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The coming of the railway to County Tipperary in 1848

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Introduction

The year 1848 was an extraordinary one. In Europe it was a year of revolutions. In this country, Young Ireland, not least in Tipperary, made their contribution to this political ferment. The reality of everyday life for millions of Irish people was starvation, disease, emigration and death.

Set against such dramatic events, the laying of railway tracks and the opening of stations may seem inconsequential; but the service initiated in 1848 still operates and over the past 150 years has had a huge impact on the economic and social life of the people. This article looks at the circumstances under which two separate railway companies, the Great Southern and Western (GS&W) and the Waterford and Limerick (W&L) competed with each other, laid their tracks, opened their stations and began their freight and passenger services in 1848.

The first railway in Ireland, linking Dublin and Dun Laoghaire, opened in December 1834. Eight years earlier Alexander Nimmo, a well-known Scottish surveyor and engineer, had made a report on behalf of a prospective railway company on the feasibility of a line from Limerick to Waterford.[1] Nimmo's line would have passed through Tipperary, Cahir, Clonmel and Carrick, with branches to Thurles, Cashel and the Killenaule coal-fields.

Railway construction depended on private enterprise but necessitated the permission of parliament by means of an act, the expense of which the company had to bear. Such an act was obtained on the basis of Nimmo's favourable, indeed enthusiastic, report. However, the necessary capital was not raised but in 1831, on behalf of another company, the famous railway engineer George Stephenson was engaged to make another report.

This laid even more emphasis on the viability of a railway serving such a fertile region. Stephenson's recommendation was that the company should concentrate on the Suir region and that initially the line should be laid between Tipperary and Carrick, from where the Suir was navigable to Waterford. The estimated cost of this 38 miles of line was £148,617.[2]

Again nothing followed from this. A not unexpected response by the government to the great interest in building railway lines was to set up a royal commission in 1836 under the chairmanship of Thomas Drummond. This issued a first report in March 1837 which made a number of quite obvious observations.[3] A rail network would be a good thing for the country but for economic reasons there could be no question of covering all of the major urban centres. Doubts were expressed about the viability of many private companies and their prospective plans. The government had a duty to oversee railway development, both to encourage realistic plans and mitigate monopolies.

A comprehensive final report appeared in July 1838. This has been described as "an analysis comparable in quality to modern feasibility studies".[4] Much evidence was gathered with respect to economic activity and, taking for granted that Dublin would be at the centre of any rail network, the issue was the best means of linking the country's other cities with the capital.

With regard to such a link with the south, the report took account of a line to Kilkenny which was promoted by a private company, and for which parliamentary approval had been obtained

at considerable cost in 1837. However, the report declared, "we strongly object to it as the main trunk to the south of Ireland".[5] What the commission recommended was a trunk line to Cork, passing through Tipperary, from where a Waterford to Limerick line would intersect "a little to the south of Golden". Another branch line would connect with Kilkenny.[6]

When the Dublin-Cork and Waterford-Limerick lines were constructed in the following decade, their routes differed somewhat from the commission's recommendations, perhaps the main casualty being Cashel which (because the Dublin-Cork line took a more westerly route) was by-passed. As envisaged by the report, there would have been a need for a link-line between Donohill and Marlfield to connect the two primary routes.[7]

A key issue, perhaps the most important consideration, was the matter of financing any proposed railways. As a subsequent royal commission on railways noted, Ireland was different. In common with the rest of the United Kingdom, railway developments were a matter for private capital, but from the beginning government input was greater in Ireland.[8]

The Drummond Commission favoured state direction in such a crucial matter as deciding compensation for appropriated land and (what in some circles would be regarded as fiscal heresy) it noted, admittedly rather tentatively: "... we may look forward to a certain degree of assistance from the state, as great at least as has been given for the encouragement of other public works in Ireland".[9] In essence, the provision of an Irish rail network was to be seen as a "public measure". An attempt in 1839 to promote government investment passed the Commons but was defeated in the Lords and subsequently dropped.[10] The Famine forced a moderation of this orthodoxy.

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Among the reactions to Drummond's report was a memorial of December 1838 from the "landed proprietors, merchants and traders" of Tipperary advocating that the Waterford-Limerick line as suggested by Nimmo be adopted, as it would pass through or near "some of the most productive districts in Limerick and Tipperary ... the produce of which in fat cattle, butter and pork have in late years supplied the greater part of the exports from Waterford ... and through the populous and improving town of Tipperary on to the rising village of Bansha ... at the entrance of the luxurient vale of Aherlow, thence through the important town of Cahir, where flour mills on an extensive scale are constantly at work ...".[11]

The Donohill-Marlfield link, as recommended by Drummond, would in the opinion of the petitioners "injure rather than benefit trade" in these towns. As viewed by the 66 gentlemen who signed this petition (including Cooke of Cordangan, Mansergh of Greenane, various Sadleirs and Scullys and the earl of Glengall), they appeared to have viewed the line from Dublin as primarily a link with Limerick, the two lines connecting at Linfield in that county.

Following the Drummond Commission nothing concrete happened for some years. Elsewhere in the country there was some progress, the line between Dublin and Drogheda being opened in May 1844. But the prize in terms of prestige and potential profit was the line which would link Dublin with the south, and in August 1844 the businessmen who were prepared to invest money in such a line, connecting Dublin with Cashel and Carlow, cleared a major hurdle with the passage of the necessary act.[12]

The cost of this act to the company, including surveys, valuations and legal costs, was nearly £19,000.[13] The act allowed for the raising of £1.3m in 26,000 shares of £50 each, with authorisation to borrow about £400,000. The projected route was through Thurles, then to Holycross, from where it would go south to Cashel.[14]

This emphasis on Cashel as the terminus made it all the more galling for Cashel people that the town did not in fact get a rail link until 1904.[15] Given that Cashel is on the Dublin-Cork road route, the emphasis on it was not surprising. In fact, it seems that such was the identification of Cashel with the company that for many years the share stock was known as "cashels".[16] It was never certain that the disposition of the rail network would work out as it actually did. The competition between rival companies meant that matters could have been different.

Just as the GS&W superseded the Great Leinster and Munster Railway, which had a plan and an act of parliament to link Dublin with Kilkenny and eventually further south, so rivals to the GS&W appeared. One such was the Great Munster Railway of Ireland which proposed a line from Kerry, through Limerick and North Tipperary and on to Dublin. Among the North Tipperary figures lending his name to this abortive scheme was Lord Dunally.[17]

The initial GS&W Act was passed on 6 August 1844, and on 21 July 1845 a second act authorised an extension to Cork with a branch line to Limerick.[18] On that same day another act was passed authorising a line from Waterford to Limerick to be built by a different company.[19] Two different companies, each with authorisation for lines to Limerick, was a complication that had to be resolved, and in the fallout Cashel lost its rail link.

Work began on the GS&W line at the beginning of 1845, with the turning of the first sod a short distance from the capital in the presence of the duke of Leinster.[20] According to the GS&W Extension Act, the line from Thurles would pass through the following civil parishes: Holycross, Rathkennan, Clogher, Clonoulty, Kilmore, Ballintemple (Dundrum), Kilpatrick, Donohill, Soloheadbeg, Soloheadmore, Shronell, Glenbane and Emly. This act also declared that the branch line to Limerick city would diverge from the main line in the townland of Kyle in the parish of Soloheadbeg and would also pass through Soloheadmore and on into County Limerick.

The act noted that if a rival company went ahead with plans to build a Limerick-Waterford line, there would then have to be negotiations with regard to that part of the Limerick-Waterford line between Limerick and the junction with the Dublin-Cork line. It was clear that

The main platform at Limerick Junction, looking north-east. (Photo: copyright Frank Burgess).

the issue of these two rival companies having to share a station at the junction of their lines was a potential source of difficulty. This junction was on the land of Lord Stanley, 13th earl of Derby, and the act contained a special provision against taking the railway closer than 800 yards in a direct line from the front of his (agent's) house at Ballykisteen.

Commercial interests in Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford were very unhappy at the prospect of a rail link, particularly with Limerick, being no more than a branch line of a rail company not under local control. The list of those supporting the "Waterford and Limerick Railway Act" included an array of names from the landed and business community of the region: various Malcomsons, T.S. Grubb, H. Denny, Stafford O'Brien and the mayors of Limerick, Clonmel and Waterford.

The estimated cost was £750,000 to be raised by means of 15,000 shares of £50 each and with permission to borrow up to £250,000, but not until the full capital was subscribed for and half actually paid up. (The share price was to be paid in instalments over a specified period of time.) The act assumed that the rival companies would not each build a line to Limerick and that the line would be built by the Waterford and Limerick Company, provision to be made for the GS&W to have use of it, and, if they wished, to have their own station in Limerick.

The issue of the junction between the two lines and the responsibility for the station there was left for arbitration by the Inspector General of Railways. A penalty clause in the act would put enormous pressure on the W&L Company and seriously affect their financial health. This declared that construction of the line had to begin within three months of the passing of the act; if not completed to the junction by 1 May 1847, then the GS&W could take over.[22]

Hardly surprisingly, the W&L Company was unhappy about this time pressure, as one of their directors made clear in a letter to the press, putting forward 1 January 1848 as a deadline and a further escape mechanism by suggesting that, if the company failed the deadline, the matter would be referred to arbitration by the Board of Trade.[23] In fact the W&L Company got an extension of one year, and when in 1862 the chairman of the company was asked during a parliamentary inquiry why his company had difficulty constructing 22 miles of line during a period when the GS&W Company covered 80 miles, he made the odd answer: "I will admit at once that the GS&W Company were cleverer people than we were". He came closer to the truth when he explained that because of the time pressure on the company, land and equipment had to be purchased "at any cost".[24]

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Work on building the line from Limerick began on Wednesday 15 October 1845 when a party of VIPs, including the earl of Clare (a substitute for the earl of Glengall, who was especially helpful to the company in steering their act through parliament) gathered in James McCormack's field in Boher for the turning of the first sod.[25] From the start, the enterprise was seen (and jealously seen) as a local employment opportunity. Within a few weeks some 500 men with picks and shovels forced their way on to the site demanding work "as Limerick-men". Police were called and eventually 75 men were taken on, with a promise of more jobs.[26]

As their chairman mentioned above, land-owners along the route were in a position to take advantage of the pressures under which the company laboured. For example, in Limerick city, one landlord Samuel Dickson claimed £16,000 compensation. The company offered £3,000. A city jury deliberated on the matter, but refused to give their judgement until they were paid for their time; they demanded 15 guineas each, and were offered 7! While this was being discussed, the jurors demanded that each receive one of Mr Cruise's best dinners.

In the end they settled for 7 guineas each and awarded compensation of £3,223 to Dickson. This he refused, spending the rest of the year fighting the company. Eventually he settled at no great advantage to himself, each side paying its own costs.[27]

The chief engineer of the company was Charles Vignoles (until August 1846), and in May 1845 he was among those who gave evidence before a select committee on Irish railway bills, with reference to the complications of obtaining land for the railway line. He explained about the difficulties arising from the number of "derivative interests" in the land which the company had to acquire. At its worst, he exampled 12 to 14 different parties holding one after another an interest in a piece of property.[28] Similar evidence was given by the solicitors of the GS&W who explained, citing a specific example, a field of three acres held in fee by Lord Portarlington. Both Portarlington at the top of the scale and the actual occupier of the field at the bottom, were obvious but between these two were seven other interests.

One of these was the regulation "old lady", who lived in Devonshire and enjoyed £1 p.a. from the land. As she did not respond to letters, the witness had to visit her to serve the necessary documents. The method of discovery used by the witness seems sensible. Starting with the occupier, he found out to whom he paid his rent; then going to him, he found out to whom he paid, and so on up the ladder. However, discovery became more difficult at this level: "We generally found that the gentlemen who had profitable leases had a great disinclination to admit that there was an owner in fee"![29]

By early May 1846 tracks had been laid about half way between Limerick and Tipperary.[30] In spite of the fact that constructing the lines from Dublin and Limerick provided a great deal of employment, the question of the exploitation of workers was raised from time to time. William Dargan, the chief contractor on the Dublin line, defended himself against press attacks in February 1845. With wages for agricultural labourers around ten pence to one shilling a day, Dargan claimed that he paid around one shilling and sixpence a day and denied that the shops sub-contracted because of the work often being distant from settlements, or exploited the labourers. After all, he explained, the labourers were not forced to use these shops.[31]

It appears that workers on the Limerick line were also paid around one shilling and sixpence a day.[32] By early September 1846 work on the Limerick line was progressing. Most of the bridges were ready, the work of the chief engineer R.B. Osborne, who had experience in the United States of similar work. There were problems with some of the labourers on the Limerick-Tipperary border. Some went on strike for higher wages and when others returned to work, they were frightened off by armed men.[33]

By 1847 and the intensification of the impact of potato failure, the jobs provided for large numbers of labourers by the railway companies were seen as increasingly important, and landlords who held out against the line going through their lands came in for opprobrium. At a time when tax-payers' money was being spent on what were perceived as wasteful public works, the employment provided by the railway companies was seen as a welcome alternative.

In January 1847 the *Irish Railway Gazette* contrasted the situation around Dundrum, where Hawarden had readily reached agreement with the GS&W Company regarding some five miles of line through his property, with the attitude of about 30 proprietors in the vicinity of Thurles. There each case was brought before a jury for arbitration, the finding in each case being in favour of the company.[34] This problem having been overcome, Dargan the contractor promised to have the line from Thurles to the junction with the W&L Company line completed by August.[35]

The line from Limerick faced similar problems from landlords. In February 1847 Glengall in a statement made much of the generosity of landlords in general, especially in the barony of Iffa & Offa East (around Clonmel) where, however, between Barne and Glenconnor a handful of

proprietors were proving difficult, specifically Watson and Wall. The rail company was intending to spend £59,000 on earthworks alone and thus relieve taxation on the barony.[36] The recalcitrance of a few land owners, in some instances refusing to allow company surveyors on to their land, meant that money voted by baronial presentments for earthworks could not be drawn from the Treasury.

Writing in October 1847, Richard Griffith (of Griffith's Valuation fame), a senior figure in the Board of Works, while stressing the importance of completing the line from Limerick to Tipperary, was doubtful of the ability of the company to do so without government help. In the immediate term he was mindful of the necessity to provide armed guards for food being transported by road through the two counties. A rail link would be a saving in that respect.[37] By September 1847, under the Poor Employment (Ireland) Act of August 1846 (9 & 10 Vict. c.107), £16,000 had been sanctioned by baronial presentments in Clanwilliam, and the two Iffa & Offas. This money was to pay labourers to build earthworks for the railway.[38]

The GS&W Company opened their line to Carlow in August 1846, and in February 1847 they bought off a potential rival.[39] In July 1846 an act had been passed to allow the building of a line connecting Clonmel with the GS&W line "at or near the town of Thurles".[40] This company was to have a capital of £400,000 and the named directors included John Bagwell, J. and W.H. Riall, T.S. Grubb and Samuel Perry. Essentially, this would have linked the two towns in question (each of which was to be on the lines of the existing companies) by a shorter route. It is difficult to see this endeavour as other than a manifestation of the "railway mania" common at the time.

As the writers of the history of the GS&W Railway noted, the company seemed to have a great deal of trouble on the County Tipperary section of the line. Their difficulties were not technical but human, the company being caught between greedy land owners and intimidatory workers.[41] Under existing legislation which protected (perhaps too much) property rights, each piece of land sought by the company could be brought before a jury for arbitration. The aggregate of the land eventually held by the two companies in question was not very large: 898 acres in the county by the GS&W and 548 acres by the W&L.[42]

For example, in the parish of Glenbane in Clanwilliam, the company acquired 3.75 acres. To achieve this a jury of 12 men sat in Tipperary town over several days in May 1847. The fact that the members of this jury were "gentry" – with names like Mansergh, Riall, Creagh and Jellico – did not mean that they favoured fellow members of the landed interest. In many cases, no doubt, as shareholders, these men had a vested interest in the needs of the railway company.

In order to acquire the miserable 3.75 acres the company needed in Glenbane, professional services had to be paid, the legal system involved and several interests paid off. The owner in fee was the earl of Portarlington, like many of his class, financially embarrassed. He was proprietor of a number of townlands in that district through which the line would run. For his interest in 24.75 acres (including the few acres in Glenbane), he demanded £4,000, was offered £1,800 and settled for £2,250.

Glenbane was both a large townland and very small civil parish (943 acres) and was held on renewable lease from Portarlington by George John O'Connell. He claimed £400 from the company and was awarded half of that by the jury. Those actually living in the townland and working the land, and who were going to lose small amounts of land, also had to be satisfied. For example, one such subtenant of O'Connell's argued at great length about the loss he would suffer, having used the piece of land in question for drying turf in summer; not to mention the inconvenience and danger having to drive his cattle to the river through an open passage under the railway! Having spent over two hours on this matter, the jury awarded £245, which cannot have pleased as the demand had been £600 and the company's offer £300.[43]

The main platform at Limerick Junction, looking south-west, with principal office building at left. (Photo: copyright Frank Burgess).

By mid-1847 on the GS&W line the story was one of snakes and ladders. At the end of June the station at Portlaoise was opened; as far as Thurles, bridges were ready; all but ten acres or so of the land needed for the line as far as Cork had been purchased and paid for; similarly rails and sleepers were also to hand and a government loan of nearly £.5m had been sanctioned.[44]

On the other hand, little work had been done on the line from Thurles. By September, with some 2,500 men employed between there and Ballykisteen, cuttings, embankments and fences were well advanced and only three bridges remained to be built, but there was still a problem acquiring land in Solohead and Donohill.[45] The year came to a close with the murders of two of Dargan's gangers in separate incidents.[46]

Meanwhile, the W&L Company had its own problems pushing through their much shorter line to Tipperary. At their shareholders' meeting in late February there was talk about the line to Tipperary being opened in May, and the meeting was informed that in the previous six months the company had spent over £111,000, of which nearly £5,000 went in legal fees getting possession of land.[47]

Thanks to local taxation for local relief works in the Cahir area, work began on the earth-works in that area, After a few words from Glengall, 120 labourers were put to work in early March.[48] An indication of the company's regard for Glengall was the fact that they named one of their locomotives "The Glengall". This was built in Bristol and weighed 32 tons and on its first trial run from Limerick reached an "astonishing" 70 mph. One report gave £2,000 as the cost of each of these engines.[49]

What appears to be the first train fatalities occurred in June. On the Limerick side of Boher part of the train derailed, killing two people and injuring others. It appears that the crash was deliberate, having been caused by some obstruction placed on the line.[50]

When the W&L Company shareholders met in late August for their second 1847 meeting, there was little to celebrate due to the widespread distress in the country and the consequent reluctance or inability of their shareholders to pay up the most recent instalment of the share price. The report of the chief engineer, R.B. Osborne, emphasised what had been done rather

than the fact that the line was still behind schedule. However, in that regard the company was fortunate in that the previous month parliament had passed amending legislation to the original act in order to give more time to the company.[51]

About one mile of track had still to be laid to take the line to Tipperary town, where, however, building of facilities at the station were well advanced. Some ten miles of a second track between Limerick and the Junction with the GS&W line had been laid, this apparently to accommodate the latter company and a consequence of the competition between the two companies.[52]

The most common refrain by speakers at this meeting (including the earl of Glengall) was the usual one about the rapacity of land owners and occupiers. The earl was very strong on the point that employment on the line reduced numbers on Poor Law relief and thus reduced local taxation. He described how around Cahir about 600 were employed at a shilling and sixpence a day and some 200 horses, the owners of which were paid three shilling and sixpence a day.[53]

As is often the case with meetings of shareholders, directors put a gloss on difficulties, which after all are their responsibility. In later years, however, there is less economy with the truth. Even before 1847 had ended, an editorial in the *Irish Railway Gazette* was making the point that, notwithstanding the delays in shareholders paying up, there was more than enough capital to finish the line to Tipperary, and criticised in particular the engineering branch of the company for wasting money.[54]

The most stringent critique of the company's performance was that of John Pitt Kennedy, a noted army engineer and agricultural expert who had served as secretary to the Devon Commission in the early 1840s. In the late 1840s he worked as an estate agent in County Limerick and had been asked to join the board of the company, of which he was a shareholder. At the shareholders' meeting in February 1849, he launched his first salvo by attacking the old board for paying £71,000 for land really valued at £2,000 and claimed that the Limerick-Tipperary line cost nearly £22,000 a mile.[55] Taking all costs into account, this seems about right. It was later declared by a chairman of the company that this part of the line cost about £.5m.[56]

That same year (1849) Kennedy changed careers and, rejoining the army, went to India, where for a few years he worked as administrator and engineer. What has this to do with the Waterford and Limerick Railway Co.? Kennedy can only have been in India a short time when he published a pamphlet in Calcutta aimed at warning the Indian authorities against waste, jobbery and corruption in railway development and using the W&L experience as a case-study.[57] The writer castigated all those involved in railway enterprise as seeing it as a source of easy money. He described the board of directors as "easy prey" to engineers and lawyers in particular, not forgetting of course the more usual target, the landed interest – "The rapacious dream of a ten-fold price for a few acres of land".

'In short," he went on, working himself into a fine fury, "every man with some honourable exceptions, who treats with a [railway] company stifles his conscience in establishing and pressing his claims and the public expects, after such wholesale pillage, that they are to be conveyed in the greatest luxury at one-third of the cost and in one-fifth of the time that they formerly expected by bone-bruising coaches and springless cars". Kennedy had difficulty understanding why an enterprise of such manifest benefit to the country was not seen in such an altruistic way by everyone else.

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At the first shareholders' meeting of this company in 1848 there were resolutions to cut costs and make defaulting shareholders pay up.[58] Nothing was better calculated to do this latter than

getting the line running and Monday 27 March, while not the official opening of the line, marked something of a public relations triumph. On that day the famous two-day Barronstown Races were beginning; a formidable one-and-a-half-mile course comprising ten jumps, mainly double-ditches.

The course, had in fact, been in existence for nearly 50 years and attracted a crowd of perhaps 8,000. The W&L directors used one of their "trial trains" to bring 400 invited guests to the meeting. The train left Limerick at 10 a.m. travelling at around 35 mph. The train arrived at the point closest to the racecourse, where most of the passengers alighted and with much excitement made their way across two fields to where stands had been erected and were greeted with the Tipperary Temperance Band's rendition of *Garryowen*.

What a newspaper described as "a stupidly ignorant but feeble instance of hostility to the railway" was the discovery, just outside the town, that the tracks had been covered with gravel. This may have been mindless vandalism, or perhaps was connected with an ongoing dissatisfaction over employment and wages. (In June, some of the temporary wooden sheds in the Tipperary station were burned down and some signalling equipment destroyed. Those responsible appear to have been a mixture of discontented employees and disgruntled former employees.)[59] The return train to Limerick departed at 5 p.m. and about a mile from Limerick was met by a crowd. A similar service operated the following day.[60]

On Wednesday 20 April all elements of the line – track, bridges, embankments and rolling stock – received and passed government inspection, thereby allowing the line at last to open for commercial traffic.[61] The first day the line carried fare-paying passengers was Tuesday 9 May, though freight traffic seems to have begun almost immediately after the inspection. There were three stations between Limerick and Tipperary – Killonan, Pallas and Oola – and the fares were four shillings, three shillings and one shilling and eight pence respectively for first, second and third class.[62]

The first class carriages were built in Dublin, the others in Limerick. The former were divided into compartments, each holding about a dozen people, while the second class , 40 feet by nine, accommodated around 60 and were described as being as "comfortable as a parlour".[63] When the GS&W began their passenger service, there were complaints that there was little difference between their second and third class and that second class on the W&L was as good as first class on the GS&W![64]

The essential point about the opening of the Limerick-Tipperary line was that it beat the opening of the Dublin-Limerick Junction line by some two months, thus obviating the GS&W's right to make a connection with Limerick. According to the evidence of the GS&W traffic manager before a government inquiry in 1862, that company had invested a great deal of money in the Thurles station, "for the purpose of making it a central depot for the whole of our traffic between Dublin and Cork".[65]

Up to July 1852 the GS&W even had the right to build their station in Limerick. Theoretically, two separate railway companies, each with its own Limerick station, could have competed for business between the Junction and that city.[66] Where the Limerick-Tipperary (Waterford) line intersected the Dublin-Cork line, on land purchased from Lord Stanley, the GS&W was obliged to spend £30,000 and by 1862 incurred £1,500 p.a. running costs, with the W&L company paying for use of the facilities. Relations continued to be difficult between the two companies.[67]

On Saturday 1 July 1848 the GS&W line from Dublin to the Limerick (or Tipperary, as it was called in these early years) Junction was officially opened.[68] At 10 p.m. a special train arrived from Limerick, decorated with Union flags and garlands of flowers. It had originally been intended that the Dublin train would go on to Limerick for a brief visit before returning to the

celebrations at Dundrum - hence the train from Limerick to the Junction instead.

While the crowd at the Junction waited the arrival of the Dublin train, they were entertained by a mock drill performed by some 700 labourers with their shovels and pickaxes, together with 200 horsemen. "They formed lines, changed positions, advanced etc. *[sic]* in the fields adjacent the Junction to the admiration of the military officers who were present." The Dublin train arrived at 3 p.m., late (thus establishing a tradition that has lasted for 150 years) and conveyed the Lord Lieutenant, the earl of Clarendon, together with some 600 guests and various regimental bands.

After about 20 minutes at the Junction, the train retraced its route to Dundrum; there on Lord Hawarden's grounds dinner was provided. This latter peer had been accommodated by the GS&W Company by the provision of a station at Dundrum. In his formal speech, Clarendon was positive about government funding for railways, while admitting that this was "sinning" against strict economic principles. The train departed for Dublin at 6.30 p.m. and was back in the capital at 11.15 p.m.[69]

Whereas the GS&W line reached Cork in 1849, the W&L line did not reach Clonmel until 1852 and Waterford in 1854. The relative success of each line in 1849 may be seen from the following figures: GS&W carried 448,502 passengers, producing a revenue of £110,051 together with £63,891 from freight, while the W&L Company carried 88,374 passengers, producing a revenue of £8,352 together with £5,502 from freight.[70]

FOOTNOTES

1. Report of Alexander Nimmo on the proposed railway between Limerick and Waterford, in *The Dublin Philosophical and Scientific Review* (Feb. 1826), pp. 1-19.
2. George Stephenson, *A report on the practicability and utility of the Limerick and Waterford Railway* (London, 1831), pp. 1-16.
3. *First report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the manner in which railway communications can be most advantageously promoted in Ireland*, H.C. 1837 (283), xxxlll.
4. A.A. Horner, Planning the Irish Transport Network: parallels in 19th and 20th century proposals, in *Irish Geography*, x (1977), p. 45.
5. *Second report Railway Commission*, H.C. 1837-38 (449), xxxv, p. 39.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 42, and appendix A, no. 1.
8. *Royal Commission on Railways, report*, H.C. 1867 (3844), xxxvlll, pp. xxlv-xxvl.
9. *Second report Railway Commission* (*Drummond*), p. 94.
10. J.C. Conroy, *A History of Railways in Ireland* (London, 1928), p. 12; K.A. Murray and D.B. McNeill, *The Great Southern and Western Railway* (Dublin, 1976), p. 14.
11. *Copy of all resolutions and memorials presented to the Lord Lieutenant or Chief Secretary of Ireland or to the Chancellor of the Exchequer respecting railways in said country*, H.C. 1836 (lS4), xlvl.
12. 7 & 8 Vict., c. 100.
13. *Limerick Chronicle*, 5 April 1845. With reference to the red tape involved in promoting a railway bill, see evidence of the chairman of the standing orders committee to the *Select Committee on railway bills Ireland*, H.C. 1845 (315), x.
14. John MacNeill, *Report on a proposed line of railway from Dublin to Cashel* (Dublin 1844), pp. 5-6.
15. For example, see letter from Cashel town commissioners in the appendix to the *Second Report of the Royal Commission on Irish Public Works*, H.C. 1888 (c. 5264-1), xlv, 111; among those who were shareholders in the projected Dublin-Cashel Railway were Denis and Jerome Scully, both of Cashel and each to the value of £1,000 (*L.C.* 25 June 1845; also editorial in *Cashel Gazette*, 13 May 1871).
16. F. Mulligan, *150 Years of Irish Railways* (Belfast, 1983), p. 42; Murray and McNeill, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
17. *L.C.*, 12 April, 2 July 1845.

18. 1845 Act, 8 & 9 Vict., c. 124.
19. 8 & 9 Vict., c. 131.
20. *Irish Railway Gazette*, 6 Jan. 1845.
21. *L.C.*, 22, 26 March, 2 April 1845.
22. W&L Company shareholders had to pay their first instalment by 27 Sept. 1845 and the 9th call was deadlined 20 May 1848 (*L.C.*, 1 July 1848). By late Feb 1849, share calls had produced just under £.5m (*I.R.G.*, 5 March 1849).
23. *L.C.*, 26 March 1845.
24. *Select Committee on the GS&W and the Limerick & Castleconnell Railway*, H.L., 1862 (483), lx, evidence of Thomas Meagher.
25. *L.C.*, 18 Oct. 1845.
26. *L.C.*, 3 Nov. 1845.
27. *L.C.*, 10, 14, 31 Jan, 30 Dec. 1846, 9 Jan. 1847.
28. *Select Committee railway bills*, 1845. Vignoles had noted how the work of the O.S. had made his life much easier.
29. *Ibid.*, evidence of M. Barrington and P.D. Jeffers.
30. *L.C.*, 2 May 1846.
31. *Dublin Evening Mail*, 17 Feb. 1845, *I.R.G.*, 24 Feb. 1845; *L.C.*, 19 Feb. 1845.
32. *L.C.*, 8 Aug. 1846.
33. *L.C.*, 2 Sept. 1846. The first bridge was opened on 18 Feb. 1847. This was 80 feet in length and was on the "Roxborough Road" close to Limerick Lunatic Asylum. The bridge was tested by placing over 30 tons of broken stones on it (*L.C.*, 24 Feb. 1847).
34. *I.R.G.*, 18 Jan. 1847.
35. *I.R.G.*, 8 Feb. 1847.
36. *Tipperary Constitution*, 24 Feb. 1847; *Tipperary Free Press*, 24 Feb. 1847.
37. *I.R.G.*, 1 March 1847; R. Griffith to Colonel James, 16 Oct. 1847 (OPW 5/24329/47, N.A.).
38. Report of Edward Russell, 4 Sept. 1847 (OPW 5/24329/47, N.A.).
39. *I.R.G.*, 8 Feb., 1 March 1847.
40. 9 & 10 Vict., c. 198. This Clonmel-Thurles line "cutting off the angle formed by the Limerick Junction" seems to have surfaced again in 1865 (*Report* of the commissioners appointed to inspect the accounts and examine the *works of railways in Ireland*, H.C., 1867-68 (4018), xxxll.
41. Murray and McNeill, *op. cit.*, p. 17.
42. *Return of owners of land of one acre and upwards, 1876* (Baltimore, 1988), pp. 168-69.
43. *I.R.G.*, 17, 31 May 1847. Also see editorial *I.R.G.*, 27 Sept. 1847 with reference to specific instances around Templemore – owners in fee demanding 60-80 years' purchase, yearly tenants calculating their compensation as if in possession of the fee simple, and conspiracy between lawyers and jury members!
44. *I.R.G.*, 7 June 1847.
45. *I.R.G.*, 28 Sept. 1847. One of the landlords making difficulties in Donohill was Vincent Scully, who 20 years later was explaining how he had to re-arrange holdings so that they lay on one side or the other of the railway (*Cashel Gazette*, 2 Jan. 1869).
46. *I.R.G.*, 22 Nov., 6 Dec. 1847.
47. *L.C.*, 27 Feb. 1847; *I.R.G.*, 1 March 1847.
48. *I.R.G.*, 15 March 1847.
49. *L.C.*, 17 March 1847; *I.R.G.*, 29 April 1847; *L.C.*, 5 May 1847. For the railway enthusiasts, the locomotives were manufactured by the company of Stothar and Slaughter (*L.C.*, 1 Sept. 1847).
50. *L.C.*, 26 June 1847.
51. 10 & 11 Vict., c. 231. A provision of this act was that the railway company was to build a wall six feet high, running north to south through the demesne of Hugh Baker of Bansha and on the east side of the railway line, and that the line was not to be constructed nearer than 118 yards to the centre of the entrance of his avenue.
52. *Select Committee GS&W etc.*, 1862, evidence of H.W. Massy. He had been chairman of the company to 1858, when he was succeeded by the earl of Donoughmore.

53. *L.C.*, 1, 4 Sept. 1847.
54. *I.R.G.*, 13 Dec. 1847.
55. *I.R.G.*, 5 March 1849. In May 1848 the chairman of a group of discontented shareholders, who had taken it on themselves to look into the finances of the company, claimed that in comparison with other rail companies, expenses were very high and that less than 300 acres of land had cost the company £60,000 (*L.C.*, 17 May 1848).
56. *Select Committee GS&W etc.*, evidence of H.W. Massy.
57. *I.R.G.*, 17 Dec 1849. Kennedy's pamphlet was titled *A Railway Caution: an exposition of changes required in the law and practice of the British Empire to enable the Poorer districts to provide for themselves the benefits of railway intercourse.*
58. *L.C.*, 4 March 1848.
59. *L.C.*, 14 June 1848. The railway companies had their own police. Later that year an inspector of the W&L police received a threatening notice at the Tipperary station, ordering him and his men to quit or "prepare coffins". Some days earlier the tracks outside Limerick had been interfered with (*L.C.*, 30 Sept. 1848).
60. *L.C.*, 29 March 1848.
61. *L.C.*, 23 April 1848.
62. *L.C.*, 29 April, 6, 10 May 1848.
63. *L.C.*, 24 Feb. 1847.
64. *L.C.*, 5 July 1848.
65. Thurles station was opened in March 1848. On Sunday night, 2 April 1848, "the magnificent signal lamp was lighted up and hoisted for the first time at Thurles station". Within 15 minutes answering signal fires were ablaze on neighbouring hills and eventually over a very wide area, similar fires burned in the mistaken belief that revolution was being signalled (*L.C.*, 5 April 1848). In a famous episode, William Smith O'Brien was arrested at the station by a railway policeman from England who had been brought to Ireland to help establish the GS&W railway police (Murray and McNeill, op. cit., p. 175).
66. Regarding this competition see *I.R.G.*, 25 Aug 1845; *L.C.*, 22, 26 March, 2 April, 7 June 1845. With reference to ongoing competition especially from the perspective of the much weaker W&L Company see, *Select Committee GS&W etc.*, 1862, opinion of T.W. Jacob, director of W&L Railway Company, that the rival company was trying to inflict "maximum damage" in order to be able to take it over and have a monopoly of Dublin-Limerick, which was what they wanted from the beginning.
67. *Select Committee GS&W etc.*, 1862, evidence of G.E. Ilbery.
68. It is, of course, something of an oddity that there should be two stations within three miles of each other, but as the Tipperary station was the property of the W&L company, the much more powerful GS&W company was unlikely to be happy with the exercise of that kind of patronage. Also, as the whole direction of the GS&W line was westward, a junction at Tipperary would have required the line to veer eastward.
69 *L.C.*, 28 June, 1, 5 July 1848. *Saunder's Newsletter*, 3 July 1848. One of the passengers on this inaugural journey from Dublin, though he did not attend the festivities, was Fr Theobald Mathew.
70. *Return of passengers etc. 1849*, H.C. 1850 (10, 602), LIII.