attended by great festivities and forming one of the principal local celebrations of the happy event." The Duke of Buccleuch himself was in attendance upon the Queen in London, so the ceremony was performed by His Grace's brother, Lord John Scott, who was then in residence at Caroline Park. His Lordship's yacht *Lufra* was the first vessel to arrive at the quay, and, having landed, he named the spot, at the special desire of the Duke, the "Victoria Jetty," a luncheon later being served on one of the steamers moored alongside the Pier. The first parcel of goods landed appears to have been a barrel of London Porter for the workpeople, presented by the General Steam Navigation Company, and it was landed with due ceremony with a crane. These were not the only arrangements made for the benefit of the workpeople, for it is also recorded, "and that the ale might not be injurious, each man is to get twopence worth of bread and an allowance of beef." All the official people in Edinburgh and Leith and parties connected with shipping, were invited, and the whole ceremony, accompanied by the firing of field pieces by a company of twelve men sent by the Commanding Officer at the Fort, was carried out according to schedule.

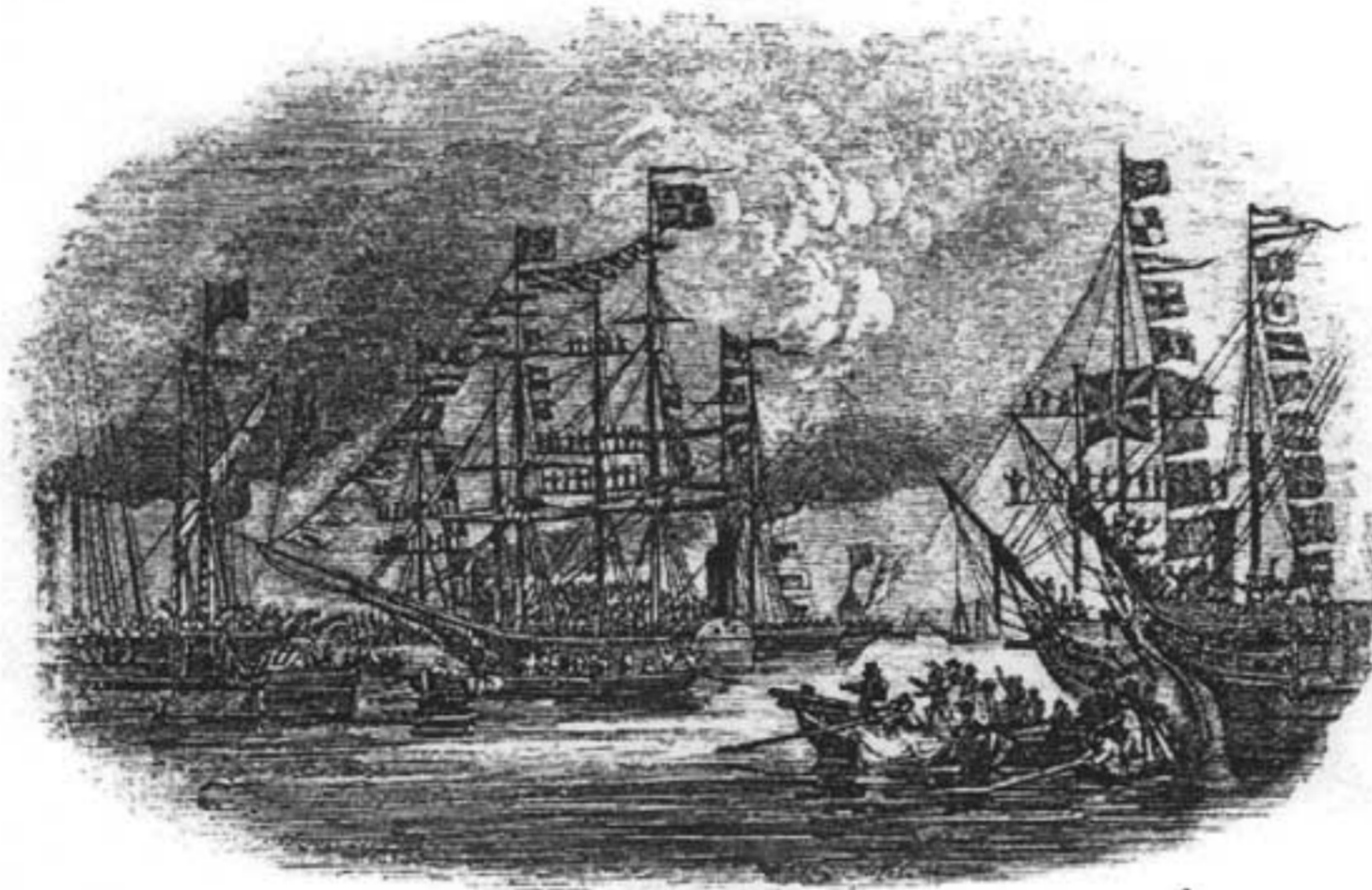
On 30th June 1838, Mr John Gibson reports: "Your Grace would observe from the Newspapers a tolerably correct account of what took place at Granton on Thursday. I am happy to say no accident took place either on the Pier or on the lands of Granton though on board the *Royal William* steamer two accidents occurred from the rashness of the parties themselves in firing their guns. Two of the seamen were severely wounded, and the wadding of one of the guns struck Mr Scott Moncrieff on the head and stunned him. He is now quite well, however.

"We had a good deal of confusion and squeezing on the Jetty at the embarkation, in consequence of people forcing themselves in who had no right to be there.

"I understand Lord John Scott presided over the entertainment in such a way as to give universal satisfaction. The workmen conducted themselves remarkably well, and indeed so did everybody, except those who forced their way into the Steamer without Tickets. They were dressed respectably, but behaved in this respect disgracefully."

Mr Gibson was senior partner of Gibson & Home, W.S., the Duke of Buccleuch's Law Agents. It is interesting to note in passing that the same firm have advised the Dukes of Buccleuch throughout the century, although the name of the firm has changed from time to time, being first Gibson & Home, then Gibson & Strathern, and now Strathern & Blair. Mr Scott Moncrieff was His Grace's factor at Dalkeith.





ARRIVAL OF THE ROYAL YACHT "ROYAL GEORGE" AT GRANTON  
1st September 1842

### THE VISIT OF QUEEN VICTORIA

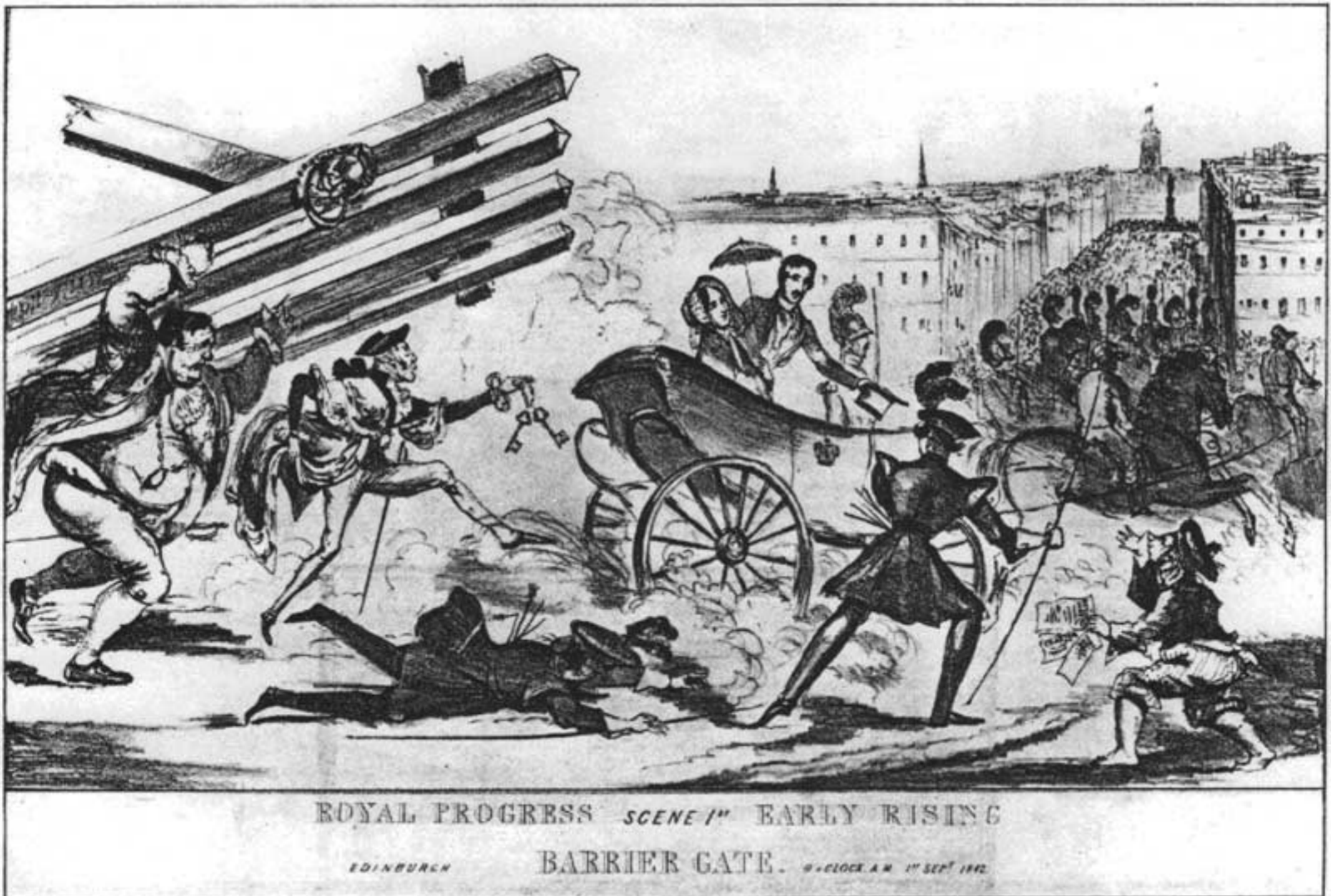
The second occasion on which Granton is referred to in a similar social manner was the Royal Progress throughout Scotland in 1842, for Her Majesty Queen Victoria and Prince Albert landed at Granton on 1st September 1842, and again sailed from Granton on 15th September.

The Royal Party had set sail from the Thames on 29th August in the Royal Yacht *Royal George*, which was towed all the way to Edinburgh by the *Shearwater* and *Black Eagle* steamers, arriving off Granton during the night of 31st August, and remaining at anchor under the shelter of Inchkeith. The Queen had made it known that she wished her visit to Scotland to be accompanied by the minimum amount of ceremonial, as she wished to come as closely as possible in touch with the life of her people, but as this was only the second occasion on which Edinburgh had been visited by Royalty since the reign of Charles II., the City fathers felt that her arrival must be marked by due ceremony, and at least by the formal presentation of the City's keys to Her Majesty at the City boundary.

The previous Royal Progress, that of George IV. in 1822, had taken place at mid-day, and it was presumed that Her Majesty would follow the procedure of that time. But when the day dawned, it was rather foggy and showery, and Her Majesty, who had awakened early, decided that she would land as soon as possible. The Royal Yacht reached the eastern side of Granton Pier at about half-past eight o'clock, and Her Majesty herself landed at about five minutes to nine



o'clock, being received by the Duke of Buccleuch on a platform covered with crimson cloth. The carriage then drove off at a smart pace "amid the shouts of the people and the thunder of the cannon," the Queen having refused to have the hood of the carriage raised "unless it rained more heavily," as the day was somewhat damp. The landing of the Queen at this early hour was so little expected that even inhabitants within a mile of the spot were taken by surprise. In spite of the Duke having despatched a horseman to the City Chambers, the first real indication which came to the populace was the "breathless running of certain individuals who could hardly gasp out the intelligence that the Queen was at hand." As there was no telegraphic means of communication at that time, an elaborate system of signals by gun and flag had been arranged to give warning of the Royal approach, but owing partly to the fog and partly to mismanagement, the correct signals were not given, and when the Queen was actually entering Edinburgh, it was presumed by many that the Royal fleet was merely entering the Forth. The whole town became packed with a mob of people rushing to the barrier gate at the head of Brandon Street, where it was proposed to hold the imposing ceremony of the delivery of the keys of the City to the Queen by Sir James Forrest, the Lord Provost.







In consequence of the omission of the signal flag, the Royal Archers did not meet Her Majesty until she was practically at Canonmills Bridge, instead of at Granton. Here they attempted to fall in at the right and left of the carriage in the place which rightfully belonged to them, but the Dragoons who had accompanied the party from Granton, seeing themselves strongly broken in upon by a body of men in Kendal green and knowing nothing about them or their rights, endeavoured to keep them off with much jostling and fighting, the troopers little realising that they were dealing with some of the élite of the Aristocracy, and that those whom they were throwing in the mud were Earls and Dukes. Lord Elco, General Officer commanding the Archers, was very nearly hurled under the wheels of the Royal carriage, but the position was explained before anyone was seriously hurt.

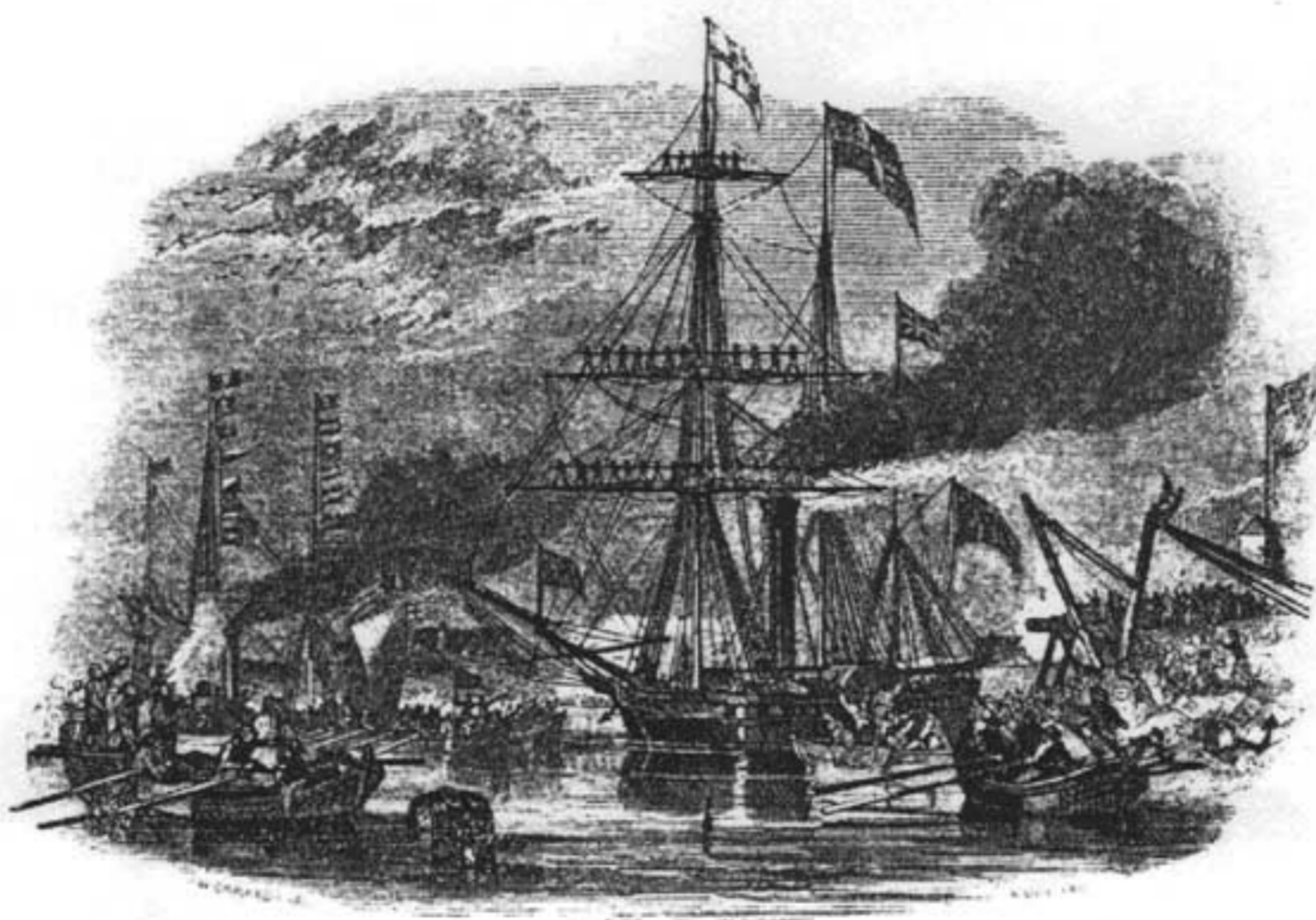
When the Royal carriage reached the wooden barrier the Civic Authorities were still in their Council Chamber awaiting news of the arrival, so the Royal carriage swept through the open gates without slackening pace, the Queen, not unnaturally, wondering what all the



fuss was about. As soon as they heard what had happened, the Magistrates abandoned their dignity and rushed pell-mell through the town in the hope of intercepting the Royal procession near Royal Circus, and they just arrived in time to see Her Majesty drive past without their receiving more recognition than the ordinary members of the crowd. Sir James Forrest and the senior Bailies then went post haste to Dalkeith House, where the Queen was staying as the guest of the Duke of Buccleuch, and the failure of their arrangements was satisfactorily explained, the remainder of the Royal Progress going through without any of the untoward incidents which had marked its commencement.

The Royal Party sailed from Granton on 15th September 1842, their embarkation being attended by an even greater degree of ceremony than that planned for Her Majesty's arrival, to make up for the deficiencies of her welcome, and on this occasion the programme was adhered to to the minute.

Owing to the slowness of the voyage up and the rolling of the Yacht in tow, it was decided to charter the General Steam Navigation Company's vessel *Trident*, which was specially decorated for the occasion. This vessel, which was the latest of their fleet, made a record passage to London, and we read that it had out-distanced all the accompanying squadron by the time the Farne Islands were reached.



DEPARTURE OF THE "TRIDENT" FROM GRANTON WITH QUEEN VICTORIA ON BOARD  
15th September 1842



## TRADE AND FACILITIES

**T**HE Harbour of Granton is situated within two miles of the centre of the City of Edinburgh, and, alone of the Forth Ports, is tidal, there being no dock gates. This enables Coasters and Lighters drawing up to 13 ft. of water, to enter and leave the Harbour at all states of the tide, while vessels drawing up to 30 ft. of water can enter and leave at high water.

The Harbour consists of a Middle Pier protected on the east and west sides by two breakwaters, thus forming two harbours, the west containing 70 acres and the east 52 acres of water at H.W.O.S.T. The West Breakwater is lined with timber wharves, and is equipped with a battery of 3-ton Electric Travelling Cranes to augment the quick-acting steam cranes of three and five tons capacity.

The present-day imports consist mainly of Esparto Grass, Wood Pulp, and other paper manufacturing materials; Motor Spirit, Asphalt, Strawboards, and Bog Ore. Granton has been for many years, both pre- and post-war, the principal Esparto importing port in the British Isles, and the growth in recent years of the paper-making industry in the Lothians and surrounding counties has resulted in an increasing yearly quantity of Esparto being landed at the Harbour.

The exports comprise principally Coal, Coke and Coke Breeze. The Coal, both for coastwise and foreign shipment, is chiefly obtained from the nearby Lothian coalfields, although a considerable quantity is also forwarded from the Lanarkshire pits. Practically all the Coke exported from the Edinburgh Corporation Gas Works, which are situated close to the Harbour, is handled at Granton and is shipped principally to Denmark, Sweden, and Germany.

The Coal and Coke exports are handled at wharves at the Western Breakwater and the Middle Pier. Two 25-ton coaling cranes, capable of shipping up to 300 tons of coal per hour, are situated on the West Breakwater, and each has extensive siding accommodation for the storage of wagons. A third 25-ton coaling crane of similar capacity is placed on the Middle Pier, where there are other steam cranes with lifting capacities varying from three to ten tons for general cargo.

A new berth for the loading of coal which will have a depth of 25 ft. at L.W.O.S.T., equipped with a Belt Conveyor with a capacity of 600 tons per hour, is presently under construction.

All the berths in the Harbour are connected up with the London & North Eastern and London, Midland & Scottish Railways, and there is extensive siding accommodation adjoining the Harbour for the standage of coal and other traffic. Access to all the berths may also be had by road, and cargoes may thus be discharged direct into motor





GRANTON TRAWLING FLEET

lorries. Great advantage is taken of the conveyance of goods by road transport, as it is possible to convey goods by road to the outlying districts of Edinburgh without the necessity of going through the centre of the city.

Vessels drawing up to 21 ft. of water can be kept afloat at all states of the tide, and up to 25 ft. of water at neap tides, as the depth of water at the Western Wharf varies from 15 to 23 ft. at L.W.O.S.T. Vessels of from 2000 to over 8000 tons gross are regularly berthed at these wharves. At all the berths fresh water is procurable from pipes connected up with the Edinburgh Corporation's Water Mains.

On the land adjoining the Harbour, which is also the property of the Harbour Company, several important industries are carried on, the principal of which are :—

Wire works, Printing Ink and Oil refining factories, Iron foundry, Ice factory and Net factories. There are also a number of workshops occupied by engineers, boat-repairers, riggers, etc., adjoining the Harbour, thus providing local facilities for executing smaller repairs to shipping.

All parts of Edinburgh and Leith are within easy reach of Granton, which lies within the Edinburgh City boundary. There is a five-minutes' service by the electric tramcars to the commercial centres of both places, the journey only occupying about fifteen minutes, while the converging of several arterial roads at Granton renders the Harbour very accessible and convenient for road transport to surrounding districts.



## TRAWLING

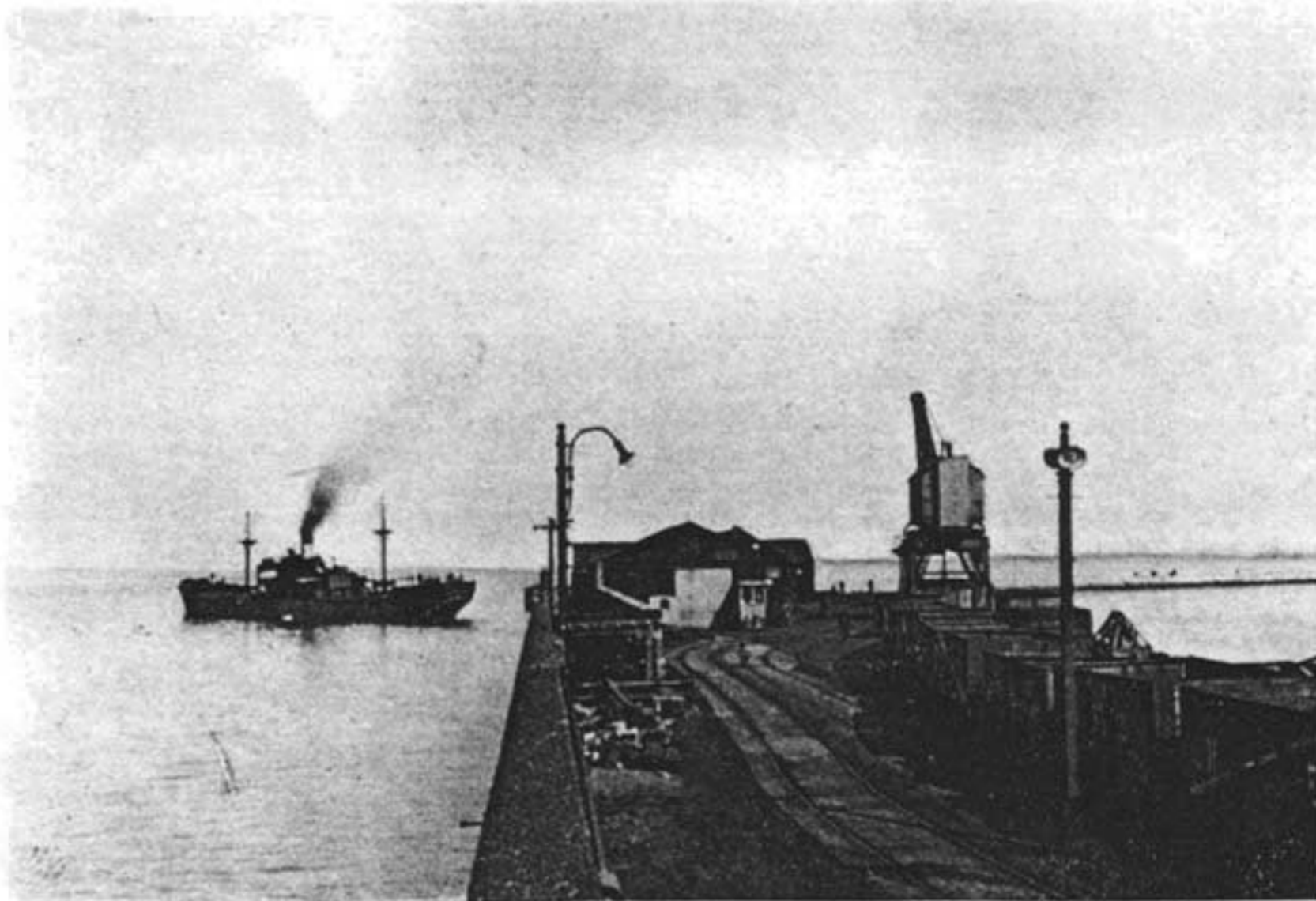
Granton is the headquarters of the Fleet of Trawlers operating in the North Sea from the Firth of Forth. Between 300,000 and 400,000 cwts. of white fish are landed annually, over half of which is dispatched to the Glasgow Market.

The commencement of the Trawling Industry, which took place about 1885, found the Granton and Newhaven Fish Salesmen wide awake to the future of the trade, notable amongst whom were Mr John S. Boyle and Mr Thomas L. Devlin, whose family still take a prominent part in the industry. The Fleet at Granton consists of about fifty vessels, and there is a large Repairing Establishment quite near the Harbour, for serving the needs of all vessels.

In passing, it is interesting to note that the Otter Trawl was invented by a Granton man, Mr Scott, who was General Manager of the General Steam Fishing Company, nearly sixty years ago.

The accessibility of the Harbour at all states of the tide and the proximity of the Lothian Coalfields make Granton Harbour an ideal centre for bunkering vessels. In addition to the local fleet, advantage is taken of the excellent facilities provided for the bunkering of fishing vessels by a considerable and ever-increasing number of trawlers from Aberdeen and other East Coast ports. Plentiful supplies of coal for these vessels are always kept in readiness in the Harbour sidings by the local Agents, while the Granton Ice Company, at their factory on the Middle Pier, deliver the crushed ice by means of a travelling belt and chute direct from the factory into the ice holds of the vessels berthed right alongside.

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LONDON BOUND



## PROPRIETORS

- 1837-1884. WALTER FRANCIS, 5TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.
- 1884-1909. WILLIAM HENRY WALTER, 6TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.
- 1909-1932. JOHN CHARLES, 7TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.  
(Earl of Dalkeith until 1914.)
- 1932 to date. GRANTON HARBOUR, LIMITED.
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## GRANTON HARBOUR, LIMITED

### CHAIRMEN

- 1932-1935. JOHN CHARLES, 7TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.
- 1935 to date. WALTER JOHN, 8TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.



## OFFICIALS. 1837-1937

### *Resident Engineers*

1837-1838. D. Dick.  
1838-1839. D. Fraser.

### *General Superintendents*

1839-1877. John Howkins, C.E.  
1877-1906. John Howkins (Jnr.), C.E.  
1906-1907. Hugh McD. Wilkie (Interim).  
1907-1931. John Oliphant, F.C.I.S.  
1931-1932. Hugh McD. Wilkie.

### *General Superintendent and Engineer*

1932 to date. J. H. Hannay-Thompson, B.Sc., B.Com.,  
A.M.Inst.C.E., M.Inst.T.

### *Secretary*

1932 to date. John Ormiston.

### *Pier Masters*

1838-1847. Capt. Sir William Bain, R.N.  
1847-1877. Capt. Thomas Alexander Wemyss, R.N.

### *Middle Pier Masters*

1877-1907. Capt. Wm. Hardie.  
Alex. Robertson.  
Archibald McGillivray.

### *West Pier Masters*

John Watt.  
John Peterson.

### *Harbour Masters*

1907-1908. Capt. Williams.  
1908-1929. Archibald McGillivray.  
1929-1936. Capt. John M. Aitken.  
1936 to date. Thomas Edward Drysdale.



## GRANTON HARBOUR, LIMITED

### *Principal Officers and Staff, 1937*

<i>Chairman</i>	WALTER JOHN, 8TH DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH.
<i>Directors</i>	LORD WILLIAM WALTER MONTAGU-DOUGLAS-SCOTT. SIR JOHN HEPBURN MILNE HOME.
<i>General Superintendent and Engineer</i>	JOHN HORACE HANNAY-THOMPSON, B.Sc., B.Com., A.M.Inst.C.E., M.Inst.T.
<i>Secretary</i>	JOHN ORMISTON.
<i>Clerks</i>	James Bruce, Daniel John Gunn, William Wilson Johnston, Alexander Spence Ronald.
<i>Engineers</i>	John Ashton Pool, Stud.Inst.C.E., Findlay Nelson.
<i>Typists</i>	Jean Guthrie Henderson, Agnes Baxter Porteous.
<i>Harbour Master</i>	Thomas Edward Drysdale.
<i>Deputy Harbour Master</i>	Alexander Forsyth.
<i>General Foreman</i>	James Harrower.
<i>Traffic Foreman</i>	Peter King.
<i>Foreman Engineer</i>	John Hodge
<i>Foreman Carpenter</i>	Robert Lister.
<i>Foreman Platelayer</i>	Andrew Boath.
<i>Dredger Master</i>	Allan Douglas.



