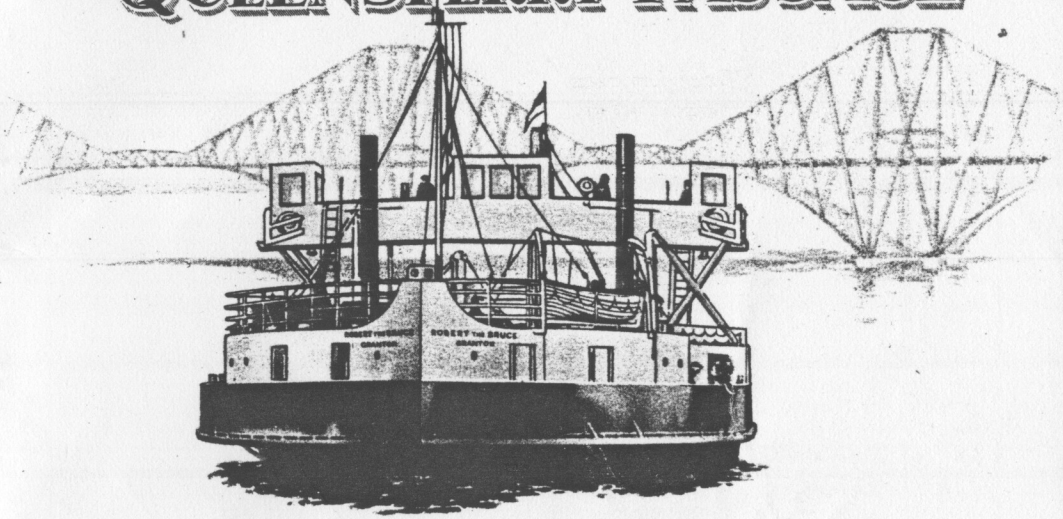
QUEENSFERRY PASSAGE



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WEST LOTHIAN
HISTORY AND AMENITY SOCIETY
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Cover Illustrations

Front *'Sir William Wallace', the last ferry built for the Passage;*

Back *Three ferryboats 'John Beaumont' (1876 - 1893), 'Woolwich' (1908 – 1920), and 'Queen Margaret' (1934 – 1964).*

Title Page *Denny's notepaper heading for the Queensferry Passage (1956).*

FOREWORD

This Pamphlet is the second in a series of original pamphlets to be published by the West Lothian History and Amenity Society. The first, on the murder of the Regent Moray, took a look at a single event in 16th century Linlithgow; this pamphlet covers a much greater period of time, and brings its subject down virtually to the present day.

The Queensferry passage has been a feature of the life of Scotland since the earliest times, and it has been associated with many of the great names in Scottish history. The author deals with this aspect of the ferry, but he concentrates mainly on the last century or so of its life, during the great age of steam, when travel became increasingly important, and speedy communications ever more essential.

No one could be better qualified than Mr. Brodie to write on the subject. He has already spoken and wirtten extensively on steamships with particular reference to the Forth, and the Society is consequently very pleased that he has been prepared to contribute this pamphlet to the series.

Patrick Cadell (Secretary)



QUEENSFERRY PASSAGE

The ferry across the Forth at the narrows at Queensferry, was the oldest, longest operating, and best known of all the Forth ferries. It began in the 11th century when the monks of Dunfermline ferried Queen Margaret of Scotland across to their Abbey, was confirmed as a regular crossing by a charter of King David I, and continued without interruption until the opening of the Forth Road Bridge in 1964. It was a difficult ferry to operate, having to cross a tide of up to nine knots and cope with strong eddies. For this reason a number of landings were in use on the south shore until ferries appeared which were sufficiently powerful to make a direct crossing. In earlier days the ferry simply arrived at whatever landing it was able to reach. Even the last vessels had their jousts with the tide and always displayed three black discs on their signal hoist. A warning to other shipping stating 'Keep clear, I am out of control'.

THE MEDIEVAL FERRY

Half, and latterly the entire, rights of ferry were vested with the Convent of Dunfermline, the operation being let to individual boatmen. In an extended and modified form, this system persisted until 1809 when there were sixteen shares, disbursed by the Court of Regality to various personages and mostly sub-let to local boatmen.

Crude landing places for handling the considerable cattle traffic were first erected on the south shore to comply with a Parliamentary Act of 1467, while the crossing charges were fixed by another Act seven years later, as one penny Scots per person and two pennies for a horse. By the 16th century the boatmen were charging as they saw fit and the 1474 Act was repealed and replaced by another which stipulated charges of 4d per person, 8d for a man on horseback.

An Admiralty Court, held at Dunfermline on 13th October

On board 'Sir William Wallace' at the west side of Hawes Pier, 1959

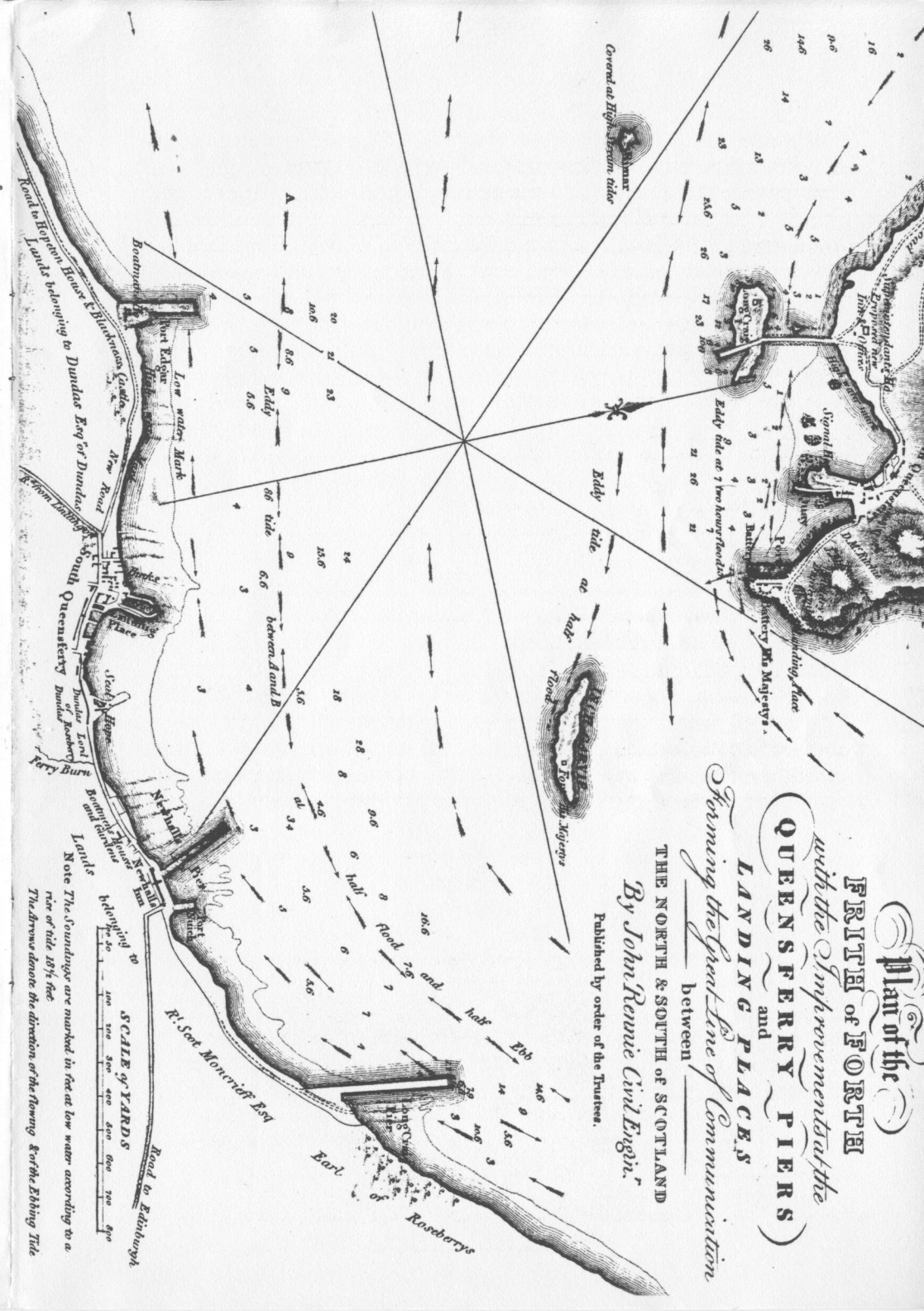
1749, established the timetable, specifying a boat from each side every two hours on weekdays, from 4 a.m. till 8 p.m. during the summer months and from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. in winter. The boats over-nighted at the north shore but one was required to be in attendance on the south shore on Sundays, 'to transport passengers who must needs cross on that day'. Four boats and four yawls were to be provided for the Passage with a yawl available for charter on request in between the scheduled two hourly service. The timetable did not apply at the time of the Falkirk Trysts (cattle markets) when 'the boatman shall immediately cross with the cargo'. Both Binks and Hawes landings were obviously in regular use as a list of crew members was required to be deposited with 'the possessor of William Hill's public house at South Queensferry..... and the possessor of the public house at Newhalls (now the Hawes)'.

The Trustees for the Improvement of Fisheries and Manufacturies in Scotland financed the repair of the south landings in 1775 and utilised all the money on the Hawes 'without bestowing a penny on the more useful and commodious shippings at the town of Queensferry'. South Queensferry applied for a grant to repair these 'shippings' in 1784 describing the crossing as 'a great key of Communication between South and North parts of the United Kingdom' and as 'the most frequented ferry in Britain'. The grant was not forthcoming and the Passage continued with users 'compelled to scramble..... over a track lying in disorder and covered in seaweed, with sea water washing between them'.

THE STAGE COACH FERRY

A new era dawned in 1775 when 'The Fly' stage coach set off down the cobbled streets of Perth bound for North Queensferry. Other coaches followed and in the 1790's the government introduced fast mail coaches. These coaches all crossed the river at Queensferry and the operation of the ferry became more difficult. The boatmen became belligerent and for a short time in 1788 were suspended and replaced by naval personnel without any knowledge of the local tides, who proved so inefficient that the boatmen were soon reinstated.

Map, dated 1811, showing the improved piers



A turnpike road was constructed between Perth and North Queensferry in the early 19th century and the Queensferry Passage reorganised at the insistence of its proprietors. By an Act of 1809 the individual shareholders were forced to sell their holdings to the Treasury for a total of £10,000, the ferry being vested in Trustees who comprised most of the dignitaries of Fife, Clackmannan, Perth, and Linlithgow (West Lothian), together with the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Vice-Admiral of Scotland, and representatives from Dunfermline and Inverkeithing. Fifteen of these comprised a management committee, with full responsibility for working the ferry. A government loan of £10,000 was given for improvements and a survey commissioned from the celebrated engineer, John Rennie. He recommended pier improvements to allow boats to lie overnight safely at both sides and for them to cross diagonally with assistance from the tide.

Almost £15,000 was spent on the south bank landings.
A new pier at Port Edgar:– £4,763 13s. 10d.
A new pier at the Hawes, with a central breakwater and paved roads on either side:– £8,696 0s. 0d.
A small pier at Portnuick, with rock blasted to give sufficient depth. (now known as the Anchorage):– £587 11s. 11d.
Six houses on the foreshore at the Hawes (for boatmens' families):– £909 11s. 6d.
A new pier at the Longcraig:– (uncosted, and built a few years later as a low water landing.)

The Trustees appointed Captain James Ross, R.N. as superintendent and he proved an excellent choice. He kept a record of the traffic and reported that in the year ending 11th May 1811, 228 passengers were transported daily, the highest daily figure being 447. Other traffic totalled 1,515 carriages, 4,524 carts, 13,154 horses, 18,057 cattle, 25,151 sheep and 2,615 dogs. The service was now hourly, on the hour. Thirty six men and boys found employment as crew for the four large boats, three pinnaces, and one small boat. Of the large boats two were in regular passenger service while the others transported carriages, carts, and livestock.



THE EARLY STEAM FERRY

An independent concern, the Edinburgh and Glasgow Shipping Co., started the Forth's first steam ferry between Newhaven and Dysart, in September 1819. The Trustees of the Fife and Midlothian ferry (Newhaven to Pettycur) responded by placing a steamboat on their service on 7th August 1820 and by the following autumn they were operating three steamboats on two distinct crossings from Newhaven; to Pettycur and Dysart, and via Pettycur to Burntisland and Aberdour. The effect on the Queensferry Passage was dramatic and two thirds of the coach traffic was immediately lost. The Queensferry Trustees decided to experiment and chartered the Stirling steamer *Lady of the Lake* for two weeks from 1st January 1821.

Captain Ross was impressed but the difficult tidal conditions made the introduction of a steamboat far from straightforward. He set about designing a vessel suitable for use as a ferry at high tides, and for use as a tug to tow the large sailing boats at low water. The result was *Queen Margaret,* built by Menzies & Co. of Leith. She cost £2,369 and entered service on 1st October 1821.

A 90 minute steam service was given, advertised 'to at all times tow large and small boats as directed by the Superintendent'. Full laden herself, *Queen Margaret* could normally tow one large boat and in a calm managed two, occasionally three. At low water she could only call at Longcraig and could not handle wheeled traffic. This was taken by the sailing boats which she picked up off Hawes pier and detached to windward of the Town Pier at North Queensferry.

Queen Margaret had unfortunately been built of improperly seasoned timber, and in six years absorbed sufficient water to increase her draught by six inches. This was rectified by lengthening her bows by seven feet in 1828 reducing her draught by eight inches and increasing her speed. She remained as ferry vessel till 1838 and then as spare till advertised for sale by public roup on 7th August 1841. Her replacement was a small iron steamer, named *William Adam* after one of the Trustees. She appeared in 1838 and continued the practice of towing the large sailing boats. This practice persisted till the late 1870's.

A Parliamentary Act in 1830 defined the limited of the ferry, giving the Trustees exclusive rights within them, and a further one

The Hawes in 1784, before the improvements.

in 1848 gave them power to lease the Passage to the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Co., with harbour improvements to follow this lease. Unfortunately it was never implemented and traffic, which had flourished up to this point, declined markedly following the opening of the Edinburgh Perth and Dundee Railway Co.'s line (via the Granton to Burntisland ferry) that year.

BANKRUPT TRUSTEES

The lack of railway connections crippled the Queensferry Passage and by the early 1860's the Trustees were in debt to the tune of £11,000 to £12,000 and imploring the railway companies to build connecting lines. In 1861 the Edinburgh and Glasgow company presented a bill for the construction of a line from Ratho to Port Edgar where a major coal exporting harbour was envisaged. The North British Railway contested this and proposed a line along the shore from Granton to South Queensferry, and a connection from North Queensferry to Dunfermline. The Edinburgh Perth and Dundee objected to both proposals and they never received assent. On 25th March the Ferry Trustees requested a meeting with the Edinburgh and Glasgow and this led to the railway offering to purchase the ferry by paying 12s. 6d. in the pound to the creditors. This offer was rejected by the ferry creditors.

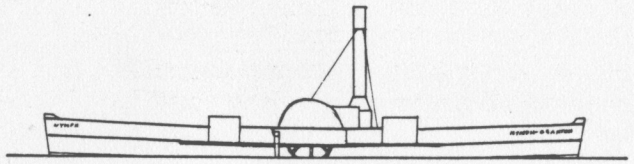
The North British had purchased the Perth railway by 1863 and then reached agreement with the Glasgow company over plans for the Queensferry Passage. They each successfully present a bill to Parliament. The Edinburgh and Glasgow bill covered, as before, the line from Ratho to Port Edgar with ferry terminals at South Queensferry, and included power to purchase the ferry in two years time if the North British had not already done so. The North British bill covered not only a line from Dunfermline to North Queensferry and the construction of ferry piers (to be jointly owned with the Edinburgh and Glasgow), but included power to purchase the ferry and operate a direct crossing between Port Edgar and North Queensferry until the Passage became their property. An ambitious train ferry was authorised, where 'the boats shall be such as to receive and convey the engine, tender, and all carriages of each train without any transhipment'. The famous

consulting engineer, Thomas Bouch, described it as 'the perfect ferry'.

Work on the Ratho line started immediately and it was open to Dalmeny in February 1866. Land at Port Edgar had been purchased and the construction of the coal harbour and ferry terminal was well in hand. Work was then suspended as the North British had made no progress on the Fife side and their plans had radically altered. On 30th October 1863 they had appointed Thomas Bouch as engineer for their ferry project and before long he was advocating that a bridge (crossing the river from Blackness to Charlestown) should be built in place of the train ferry.

The affairs of the Ferry Trustees reached breaking point in the summer of 1863 when they announced that *William Adam* needed reboilering so badly that she was virtually unserviceable. A deputation met the North British to explain their desire that the railway 'arrange for the future conduct of the Passage'. While the two railways conferred over what offer to make, the Trustees decided they could carry on no longer and from 10th September 1864 leased the ferry working to John Croall, the proprietor of the largest surviving fleet of stage coaches in Scotland. Ironically they sold *William Adam* to the N.B.R., and she was used to tow into place an experimental caisson for the Blackness bridge. This bridge, with multi spans 500 foot long, probably would have been built but for a major financial crisis within the N.B.R. The necessary powers were obtained in an Act of 1865, which also abandoned the proposed railway to North Queensferry and the N.B.R. powers to purchase the ferry. The bridge project was abandoned in September 1866, when *William Adam* was offered for sale, going to Leith owners for £85.

John Croall placed the steamer *Benwell* on the Passage. A typical tug of the period she caught fire while lying at North Queensferry in February 1867 and was declared a total loss. *Nymph,* an antiquated Mersey ferry was added to the fleet in 1865 and was to serve as the Queensferry Passage steamer for the next twelve years, carrying Croall's 'Antiquary' on its daily journey to Dunfermline. This was Scotland's last express coach and it operated until Croall's death in 1873.



Nymph

THE RAILWAY PURCHASE

The Trustees still felt their financial position to be hopeless, and on 1st March 1867, the N.B.R. received information through Edinburgh solicitors that an offer of £5,000 might secure the Queensferry Passage rights. On 25th May the Trustees and their creditors agree to sell for £4,500 plus £200 expenses, payable on 19th September 1868, with entry, working, and possession, one year earlier. The deal was swiftly concluded, the N.B.R. using the purchase rights it had acquired in amalgamating with the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway Co. A condition of the sale was that the service being given at the date of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Act must be considered the minimum lawful service.

Rail connection was provided by extending the Dalmeny branch to a station called Newhalls, opened in July 1869. This was at the end of the woods, some way west of and above the Hawes pier. A footpath connected the two and porters were provided to carry passengers luggage. The porterage charge was 1d if the luggage could be carried in one hand, 2d if two hands were required. Rails were also laid to Port Edgar but work on the harbour was not restarted.

The railway initially considered placing their handsome Clyde built steamer *Dandie Dinmont* on the crossing but she was far too large for the existing piers. During June 1868 they ran trials with *Carham*, a vessel recently brought round from the Solway Firth. Again she was too large and so Croall's lease was renewed and continued till his death in July 1873, when the N.B.R. acquired his aged *Nymph*. At that time they minuted that she was being repaired and that ferry working was irregular.

RAIL CONNECTIONS & A NEW STEAMER

Construction of a railway from Dunfermline to North Queensferry was again approved in 1873. Originally in private hands it was acquired before completion by the N.B.R. and was opened to traffic on 1st November 1877, making the Queensferry Passage an alternative through route to the north. At North Queensferry a solid stone slipway was constructed over Longcraig and close to the station. The ferry now called both there and at the Town Pier before crossing the river.

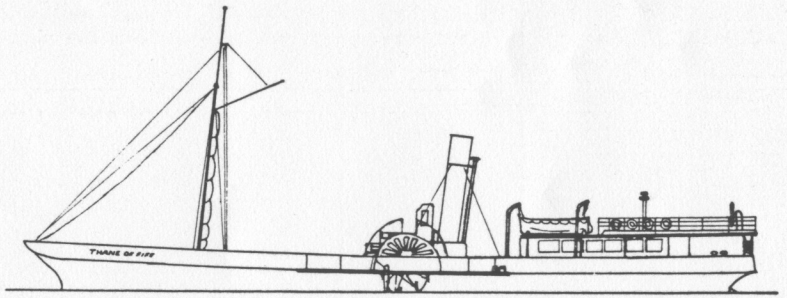
Construction restarted at Port Edgar where £30,000 was spent completing the facilities. The station and harbour were opened on 1st October 1878. The station at Newhalls was closed. The steamer thereafter sailed from Port Edgar, calling at the Hawes for road traffic if the tide was suitable. Calls ceased at Longcraig, the previous low water landing.

The N.B.R.'s locomotive superintendent reported in September 1873 that the *Nymph* would not last more than one year, but that year passed with no signs of a replacement and the Board of Trade extended her passenger certificate after her boiler pressure was reduced to 6¾ lbs. per sq. inch. This reduced her speed to such an extent that she was incapable of combating the tides and the service she gave was totally inadequate. She broke loose from her moorings at Port Edgar on New Year's Day 1877 and would have been wrecked but for five fishermen who climbed aboard and secured her. The railway rewarded them with a payment of 10s each.

A replacement steamer was again considered in December 1875 when it was agreed to purchase a suitable second-hand tug. This seemingly strange decision confirms that the large sailing boats were still in use, and probably carrying the bulk of the traffic. No tug was located and on 3rd February 1876 the locomotive superintendent was told to prepare plans for a new tug, but on his own initiative produced a design which, using the new piers under construction, would handle all the traffic and allow the sailing boats to be phased out. A double sterned, shallow draught screw steamer, she was ordered from the Kinghorn yard of John Key and Son in May at a price of £5,137. Named *John Beaumont* (after one of the directors) she entered service on 2nd February 1877. *Nymph* was put up for sale but was withdrawn from the market six weeks later once it was realised that the 'Johnnie' was proving quite unmanageable.

She ran aground after only a few days in service and was off until early March. Thereafter she was still difficult to handle and proved that the locomotive engineer had slipped up badly in expecting a vessel with a single engine and a screw propeller at each end to cope with the Queensferry tides. However *Nymph* was withdrawn again in August when she was sent to Charlestown for use as a tug. She was for sale 'lying Port Edgar' in May 1883, and shortly afterwards was broken up. *John Beaumont* again made news on 8th December 1878 by sinking after striking the pier at North Queensferry but she was back in service within a few days. Still unreliable, she was reduced to the role of spare steamer, from 12th September 1879, when *Thane of Fife,* an old but reliable ship built in 1847 for the Burntisland ferry was transferred to the Queensferry Passage, becoming the regular steamer for the next decade. She was also used for excursion work whenever the Royal Navy visited the Forth, giving cruises to view the fleet from Port Edgar with connecting trains from Edinburgh. *John Beaumont* was rebuilt with paddles late in 1879, greatly improving her performance and she appeared in service whenever the 'Thane' was required for other work.

Despite the money spent to modernise the crossing the Queensferry Passage never became a major north route at this period. Its railway connections served Dunfermline and the surrounding area. Traffic for further afield crossed either on the ferry from Granton to Burntisland or via the Caledonian railway bridge at Alloa.



Thane of Fife

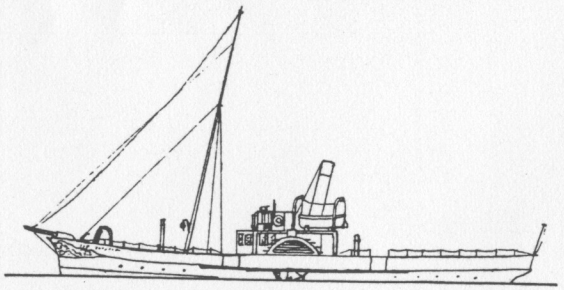
The Hawes in 1890. 'John Beaumont' has just left, while a launch, possibly 'Dalmeny Castle is approaching. 'New Undaunted' is lying off.

THE FORTH RAIL BRIDGE

Work on the world famous cantilever rail bridge commenced in 1883. Tourists were soon flocking to Queensferry to see the bridge works and many used the Passage steamer to obtain a good view. In 1887 Captain Arthur started cruises from the Town Harbour to view the bridge having built both the hull and engines of a small launch, *Dalmeny Castle.* So successful were these cruises that the next year he added a small paddle steamer, *New Undaunted,* to his fleet.

The bridge was opened on 4th march 1890, *John Beaumont* and Captain Arthur's two vessels sailing from Queensferry with excursionists. After crossing by train and driving home a gold rivet, the Prince of Wales returned by sea in the builder's little work boat *Dolphin.* The large Burntisland ferry *William Muir* came up river specially to convey the official guests back across the river.

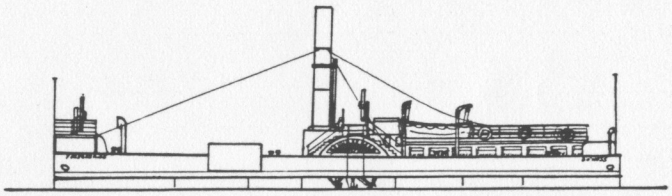
The N.B. had no longer any need for the Passage and on 24th April leased it to Captain John Arthur, selling him *John Beaumont* for £1,250. His fleet moved with their base to the Hawes Pier and for the next four summers gave a frequent service of excursions around the bridge. Ferry traffic was minimal but the legally required service was maintained. Port Edgar and North Queensferry stations were closed. A new station was opened on the bridge line at Dalmeny, connection with the ferry slip being by steps known locally as Jacob's Ladder.



New Undaunted

JOHN WILSON OF BO'NESS

Captain Arthur retired after the summer of 1893 and from October that year the Queensferry and Broughty (Tay) ferries were leased to John S. Wilson, a Bo'ness tugmaster. Traffic was almost all going by rail and the N.B.R. paid an annual subsidy of £375 to keep the ferries open with the legal minimum services. They also gave Wilson an interest free loan of £1,250 to finance a ship for Queensferry. He purchased a thirty two year old Tay ferry, *Forfarshire,* and operated a combined roster of bridge cruises and ferry crossings. Wednesday evening cruises were also a regular feature, given by one of his tugs, *Admiral* or *Pero Gomez.* In fine weather the crowds were such that sometimes *Forfarshire* had to perform the cruise while the smaller tug took the ferry working.



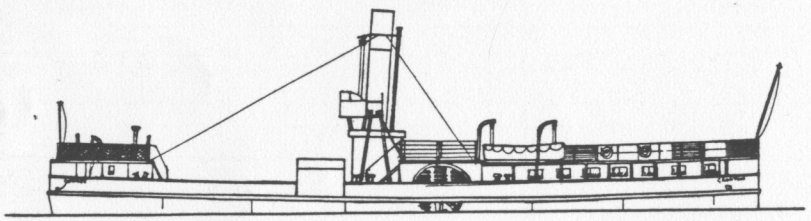
Forfarshire

Forfarshire received a new boiler and very tall funnel in 1904. About this time road traffic began to increase and in 1908 Wilson obtained an additional ferry, the eighteen year old *Woolwich* which came up from the Thames. Road traffic could thereafter be handled all year round, though it could not be loaded at low water. This increase in traffic was reflected in the railway subsidy which was reduced in 1910 to £300 per annum.

Traffic picked up quickly at the start of the Great War, mainly due to the naval base at Rosyth. Wilson agreed to work without a subsidy from 1st January 1915 but on 1st July 1917 after the Admiralty had put on its own service to Rosyth it was restored at £375 per annum. Inflation soon rendered this unrealistic and after one year it was increased to £1,000.

THE 1920'S

John Wilson died on 3rd February 1919 and on 30th September his executors sold his business, including the ferry leases, to the Leith Salvage and Towing Co., who also acquired the ships. In October 1920, faced with considerable losses, this concern requested the railway to relieve it of the ferry leases. Attempts to find another leasee were unsuccessful and from 13th November 1920 the N.B.R. reluctantly took over the ferry working itself. Another former Tay ferry, the forty five year old *Dundee* was acquired. She was in excellent condition having been reboilered as recently as 1914 and was much larger than the previous vessels, being certificated to carry 997 passengers, three motor lorries and two motorcars (or ten motorcars).



Dundee

She also drew more water and with her loaded draught of 4ft. 6in. there was insufficient water at the Hawes for two and a half hours on either side of low spring tides. At North Queensferry there were similar problems and the Railway Pier (out of regular use since 1890) was substituted for the Town Pier. The Admiralty had conveniently provided a road to it during the war.

Fares were increased, the first change in over 60 years, raising a public furore. The Rates Advisory Committee held a public enquiry in London resulting in a small reduction in the rates for vehicles from 13th August 1921, and fixed the new rates as valid for five years only. The Queensferry Passage thereafter paid its way for the first time in thirty years. Over the five years 1921-25 the net profit amounted to £2,535. A total of 55,233 road vehicles were conveyed.

In 1925 the London and North Eastern Railway (which had absorbed the N.B.R. on 1st January 1923) applied for parliamentary

The veteran ferry 'Dundee' leaving Hawes Pier in 1948

powers to continue levying the new rates. Several petitions were submitted against this with arguments based on the inadequacy of the service. The rates were only continued after the railway accepted an obligation to increase the capacity of the service by 50%. Pier works costing £21,835 were involved, with the major work at the Hawes where the pier was lengthened by about 250ft to give a minimum of six feet of water at low spring tide. The approach to both north and south piers was dredged and the seaward end of the north pier lowered. The L.N.E.R. Scottish Manager also requested a new ferry vessel of shallower draught, and similar to one built for the Dundee ferry in 1924, but London headquarters rejected this proposal.

Dundee soldiered on with longer summer working hours, necessary to give the 50% uplift in capacity. From the completion of the pier works in May 1927 she was usually able to operate continuously, though there was still a theoretical service gap of a maximum of two hours. At low springs she lay across the end of Hawes pier and could not handle road traffic. When off duty for overhaul her replacement was the Burntisland ferry *William Muir.*

THE SUPER CAR FERRY

Road traffic increased to such an extent that by the spring of 1930 *Dundee* was providing unable to handle all the traffic offered. Road users began to press for a road bridge or a super ferry. The railway were initially deaf to these pleas but realised that some improvement had to come eventually. When Sir Maurice Denny of the Dumbarton shipbuilding firm of William Denny Bros. approached them with the plans for a car ferry and the suggestion that two were required, he received a fair hearing. The railway stated their unwillingness to invest but made the counter proposal that if Denny built the ships on his own account the railway would lease him the ferry. This offer came at the peak of the shipbuilding depression and Denny grabbed the opportunity to keep his workers employed. He took over the Passage working on 1st March 1934 in the midst of a campaign for a road bridge.

The two new ferries, launched at a double ceremony on 25th January and named *Queen Margaret* and *Robert the Bruce* were

revolutionary. Double bowed, with clearance for a furniture van under the midships bridge, and with the deck entirely clear except for short cabins at bow and stern. Side loading was retained as it suited the existing slips as was paddle propulsion to give the required degree of manoueverability. Machinery of twin diesel generators powering electric motors, each driving one paddle wheel through a chain drive was also an innovation. While *Queen Margaret's* hull followed conventional riveted practice her sister vessel was entirely welded, the first ship to be entirely constructed by this technique. The pair were used as guinea pigs to establish the practability of welded construction. Each vessel cost about £22,000 and could carry twenty eight cars, with a maximum unit load of eleven tons, at a speed of nine knots. The veteran *Dundee* was loaned to Denny and repainted in his colours. She remained as spare vessel, to cover overhauls and emergencies and at least once appeared to act as tender to a visiting cruise liner. For most of the year she lay up at Burntisland. Vehicle rates were reduced, the cost for a small car coming down from 10s. to 4s. 6d. An efficient half hourly service was provided and Denny records reveal that over the next fifteen years 99.3% of the crossings were made on time.

The Forth at last had its super ferry, though it could not carry the elephant nor the steam roller which optimistically turned up for shipment at the Hawes.

A TWENTY MINUTE SERVICE

By the end of the war *Dundee* was seventy years old. She looked dowdy and worn out. In service, she had insufficient power to cope with the tides and was a liability. In November 1947 Denny ordered a new boat even though a Forth Road Bridge Order had been passed in Parliament earlier that year. With post war material shortages the ship was not launched until 4th March 1949 when she was named *Mary Queen of Scots.* Unavailability of electric motors then caused further delay while her machinery was redesigned to use geared marine diesels driving the paddles through hydraulic couplings and chains. It was the spring of 1950 before she arrived at Queensferry. On her delivery *Dundee* was handed back to British Railways (as successors to the L.N.E.R.) and was broken up the following year.

Denny stated at the launching of the new craft that there was no intention of increasing the service. 'The new vessel simply means that there will always be two first class ships running, instead of occasionally one ship and one lame duck.' However experiments carried out on her delivery showed that three ships could operate simultaneously and a twenty minute service was thereafter given throughout the summer period. This was arranged by always having a vessel at each pier, with the third ship crossing. This gave the required twenty minute turnround at the piers and departures from each side were staggered by ten minutes. A refuge jetty was constructed to the east of the North Queensferry slip to provide overnight accommodation for the additional ferry.

A FIFTEEN MINUTE SERVICE

Traffic grew rapidly and long queues for the ferry became commonplace. While arguments raged about building the road bridge Denny obtained County Council grants for pier improvements and ordered a fourth vessel from the Dumbarton yard. The west side of the Hawes was resurfaced and brought back into use for the first time in many years. On the north shore, a complete additional slip was built at the landward eastern end of the railway pier and both terminals were again dredged. With this work complete two vessels could load at each side simultaneously, and up to six ferries could be employed.

The launch of Denny's fourth ferry took place at Dumbarton on 2nd December 1955 when she was named *Sir William Wallace.* She arrived at Queensferry the following March. On her arrival the service frequency was increased to fifteen minutes with simultaneous departures from both banks. During winter overhaul periods a twenty minute service was provided.

The 'Wallace's' passenger certificate allowed her below the rail bridge, (the only Denny ferry with such a certificate) and she often performed morning tender duties for visiting cruise ships lying off the Dalmeny estate. She also gave two all night 'Riverboat Shuffles', but the ferry soon became so busy that the four ships could barely cope and these extraneous duties were phased out. She proved a disappointing companion for the other three vessels. She was similar

but ten feet longer and beamier. It was a mistake not making her identical, as though she could carry a few more cars, she took longer to load and was slightly slower in crossing. The precision working demanded an equal performance from all boats and the 'Wallace' proved to be the pace setter. With business booming, the local manager Captain Mason, ran the ships as fast as they would go and every so often the 'Wallace' got out of station and the service had to slow up or pause while she corrected her position.

Denny was on the point of commissioning a fifth vessel when plans for the Forth Road Bridge were finally approved. The days of the ferry were then numbered.

THE CLOSING YEARS

The road bridge construction brought an influx of visitors to South Queensferry and Captain Mason suggested restarting excursions to view the bridges. Denny's shipyard tug/tender, *The Second Snark,* came round from Dumbarton in the spring of 1960 for this purpose. Her cruises proved very popular and became a feature of the scene. From 1961 the cruise included a call at Inchcolm, reviving the service given between the wars by the S.M.T. launches *Auld Reekie* and *Cramond Brig.*

By the 1960's the ferry was annually carrying over two million passengers and 900,000 vehicles, long queues were normal on both banks and the four ships were stretched to their limit.

The road bridge was opened by the Queen on 4th September 1964. After the ceremony she crossed by car and returned by water, maintaining the precedent set at the opening of the railway bridge 74 years earlier. Appropriately, *Queen Margaret* was the vessel used, with the royal standard flying from a short mast specially erected on top of her wheelhouse. After running normally for the remainder of the day the ferry closed after the 7.45 p.m. crossing from the Hawes, given by *Robert the Bruce.* Two days later *Queen Margaret* made the final crossing the passengers only, a service being held on board in rememberance of the Queen who had started the Passage eight centuries earlier.

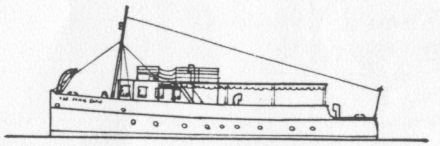
On 6th September the ships were moved to Burntisland and transferred under the terms of the ferry lease to the Caledonian



'Robert the Bruce', the pioneer welded ferry, leaving the Hawes

Steam Packet Co., as agents for British Railways. Three were broken up locally, *Queen Margaret* and *Mary Queen of Scots* at Inverkeithing in March 1965 and *Robert the Bruce* at Bo'ness the following month. *Sir William Wallace* was purchased by a Southampton shipyard, arriving there on 4th May 1965. She then sailed to Holland to become a cargo carrier on the Islemeer. Still under her original name she was later registered in Switzerland, but was broken up at Ghent in March 1970. *The Second Snark* had been sold to Brown Bros., the Edinburgh engineering firm in November 1963 and continued the excursions, mostly from Granton, in 1964. Thereafter she was based at Cockenzie for experimental work until her return to the Clyde in 1969.

The ferry slips still exist. The Sea Scouts use Longcraig, the most easterly landing, while the Hawes acts as service base for the Hound Point tanker terminal, the inshore lifeboat, and is also a centre for dinghy racing. Port Edgar is currently unused after almost 60 years service as a minesweeper base. At North Queensferry both the Town and Railway Piers are used for yachting.



The Second Snark

QUEENSFERRY PASSAGE

TOLLS & CHARGES PAYABLE IN RESPECT OF FERRY TRAFFIC

(Extract from list dated October 1963)

1. MOTOR CARS (FOR PRIVATE USE) including driver. Passengers extra.

Engine c.c.'s	*Single Crossing*	*One Month*	*Three Months*	*Six Months*	*Twelve Months*
1 to 1,000	4s. 6d.	£4 14s.	£12 13s.	£22 13s.	£34 2s.
1,001 to 1,700	5s. 3d.	£5 14s.	£15 4s.	£27 4s.	£40 14s.
	rising by stages to				
3,001 and over	8s. 3d.	£9 18s.	£26 16s.	£47 11s.	£71 3s.

2. MECHANICALLY PROPELLED GOODS VEHICLES, INCLUDING TRACTORS, AGRICULTURAL VANS AND LORRIES AND DUAL PURPOSE VEHICLES, including driver

	Unladen	*Laden*
Not exceeding 1 ton (Unladen Weight)	5s. 9d.	8s. –
Exceeding 1 ton but not exceeding 1½ tons	6s. 9d.	11s. –
rising by stages to		
Exceeding 6 tons but not exceeding 7 tons	28s. –	60s. –

3. MOTOR VEHICLES PAYING HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENSE DUTY, including driver & conductor

Seated for not more than 4 persons	5s. 9d.
More than 4 persons but not more than 8	7s. 6d.
rising by stages to	
More than 56 persons but not more than 64	22s. –
More than 64. Pro rata, but not more than	30s. –

4. MOTOR BICYCLES, including driver

	Single Crossing	*One Month*	*Three Months*	*Six Months*	*Twelve Months*
Under 100 c.c.'s	1s. 9d.	£1 18s.6d.	£4.13s6d.	£ 8 5s.	£14 0s.
Over 100 c.c.'s	2s. 3d.	£2 15s.	£6 12s.	£12 2s.	£20 0s.

5. MOTOR CYCLE WITH SIDE CAR, MOTOR CYCLE CAR, or MOTOR TRICYCLE, including driver, Passengers extra. – 4s.

6. PEDAL BICYCLE OR TRICYCLE, including rider

Single Crossing	*One Month*	*Three Months*	*Six Months*	*Twelve Months*
1s. 2d.	£1 10s.9d.	£4 5s.3d.	£6 18s.	£11 0s.

Pedal cycle tandem 2s. 3d.

7. TRAILERS, OF WHATEVER NATURE, DRAWN BY PRIVATE MOTOR CARS – 1s. 9d. per foot

8. TRAILERS, OF WHATEVER NATURE, DRAWN BY COMMERCIAL GOODS VEHICLES OR TRACTORS

Unladen	1s. 0d. per foot
Laden	1s. 9d. per foot

9. HEARSE, MOTOR or HORSE-DRAWN, including driver 10s.0d.

10. CORPSE 12s. 6d.

11. MOTOR or HORSE-DRAWN AMBULANCE, including driver Single Crossing 6s. 6d. Twelve Month Season £50 0s.

12. ANIMAL DRAWN VEHICLES, DRAWN BY LESS THAN FOUR HORSES

	2 wheel	*4 wheel*
Private	5s. 0d.	7s. 0d.
Commercial – laden	6s. 6d.	8s. 0d.
Commercial – unladen	5s. 0d.	7s. 0d.

13. HAND TRUCK or BARROW, including attendant Empty 1s. 9d. Laden 2s. 3d.

14. PERAMBULATOR or MAIL CART (not folding) including attendant 1s. 6d.

15. INVALID CHAIR (HAND or MOTOR PROPELLED) including owner 2s. 3d.

16. WHEELED AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS 1s. 6d. per foot

17. PASSENGERS

	Single Crossing	*One Month*	*Three Months*	*Six Months*	*Twelve Months*
(Children under 12 – 4d.)	7d.	17s. 0d.	£2 6s.3d.	£4 0s.	£6 1s.

18. ANIMALS, selection included

Horses (excluding Stallions), Mules and Asses	2s. 6d. each
Stallions	8s. 0d. each
Sheep or Goats	6d. each