

# Railway influence in parliamentary elections at Grimsby

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In the nineteenth century railway companies were among the largest employers in the country. Political influence was necessary to secure their own Acts of Parliament, essential for their creation and expansion, to influence the Acts of their neighbours and competitors, and, increasingly, general legislation relating to safety and rates as from the late 1860s governments took a more interventionist line. This led to the formation of the Railway Companies' Association, in which railway directors who were MPs played a leading role. Most of the railway interest's work at national level took the form of lobbying, both private and public. The railways did not exert influence on the electorate nationally.<sup>1</sup> For the most part the leaders of the Association were not elected to Parliament in railway towns.<sup>2</sup> However, in some constituencies where the railway was the dominant employer, or even the force which had given rise to the town, the railway company significantly influenced parliamentary elections by using its power as employer. This arose more from the attempt to achieve or maintain local dominance than from a desire for national influence. Attention has been drawn to this practice in a number of towns in the 1840s and 1850s, including Carlisle, Derby, Durham, Harwich, Southampton and Sunderland.<sup>3</sup> But such occurrences were unusual, and by the 1868 election some railway companies were going out of their way to guarantee their employees the 'utmost freedom' in casting their vote, though the Conservative, Sir Richard Moon, chairman of the London & North Western Railway, refused to do this, announcing that it was unnecessary.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless railways did continue to have influence on elections in some places where they were the dominant employers. Hanham pointed to Cricklade, a largely rural constituency containing Swindon, where Sir Daniel Gooch was MP from 1865 to 1885, and Harwich, where the Great Eastern secured the representation from 1859 to 1885. Captain Jervis held the seat to 1880, followed by Sir Henry Tyler.<sup>5</sup> Recent work has thrown greater light on company influence in railway towns. Diane Drummond has analysed how the L&NWR's paternal policies in its company town of Crewe, successful at the municipal level, failed to secure the new Crewe parliamentary constituency when its director W. L. Stephens lost in 1885 in the aftermath of the 'Intimidation Affair'.<sup>6</sup> In contrast George Revill has argued that in Derby

the Midland Railway did not attempt to control local politics but at parliamentary level its 'paternal mantle' was successfully adopted by Michael Bass, a major customer and director, who used the significant power of the railway work force to maintain his own political career.<sup>7</sup>

This article examines the case of Grimsby. The town was not a completely new railway creation, like Crewe or Swindon, but a long-standing port and parliamentary borough, which the Reform Act of 1832 had reduced from a two-member constituency to one. Its geographical isolation meant it had been a failure as a port until the coming of the Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway.<sup>8</sup> Opened through to Sheffield and Manchester in 1849, the railway provided effective communication with industrial areas for the first time. The MS&LR bought out the old Haven Company and by 1853 had invested £800,000 in Grimsby, a tenth of its capital. The railway built a fish dock, and with other railway companies developed a new trade in fish – by 1863 10,000 tons were sent forward from Grimsby by rail.<sup>9</sup> When the amount of shipping using the port did not grow as hoped, the MS&LR itself entered the shipping market, at first through a subsidiary and then in its own right. After 1865 Grimsby ranked as the fifth port in the kingdom. The population virtually doubled to 8,600 inhabitants from 1841 to 1851 before the first railway dock was opened in 1853. By the time the Alexandra Dock was operating in the early 1880s it was over 45,000. But Grimsby was still a town virtually without any industry of its own other than those concerned with shipping. At almost every point the council was aware of the dependence of the town on the MS&LR.<sup>10</sup> By 1885 the cost of construction of the docks and associated work amounted to £23 million, still almost 10 per cent of the MS&LR's capital.<sup>11</sup>

It was this dominance of the town which led the MS&LR to come to regard Grimsby as its own pocket borough. Initially this was because the local Whig grandee was the chairman of the company, but ties between railway and parliamentary constituency successor were strengthened when John Chapman, the second chairman, took the seat and continued over a much longer period as Sir Edward Watkin, the third chairman, strove to keep the MS&LR's hold on the seat but in a more complex way. Though he himself was a Liberal and subsequently a Liberal Unionist, he was prepared to cut across his own party ties. He also had ambitions for his son and used his power as chairman and that of MS&LR staff to further this cause.

In Grimsby to an unusual extent the beginnings of the railway era meant a continuation of the old aristocratic order. The Pelhams, whose seat at Brocklesbury was only a few miles from Grimsby, were by far the largest landowners in Lindsey – the northernmost of the three parts of Lincolnshire. Charles Anderson Pelham, the second Baron Yarborough, had around 50,000 acres, a concentration of ownership in one county only exceeded by the Dukes of Northumberland and Devonshire in Northumberland and Derbyshire respectively.<sup>12</sup> In the 1840s he owned 42 per cent of the land in Grimsby.<sup>13</sup> The leading Whig in North Lincolnshire, he was created Earl of Yarborough in 1837. His son, Lord Worsley, represented North

Lincolnshire, the county constituency adjacent to Grimsby, from 1832 until 1846. The Yarboroughs were careful not to incur the accusation of heavyhandedness in their political attitude towards their tenants. It seems that tenants gave one vote for their landlord, but were free to do what they liked with their second vote. The Yarborough interest was sustained by the politics of deference, by the Brocklesby Hunt, and by their leading role in public works.<sup>14</sup> Yarborough and Worsley gave strong support to the local railway line – the Great Grimsby & Sheffield, designed to run to Gainsborough to meet another line from Sheffield. Though envisaged as part of a continuous line from Manchester to the North Sea, it was also a rural Lincolnshire railway running mostly through the Yarborough estates. By a series of negotiations and manoeuvres partly designed to prevent rival developments this line soon became part of the new MS&LR, and Worsley, who succeeded his father in 1846, was appointed its first chairman with some show of reluctance: ‘upon very pressing solicitation on the part of every member of the board he eventually consented to take the chair’.<sup>15</sup> The other principal landowners in Grimsby were the Heneages, with their seat at Hainton, some five miles from Grimsby. Connected by marriage with the Pelhams, in the 1840s they owned 16 per cent of the land in Grimsby. Yarborough, George Fieschi Heneage, a director from 1847 to 1850, and John Chapman, the deputy chairman, a large agricultural proprietor in north-east Cheshire and the neighbouring part of Yorkshire, were the three largest shareholders in the MS&LR.

Yarborough’s relationship with the MS&LR was very much of the kind identified by Geoffrey Channon in his studies of the involvement of the aristocracy in railways.<sup>16</sup> He supported the railway to develop his estates (though the docks were not built on his land) and as an investment. The new company saw him as the leading local figure who was well connected nationally. He was also looked to as someone above the sectional interests of the amalgamated company.

The continuing political power of the old local families who now had substantial stakes in the new railway was underlined by the fact that Edward Heneage, George’s brother, represented Grimsby as a Whig from 1835, without a further electoral contest until 1852. Despite Yarborough’s support, then at a low ebb, perhaps because he had opposed the application of the Public Health Act to Grimsby, Heneage was defeated in 1852 by a Conservative free-trader, the twenty-two-year-old Earl Annesley, an Irish peer, and allegedly a more liberal distributor of largesse. But by 1857 Yarborough’s standing and political interest had recovered. He was still the squire of Grimsby, as resplendent as in the days when his father and grandfather had returned two members for Grimsby.<sup>17</sup> The town had begun to feel the benefit of the new docks and railway, and the electors gratefully returned his son, the young Lord Worsley, who was unopposed both then and in 1859.<sup>18</sup> However, his father died in 1862, aged only fifty-two, so precipitating a by-election.

Worsley had been as much a representative of the old aristocratic as of the new railway influence. The latter entered a new dimension when John

Chapman stood as a Conservative at the 1862 by-election. He had succeeded the second earl as chairman of the MS&LR in 1860, but had no connections with Grimsby other than through the railway. His election campaign at Grimsby was largely limited to undertaking not to neglect the agricultural interest, to remedy grievances and to support the Volunteers. He admired Palmerston as a person, and initially some thought he would support his administration.<sup>19</sup> His strength lay in his appeal to local interests. He told the electors that he attached great importance to the growing commercial interest in Grimsby being represented in Parliament and that he had an intimate knowledge of the requirements of their port. He emphasised that the Bills the MS&LR had before Parliament would affect Grimsby, by enabling salt to be conveyed direct from Cheshire and by gaining access to Birkenhead, so opening Grimsby to the whole world. His opponent was George Fieschi Heneage, who had been MP for Grimsby from 1826 to 1830, and had represented Lincoln from 1832 to 1835 and again from 1852. He now resigned that seat in order to contest Grimsby. Heneage argued that as a director and large shareholder in the MS&LR he had taken a great interest in the formation and progress of the docks. He favoured reform.<sup>20</sup>

Chapman's campaign was supported by George Gamble, from Gainsborough, a close friend and colleague on the MS&LR board, and Edward Ross, the company's secretary. The timekeeper at the docks and the stationmaster solicited votes. There was absolutely no excitement during the campaign. At the nomination the great political questions of the day were studiously avoided. On polling day, however, trouble started with the arrival of two men named Smith who were claimed by both parties but taken into the Yarborough Hotel by John Wintringham, Heneage's agent.<sup>21</sup> They were alleged to be two Conservative voters from Liverpool and to have been confined there to keep them from the poll. The hotel was then attacked – 'peaceful and constitutional fighting' was the description at the resulting trial at Lincoln assizes. Fifty constables were sent for from Hull. One lost an eye and twelve others suffered less severe injuries. A hundred more constables and the military were sent for from Sheffield, but this call was cancelled when order was restored, largely thanks to Chapman's personal intervention, at some risk to himself.

Chapman won by only twelve votes – 458 to 446. Heneage petitioned, complaining of bribery, intimidation, treating, violence and other offences. A House of Commons committee heard evidence for six days. Much was made of the role of a stranger in dark clothes, shiny leggings and a black hat. The main witnesses had been taken to London and the Isle of Wight between the election and the hearing, presumably in order to ensure that their willingness to testify would not be undermined. One was kept in Manchester.<sup>22</sup> Chapman and Gamble themselves gave evidence, both claiming complete detachment from matters of expenses which Chapman had never discussed with his agent. The committee as usual gave no reason for their finding that Chapman was duly elected, but added that they would not report the case as frivolous and vexatious. They regretted that Chapman had been accused of

leading a mob and creating a riot when it was clear from the evidence that he had quelled the riot. Thus the railway rather than the Heneage interest succeeded the Yarborough interest.<sup>23</sup>

Not only were the Liberals in Grimsby disappointed with Chapman's victory, but it led to a temporary politicisation of the MS&LR board. A number of Manchester Liberals closely associated with the MS&LR, led by Andrew McDougall and John Fildes, began to work for a MS&LR Liberal candidate in conjunction with John Wintringham. Fildes, since 1857 a Liberal member of the Manchester Council, a leading shareholder in the MS&LR and prominent member of the Manchester Stock Exchange, had taken the lead in opposing Chapman's policy of alliance with the Midland Railway which had occasioned Edward Watkin's resignation as general manager in the autumn of 1861. He regarded it as the greatest blunder of all, which would ruin the property.<sup>24</sup> McDougall's motives were probably more purely political. He was a manufacturing chemist in Manchester and achieved success in the making of disinfectants, baking powders and aerated bread. In the run-up to the 1862 election McDougall had mentioned the possibility of John Pender standing.<sup>25</sup> Pender was a merchant in textile fabrics in Glasgow, who transferred to Manchester, made his fortune, and was heavily involved in the first Atlantic Cable Company and subsequent developments. McDougall now pushed Pender's claims and offered Wintringham £100 for an organisation to work the register. Wintringham in turn seems to have encouraged McDougall and through him Pender to stand for the MS&LR board, so carrying the fight against Chapman on to his home ground. Yarborough too was part of this plan, as McDougall warned that whoever was elected on the Liberal side would be powerless without support.<sup>26</sup> McDougall, Pender and Yarborough all secured election to the MS&LR board in 1862 and 1863, in part as a result of deliberate efforts to create vacancies on the board. George Gamble, Chapman's ally in the 1862 election, was criticised for allegedly leaking the MS&LR's negotiating position to the rival Great Northern Railway and felt obliged to resign. Fildes alleged that Samuel Lees, whose daughter had married the MS&LR's architect, had used his position on the MS&LR board to push business in his son-in-law's direction. He too resigned, though when he heard the news Fildes said he could hardly believe it.<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile Pender, who himself did not seem particularly interested in Grimsby – his visit was constantly postponed, was elected to Parliament at a by-election at Totnes in December 1862.

The changes in board membership were followed in early 1864 by a change in the chairmanship. It is doubtful whether the group of Liberals led by McDougall on the MS&LR board initiated the moves to bring Edward Watkin, the former general manager, on to the board and within a year to make him chairman, but they certainly favoured it. When Watkin was elected to the board in early 1863 it was McDougall who seconded William Fenton's motion. Fenton, a Rochdale banker, was himself a Liberal and was to stand unsuccessfully for Chester in 1865 and for North East Lancashire in 1868, but he does not seem to have been closely associated with McDougall and had been a close ally of Watkin's for some years on railway matters. Fildes thought

that Pender and McDougall did not care much about the railway, but they keenly supported a change of chairman, doubtless seeing it as a counter to Chapman's influence in Grimsby. Fildes told Wintringham in October 1863 that the directors were beginning to see that Chapman was not the man to lead the company. Watkin's election would be a first-rate thing for the shareholders.<sup>28</sup> He replaced Chapman in January 1864, though it was Richard Withers, a Liverpool stockbroker and Conservative, who proposed him.

Edward Watkin's railway and political interests were not confined to the MS&LR and Grimsby. He had entered the railway industry as Secretary to the Trent Valley Railway in 1845, but he maintained the interest in politics he had developed in Manchester as a result of the concerns of his father, Absalom, and by his own participation in the Anti-Corn Law movement, especially after he was appointed by Cobden to organise the Operatives' Anti-Corn Law Association to counter the Chartists. These contacts led him to be nominated, when only twenty-six, as a last minute Liberal candidate in the Stafford by-election of 1846, though he had to withdraw when it was discovered that he was not qualified to stand, having insufficient property. After working for the LNWR for seven years he was appointed general manager of the MS&LR in late 1853. He persuaded Yarborough and Chapman to allow him to stand for Parliament, an unusual step for one who was then an employee of a railway company and not a director. In 1857 he stood at Great Yarmouth, a place far from the MS&LR's sphere of influence, but though successful was unseated on petition. He tried again in 1859, but both he and his fellow Liberal candidate were defeated.

Following his election as chairman Watkin became the front runner to stand for Grimsby as a Liberal at the next general election. His candidacy was supported by Yarborough. Fildes even reported that Chapman would stand against all comers except Watkin. Pender, despite Totnes, was still interested but was thought to be playing for an invitation to stand for Manchester. Fildes regarded him as a foolish fellow for resigning from the MS&LR board in August 1864 if he were still interested in Grimsby. Any hope Wintringham, who married Fildes's daughter in 1864, may have had of an effective Liberal majority on the MS&LR board went when Pender was replaced by Lord Wharncliffe and Yarborough also resigned, as he was unable to attend.<sup>29</sup> The latter's place went to John Maclure. Both Wharncliffe and Maclure were Conservatives. Fildes offered to support Edward Heneage, son of the Edward Heneage who had been MP for Grimsby until 1852, if he applied for a seat on the board. Heneage declined – he had insufficient interest in the shares to be a hard-working director. Significantly Watkin sounded Heneage through Hutton, a Lincolnshire director but a Conservative.<sup>30</sup> Watkin does not seem to have selected directors for their political affiliations.

Watkin was returned unopposed for Stockport at a by-election in May 1864, but continued to be talked of as a possibility for Grimsby. It was only in 1865 that it became clear Watkin would stand for Stockport at the next general election. The Grimsby Liberals then turned to Fildes, who accepted. There was thus a contest between two candidates closely connected with the

MS&LR. *The Times* described them both as directors of the MS&LR, but Fildes, though an active and influential shareholder, was never himself a director.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, he regarded a directorship as incompatible with his position as a stockbroker known to have large dealings in MS&LR stock.<sup>32</sup> Fildes regarded Chapman as the MS&LR candidate and complained that the Conservatives were saying that the directors were collectively in favour of Chapman. In fact Chapman had asked for support, but the board 'to his blank disappointment' had opted for neutrality. Watkin seems to have brought this about, though neutrality did not satisfy Fildes.<sup>33</sup> He favoured the ballot so that no man might be dictated to by landlord or railway company. While Fildes said that he would always support measures conducive to the education and improvement of the condition of the people, Chapman in his election address abstained from any expression of opinion, and his lack of support for reform was used against him. The election was quiet – the mayor had ensured that a troop of Hussars were quartered at the Ship and Yarborough inns. Fildes was in the lead all day and the Liberal majority of eighty-six was greater than the party expected.<sup>34</sup>

Fildes then fell out with Watkin. There was concern lest Fildes's victory be petitioned against, and Watkin, with Brand, the Liberal whip, worked to avert this. However, Watkin obtained from Fildes an undertaking that if the petition was withheld he would not offer himself for re-election without the consent of the (undefined) parties, as well as paying £100 in satisfaction of all costs incurred with the petition. Fildes was told he had been swindled. Fildes came to suspect that the petition was Watkin's own idea; he had been told Watkin's name was on the list, though later he said he would like positive evidence. Watkin denied everything and asked Fildes who had told him he had put his name on the list. But his reaction was such that Fildes told him he had betrayed the Liberals of Grimsby. Fildes threatened to carry the war into Stockport. Fildes had never seen Watkin in such a rage. Although Watkin may have supported the petition, it seems to have originated at the Carlton Club, where Chapman was talking about it, alleging that the Liberals had spent £11,000. Whatever his precise role, Watkin clearly wanted to use the situation, probably to assert what was in his view his right as chairman of the MS&LR to decide who had the Grimsby seat, hence his undertaking from Fildes.<sup>35</sup>

Fildes also later alleged to Watkin that every person in the MS&LR's service at Grimsby who had voted for him had been dismissed. Underwood, the MS&LR general manager, found that only six employees had voted for Fildes. One of them had resigned, and another had been allowed to resign, but his conduct had not been satisfactory for some time. Of the other four, three had received an increase of salary since the election. Fildes then alleged that a ship repairer had lost work to someone who had voted for Chapman. The company's answer was that this was the responsibility of a new contractor who did not even reside at Grimsby.<sup>36</sup> Fildes also thought he had caught out the MS&LR directors in treating the parliamentary expenses in relation to a new development as capital rather than revenue. However, this charge did not

have the impact he expected, though he said he gave the directors a good left jab.<sup>37</sup> Hostilities did not last long. Fildes, whose straightforwardness was probably combined with a degree of naivety, a great contrast to the intriguing Watkin, had earlier been flattered at being consulted about the Cannon Street extension in London on the SER and being asked to meet the Hon. James Byng, deputy chairman of the SER and son of Viscount Torrington, at Watkin's Cheshire home. However, while in September 1866, when faced with £325 costs for the petition, he wrote that Watkin had left the painful impression in his mind that he was an unscrupulous and accomplished liar, by January 1867 there had been a reconciliation between them.<sup>38</sup>

Although Yarborough was persuaded by George Glyn, the Liberal whip, to give £1,500 help defeat Gooch or at least to secure the second seat at Cricklade for the Liberals, he was much more a Whig than a Liberal and found support for Gladstonian Liberalism increasingly difficult. Indeed, despite his apprenticeship as MP for Grimsby, the less able third earl was not as politically minded as his father or grandfather.<sup>39</sup> He was to die of epilepsy in 1875, aged forty, when his son and heir, the fourth earl, was only sixteen years of age. Although on the eve of the 1868 election he told his steward that he would take no part in election matters in Grimsby, and hoped his tenants would exercise their franchise according to their individual wishes, earlier he himself had appointed Daubney as his agent in Grimsby with the specific object of 'ousting the seat from Mr Fildes' and supported George Tomline, a former Tory who had built up from his base at nearby Riby Grove an independent interest generally opposed to those of the Yarborough and Heneage families.<sup>40</sup> Tomline had become a free-trader, but was no radical – he opposed Derby's Reform Bill in 1859 and Russell's in 1866. Instead of standing again for Shrewsbury he now opted for his local constituency, having sold his Shropshire property. Edward Heneage had been elected as a Liberal in Lincoln in 1865, but had to give way to a more radical candidate in 1868. He did not throw his weight behind Tomline, but seems with Watkin to have got Glyn to threaten a Tory candidate in an endeavour to persuade Yarborough to drop his support for Tomline, who stood as an independent Liberal.<sup>41</sup> The Grimsby Liberals, however, regarded Tomline as a paltry milk-and-water sham. Watkin came to speak on behalf of Fildes, but the MS&LR directors again decided that the board as such should be neutral in the coming election and that the employees of the company should be perfectly at liberty to vote as they might see fit, and in any case Fildes was not in Chapman's position in the company.<sup>42</sup> Tomline defeated Fildes by 219 votes.

In early 1874, when Gladstone rather unexpectedly called an election, the parties in Grimsby were not ready with candidates. There were rumours that Tomline would stand again and that he would be opposed by Sir Edward Watkin. Somewhat surprisingly Watkin had been defeated at Stockport in 1868, in part, like other Liberals in Lancashire and Cheshire, including Gladstone himself, as result of Gladstone's Irish Church policies. He was, however, opposed by William Tipping, a director of the L&NWR, the major railway employer in Stockport, and L&NWR votes played some part in his

defeat.<sup>43</sup> Defeated in two by-elections in 1869 and 1873, it was not until the 1874 general election that Watkin secured a seat at Hythe, which he was to hold for over twenty years. The main centre of the constituency was Folkestone. Watkin was by then also chairman of the South Eastern Railway, which was important to the livelihood of the town, not least in improving the harbour and operating cross-Channel steamers. He preferred to stand for Hythe rather than Grimsby. He thought, considering the company's vast interests in that port, it might not be wise for the chairman to owe a seat in Parliament to its customers.<sup>44</sup>

The Liberals turned to Heneage, who came forward with the full support of his own and the Brocklesby interest. Chapman was then persuaded to stand, and won, though by only fifty-nine votes in a poll of over 3,000. Although Heneage argued that he had spent huge sums on improving his estate and laying it out for building land and roads, the Liberals put Chapman's victory down to the fact that he was a great favourite with the working classes, and the railway interest was exerted in his favour, 'the principal portion of the employers being engaged in bringing up voters'. Watkin offended Heneage by not intervening to prevent the railway vote going to Chapman. Tomline's friends worked for the Conservatives, who spared no expense. On polling day Heneage was in the lead until 3.00 p.m. but then it was found that, although he had lost the support of many teetotallers because he declined to support the Permissive Bill (which would have permitted localities to ban the sale of alcohol) he was too dry for the dock folk, who went to the poll in cartloads to vote for Chapman.<sup>45</sup>

Watkin had succeeded to his father's small estate, Rose Hill, at Northenden, on the Mersey between Altrincham and Stockport, in 1861. He had two children, Alfred and Harriette. His daughter's life took a course very much to her father's satisfaction. In 1872 Harriette married Henry Worsley (later Worsley Taylor), a member of a family of smaller landed Lancashire gentry who had flourished for centuries on the west side of the Pennines. A practising barrister who later became Recorder of Preston, and Conservative MP for Blackpool, Worsley Taylor pursued a largely independent career though taking briefs from his father-in-law's railway companies and after his death becoming a director of the Great Central Railway, as the MS&LR became known in 1897.

The path through life of Watkin's son Alfred was less orthodox. When his father went to Canada in 1861 to rescue the Grand Trunk Railway from its operational and financial difficulties he arranged for Alfred, then fifteen, to enter the locomotive department of the Grand Trunk, as he was 'anxious to see the bigger England'. Before he was eighteen he was placed by his superiors in charge of 1,000 men.<sup>46</sup> On his return from Canada in 1863 Alfred's employment was less grandiose. He became an apprentice with the West Midland Railway, of which his father was then a director. He transferred to the MS&LR in 1865, where he became an express train driver. In 1867 he was briefly a locomotive inspector with the London Chatham & Dover Railway – his only employment outside his father's sphere. He did not enjoy good

health and was a concern and distraction to his father, who told Captain Peel he had been unable to look into a matter because 'my poor son had again been so ill'.<sup>47</sup> His father was anxious to further his career. He purchased the Hazlehurst estate at Northenden for Alfred, who had joined the locomotive department of the SER. Alfred was appointed outdoor locomotive superintendent of the SER in 1872. The following year his salary was increased from £350 to £400, as he had performed his duties satisfactorily.<sup>48</sup> However, his father wanted to advance him further.

Early in 1874 Watkin decided that James Cudworth, then locomotive superintendent of the SER, should be styled locomotive engineer and Alfred locomotive superintendent at a salary of £500.<sup>49</sup> This was ill regarded on the SER. Cudworth was a senior and respected figure in the locomotive world. A pupil of Robert Stephenson, he had planned the new works at Ashford in 1847 and had made several improvements to the design of locomotives. Alfred's significant promotion in the railway hierarchy still did not give him the status of a board member. Watkin saw the latter as necessary, particularly in view of Alfred's approaching marriage.

In late 1875 two vacancies occurred on the MS&LR board which gave Watkin an opportunity to make Alfred a director. It was the two peers on the board, Auckland and Wharncliffe, who expressed doubts about this exercise of the hereditary principle by Watkin.<sup>50</sup> They first explained their difficulty to Withers, a member of the board close to Watkin. Wharncliffe then wrote to Watkin to say that he thought it inadvisable to put Alfred forward until the half-yearly meeting, which would have a better effect on the public and the shareholders. While he understood Watkin's 'perfectly legitimate ambition to help your son in the career in which you are so distinguished ... I will not conceal from you in the least degree that a seat on the board of the MS&LR is too high a position and too responsible to be held by a subordinate official of a railway not so important as yours.' (So much for the SER in the eyes of a Yorkshire lord!) He would not oppose Watkin but strongly advised him to reconsider.<sup>51</sup> Despite this strong counsel Watkin did not wait. At the board the following week Alfred was elected subject to the understanding that he would drop out if it was wished to appoint a Liverpool director. Alfred's credentials were thin, but some justification was found by appointing him a member of a new Locomotive Committee.<sup>52</sup>

Not content with this, two months later Watkin told the SER board that on a suitable vacancy occurring the candidature of Mr A. M. Watkin should be favourably considered, in which case his own duty would be to address the shareholders on the subject. Watkin senior said that eight years ago he had brought Alfred especially to oversee the movement of the traffic. His exertions had largely contributed to the improvement of discipline and the more profitable use of locomotives and plant. He added that the SER earned more money per engine than any other large company in England. Alfred would be an acquisition to any board of practical men. Alfred made clear that he would resign his present office of superintendent.<sup>53</sup> Since 1872 Watkin had also been chairman of the Metropolitan Railway, and in

February 1876 Alfred was appointed to its board on the ground of his special knowledge of railways.<sup>54</sup>

Alfred's marriage to Catherine Elizabeth, one of four daughters of Rev. Robert Payne Smith, Dean of Canterbury since 1871, took place with some style in Canterbury Cathedral on 10 June 1876.<sup>55</sup> In September, after Alfred's return from his honeymoon in Scotland, Cudworth resigned. Watkin had further undermined Cudworth's position by approaching Ramsbottom, formerly the locomotive engineer of the L&NWR and still active as a consultant, about large express engines which Cudworth was unwilling to introduce. Watkin said that he had expressed the desire after thirty-one years' service to be relieved of the anxiety of his office.<sup>56</sup> Two directors alleged that it was a speech by Watkin advocating Alfred's appointment which led to Cudworth's resignation. Alfred was appointed in his place. The SER board, however, were uneasy about Alfred's salary and his various roles, including his directorship of the MS&LR, which it was alleged contravened a rule about outside appointments.<sup>57</sup>

In May 1877 Alfred resigned from the MS&LR board to allow Sir Gilbert Greenall, the Warrington brewer, to take his place. In July, however, John Chapman died. He had not been well at the time of the 1874 election and had suffered for some time from congestion of the lungs supposedly brought on by taking cold on coming out of the hot rooms of the House of Commons late at night. This meant that there was both a vacancy on the MS&LR board and a by-election at Grimsby. The seat on the MS&LR board was easily dealt with. Fenton and Withers promptly proposed Alfred, who was duly elected again.<sup>58</sup>

Though he himself was Liberal MP for Hythe, Watkin regarded it as his role to preserve for the MS&LR a legitimate interest in the Grimsby seat, but not as a party matter. Consequently Chapman, though a Conservative, had received the railway vote. While Chapman was ill Watkin suggested to Disraeli, through Wharnccliffe, that Chapman should retire to enable the new Solicitor General, Sir Hardinge Gifford, to obtain a seat. But Gifford got Launceston and in May several people suggested to Watkin that Alfred should stand. According to his father, Alfred declined because he was not disposed to give up his current work and was indifferent to a parliamentary career. Alfred offered to go to Grimsby to canvass for Henri Josse, a Frenchman who ran a coal exporting and shipping business closely associated with the MS&LR, and was a leading Liberal in Grimsby, but Josse would not stand, as his partner had just died.

Following Chapman's death Watkin approached both Heneage and Colonel George Morland Hutton of Gate Burton, near Gainsborough, another director of the MS&LR and a Conservative, to see whether either would stand. Both declined. Heneage preferred to await a county seat.<sup>59</sup> Watkin said he was given to understand that the influence of Lady Yarborough – the fourth earl was only eighteen – and that of Heneage and Tomline would be given to Alfred, and that Alfred agreed to stand to keep the seat under the influence of the company. At this stage a Dr Sayle, an advanced Liberal and Home Ruler, was the only declared candidate. Richard Potter, a partner in

Price Potter & Walker, timber merchants, of Gloucester, who had established themselves in Grimsby in 1854, was a possible Conservative candidate but withdrew, having found there was not a Conservative majority. Apart from the firm's close links with the MS&LR through Grimsby, Potter had been chairman of the Great Western Railway when Watkin was a director, and both were involved in the buying out of the old Hudson's Bay Company in 1863.<sup>60</sup> Price had been chairman of the Midland Railway and Liberal MP for Gloucester but was now a Railway Commissioner. Watkin alleged that it was understood at this stage that their junior partner, Major Seddon, would not come forward, so Alfred came down to Grimsby.

Watkin wrote an account of the by-election three months later in an attempt to rebut his critics on the SER. Many years later Sir Robert Perks in his memoirs gave a rather different and more colourful version. According to him there was no initial approach to Alfred, who if he had known his father's intention for himself would not have gone near Grimsby. Instructed by Watkin, Ross and Shaw, the secretaries of the MS&LR and SER, went with Alfred to Grimsby as he supposed on some railway business. When the train drew into Grimsby station Alfred saw the placards 'Vote for Watkin' and asked Shaw if his father was giving up Hythe. He was amazed and terrified when he was told he was the candidate. He was met by his father and a crowd. When, in a rage, he said he would return to London and would not stand, the only reply that Watkin gave his son was to thrust some twenty half-sheets of notepaper into his hand on which he had set down the heads of Alfred's suggested address. Perks said Alfred could not decipher his father's notes, and even had he been able to do so he would not have known what they meant, for he knew nothing of politics. His father managed to soothe him down in the carriage and Alfred seemed to enter into the joke. His speech was quite a success but lasted less than five minutes, the gist of it being that he knew nothing whatever about politics but if returned would vote straight for the Liberal Party and defend the interests of the great port of Grimsby.<sup>61</sup>

Three days later Seddon announced his candidature as a Conservative, much to Watkin's annoyance. Apparently he was pressed to do so by Rowland Winn and other Conservatives in the county rather than in Grimsby itself.<sup>62</sup> Alfred wanted to withdraw but the local Liberals assured him that the canvass had been exceptionally favourable.<sup>63</sup> Watkin addressed a large number of railway employees in the Royal Dock. In his nomination speech Alfred was short and simple in his approach, promising to support Lord Hartington, but refusing no good measure from either side. He made no claim to any record of political involvement, merely that if he was fit by general admission to direct the labour of a thousand men he hoped the electors would consider him fit to represent them in Parliament. Josse took the chair. Heneage, Underdown and Ross were all on the platform as well as his father. Alfred left it to him to score the political points, and to disparage Seddon as only a junior partner in a firm the head of which, Price, was a Liberal. He asked Grimsby to elect his son in return for the twenty-four years' work he (Edward Watkin) had devoted in pursuing the interests of Grimsby.

The Liberals were well organised – they had conducted a census and knew where to fetch vast numbers of votes from, commented the *Grimsby Gazette*. Combined with the influence of the MS&LR and the lack of support for Sayle, who obtained only ninety-seven votes, this sufficed to give Alfred victory.<sup>64</sup> Chapman's majority of 141 in 1874 was turned into a Liberal one of 374.

The result brought immediate disorder in Grimsby and also exacerbated his father's relations with the SER board. The disorder seems in part to have been brought about by Alfred's unfamiliarity with elections. Instead of speaking at the declaration of the poll he addressed the electors only later from his hotel. His and other speeches were hooted, and fights occurred. All the windows had been broken and the mob tried to fire the hotel, having seized a wagon of coal and timber, but were too drunk to succeed. The police were too few. At 1.00 a.m. the mayor read the Riot Act and by 2.00 a.m. order had been restored before troops arrived at 6.00 a.m. from Sheffield. The Liberals said the key men were in Conservative favours. The Conservatives also alleged that votes had been purchased, that voters had been brought from Manchester and votes given for people who were at sea, but they did not find sufficient evidence to warrant a petition.<sup>65</sup> Watkin was undeterred. He resented Seddon's intervention – the election ought never to have been made a question of party politics. He hoped the two parties would unite at the next election to support a quiet and thoughtful man like Edward Bouverie,<sup>66</sup> whom he had at one stage suggested as a possible candidate at the by-election.

Alfred's victory brought a sharp reaction on the SER. Although an MP and a member of the MS&LR board, he wished to remain locomotive superintendent of the SER but said he would be content with any reduction in salary that the board imposed when Parliament was sitting. By five votes to four the SER board agreed that acceptance of membership of the House of Commons was incompatible with his duties and violated the board's policy and that Alfred should be relieved of his duties. The board also expressed the opinion that, in assisting the candidature of one of the company's officers at a political election and withdrawing Shaw from his duties to assist, the chairman had committed a grave error of judgement, prejudicial to the interests of the company and to the discipline of the service of the company.

Watkin argued that Alfred had been granted leave of absence by him and two other directors. He threatened a special meeting of shareholders. Rumours of Watkin's resignation were already abroad. At the next board meeting Watkin left the room when the board agreed to issue a statement that there was no truth in these rumours. The cause of all this discussion – Alfred – meanwhile had written to say that he had resigned from 6 September.<sup>67</sup> The high feelings on the board were made public in the columns of the *Times* and the *Railway Times*, and contributed materially to the acute divisions on the SER board arising from a wide range of matters. They were to be exacerbated the following year when Watkin accepted the chairmanship of the East London Railway, which his colleagues thought conflicted with the interests of the SER. In January 1879 Watkin had to withstand an attempt by his opponents on the SER board to oust him. He secured the

defeat of three of the malcontents in the elections to the board at the half-yearly meeting, but only by getting Perks and Knatchbull Hugesson,<sup>68</sup> one of his closest allies on the SER board, to organise a systematic campaign to secure votes for his allies. However, his victory put him into a dominant position, so that when in August 1879 Joshua Fielden, long opposed to Watkin, resigned because of ill health, Hugesson proposed that Alfred be elected and no one objected.

Alfred's membership of the House of Commons was not to last. The Grimsby interests did not take it for granted that he would stand at the next general election. He failed to attend a constituency meeting and his father was the victim of the meeting's anger at his absence. Heneage's view was that Mr Watkin was not likely to be seen again and would have no chance if he did stand.<sup>69</sup> He believed Sir Edward Watkin would stand for Grimsby, and he had an agreement with Tomline that he would support a railway candidate, but Heneage would not give him any support. Earlier in the year he had said he would not attend a meeting simply to play second fiddle to Sir Edward Watkin, whose politics were personal and inconsistent. He was also concerned about the falling value of his MS&LR shares and the railway's financial position.<sup>70</sup> By December 1879 W. P. Adam, the Liberal national agent, told Heneage that neither he nor Hugesson believed that Watkin would leave Hythe for Grimsby, but that his son was likely to stand. He was anxious not to offend Watkin, as he might improve his voting in Parliament now the Eastern Question was out of the way, and the same applied to Alfred – a worse voter than his father – who had supported Disraeli in the votes on the Afghan and Zulu wars.<sup>71</sup>

Following Disraeli's unexpected dissolution of Parliament on 8 March 1880, the Conservatives in Hythe, in view of Watkin's support for Disraeli on foreign policy, decided not to oppose him, and he was returned without a contest. Watkin's ambivalent position was emphasised when he was made a baronet in Disraeli's dissolution honours list – the only Liberal among a large number of Conservative politicians to be so honoured apart from Henry Ripley, the recently defeated hybrid Liberal–Conservative MP for Bradford. Precisely why Watkin was included is unclear. *The Times's* Manchester correspondent thought a baronetcy to Watkin might be an expression of the Queen's appreciation of his recent gift of a statue of the Prince Consort to the town of Grimsby, the size of his companies and his success in negotiating with the French government to improve the French Channel ports. But Disraeli is more likely to have recalled the expectations Watkin had in 1868 of a higher award, when he had been knighted for his service in Canada and then been strongly influenced by Watkin's support for his foreign policy.

Although Alfred had thus lost a good deal of support among Grimsby Liberals it was only after the election had been called that he told the local Liberals that he would not stand because of the difference of opinion respecting his votes and usefulness. Watkin was criticised by the Grimsby Liberals for not coming to meet them to discuss the selection of a successor to Alfred. Although personally pledged to the Liberals, he acquiesced in, if he did not

engineer, the candidature of Colonel Hutton. The latter had taken his father's place on the MS&LR board in 1868 and was to serve, with one short interruption, until 1901. Watkin therefore saw his candidature as a return to the Chapman era. He still did not see the railway interest as a party matter. The Liberal Association rapidly opted for Heneage. He lost no opportunity to deny Hutton's credentials as a Grimsby man, and to attack the transfer of the franchise from the 7,000 voters of Grimsby to the twelve men in Manchester, though he was careful to distinguish between the political and commercial interests of the MS&LR. Watkin personally did not support Hutton in the campaign, but Withers, now the MS&LR deputy chairman, did so. In part because the young Lord Yarborough, encouraged by his step-grandfather, Lord Monson, gave his support to the Liberals, the outcome was a resounding victory for Heneage, who polled 3,504 votes to Hutton's 2,002.<sup>72</sup> The size of the Liberal majority in the country as a whole came as something of a surprise even to Gladstone.<sup>73</sup>

While Watkin made no further attempt to secure a parliamentary seat for Alfred, or to stand for Grimsby himself, he continued to regard the MS&LR as having a strong interest in the Grimsby seat. Heneage held the seat against the Conservative, Colonel Campbell-Walker, by a comfortable majority in 1885, and again in February 1886, when he had to seek re-election following his appointment as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. In 1885 Watkin apparently offered to stop any opposition to Heneage if he would pledge to retire at the next election, an echo of his treatment of Fildes, but Heneage declined to do anything so dishonourable.<sup>74</sup> In 1886 Gladstone's Home Rule Bill meant a change of allegiance for many Liberals in Grimsby, as elsewhere. Yarborough went over to the Conservatives. More typical was Heneage, who at the general election in July, like Watkin at Hythe, stood as a Liberal Unionist with Conservative support. His opponent, a Gladstonian Liberal, failed by less than 300 votes.

In 1892 Watkin, who personally was again returned unopposed at Hythe as a Unionist, was still pursuing the railway interest in Grimsby. His actions incurred criticism in Folkestone as well as in Grimsby. He helped persuade Josse to stand as a Gladstonian Liberal against Heneage.<sup>75</sup> Watkin sent a supportive telegram to Josse praising him for the help he had given him in the development of Grimsby and added that his exertions had added to the fortunes of Heneage.<sup>76</sup> The latter continued to resent Watkin's influence in his constituency. He had complained of the treachery of Watkin over the nominations for the Humber Conservancy Commissioner in 1884, and that Watkin put himself up before the public as a Liberal Unionist while promoting the opposition to him in Grimsby. He protested to the Duke of Devonshire, the Unionist leader, about Watkin's support for Josse. Watkin told the Duke he was not going to be treated like a schoolboy.<sup>77</sup> Heneage also saw the Channel tunnel, of which Watkin was the leading English protagonist, as hostile to Grimsby's shipping and fishing interests. He sought to get the MS&LR and Great Northern Railway to work together to achieve better station accommodation and docks and improved facilities for the fish traffic. He therefore

thought he would have the support of the MS&LR and was heartened that Viscount Cross, a Conservative Minister who was also a director of the MS&LR, was to open the Constitutional Club. Heneage warned Josse to cease his campaign to discredit leading politicians, or Josse would have his life raked up, including his three detentions in lunacy establishments. Heneage said he would not like to be beaten by a sixty-five-year-old Frenchman residing in Paris. Josse, however, won by 736 votes, 4,202 to 3,566.<sup>78</sup> After the election Watkin, acting for the railway pocket borough, as Heneage called it, passed on to Herbert Gladstone Josse's complaint that the Salisbury government had stuffed the magistrates' bench with Tories, a more general Liberal grievance, as so many Lord Lieutenants were Unionists.<sup>79</sup>

However, Josse was not to remain an MP for long. In February 1893 he applied for the Chiltern Hundreds, as one of his partners had died, while the other was seriously ill. He said he had been dissuaded from resigning his candidature before the 1892 election only because he had been told he would endanger the Liberals' chance of winning the seat. At a mass meeting in 1890, at which Ben Tillett had spoken, a branch of the Dock Wharf & General Labourers' Union had been formed, so the Gladstonians put forward Henry Broadhurst, out of Parliament since 1892, as their best hope of holding the seat.<sup>80</sup> Watkin telegraphed to say that the borough had been represented long enough by a landlord and advised the electorate to vote for Broadhurst – a surprising move for the paternal employer who had no time for trade unions, as Broadhurst had been secretary of the TUC Parliamentary Committee. Heneage stood again as a Unionist. He claimed that Watkin's railway had been made by subscriptions of the public, including those of Yarborough, Chapman and his own father. He had lost as much money in the original shares of the MS&LR as he had spent making roads in Grimsby. Heneage added that he had offended Watkin when the people of Grimsby would not have Watkin's son, and by supporting the inclusion of railway servants in the Employers' Liability Bill. Heneage obtained a majority of 964 over Broadhurst.

Watkin, who died in 1901, did not stand at the 1895 election. He retired from Parliament, illness having already forced him to give up his three principal railway chairmanships in the previous year. Heneage was beaten, this time by George Doughty, a Gladstonian with interests in the local fishing industry. The Grimsby electors continued to show that to many of them party loyalty was of less importance than other considerations.<sup>81</sup> Doughty was sufficient of a local favourite to be re-elected in 1898 as a Liberal Unionist and as such was to hold the seat until his death in 1914.<sup>82</sup>

Alfred did not re-enter politics. He continued as a director of the SER until his death in 1915, though he resigned from the Metropolitan board in 1899 and from the MS&LR in 1901. He had no children, so any hope Sir Edward Watkin had of founding a railway and political dynasty died with him. Alfred was not the man to succeed him in either role. It perhaps took the much broader industrial and deeper capital base of families like the Pease family, to whom the North Eastern Railway was only one strand, to emulate the aristocratic dynasties.<sup>83</sup>

Watkin was fortunate after 1874 to represent Hythe, where, even before he became a Unionist, the Conservatives were content to vote for him as a semi-independent. As chairman of the MS&LR he was evenhanded between Liberal and Conservative directors and he thought he could bestow the Grimsby seat on either party. He was reinforced in this attitude by his largely unchallenged position in the company over many years. This meant that the instruments of his personal and family ambitions were the company and its servants. Moreover he did have a very personal involvement with, and commitment to, the building up of Grimsby after 1854. 'I made it,' he told a committee of the House of Commons.<sup>84</sup> The making of it continued until his retirement. In the 1880s the MS&LR's fleet was replaced and other shipping lines were attracted. Tonnage entering the port rose from 463,000 tons in 1880–84 to 720,000 in 1890–94. The parliamentary representation was seen as a part of the company's dominance of the town – and of neighbouring Cleethorpes. When the maltreatment of fishing apprentices caused much concern, although Watkin defended the employers to the Home Secretary, it was the MS&LR which provided the land and a fifth of the cost of an institute.

By the time of Watkin's retirement the ability of railway companies to influence parliamentary elections, never widespread, was becoming increasingly rare. F. W. Fison, a director of the Great Northern, secured Doncaster for the Conservatives from 1895 to 1906. Sir Henry Tyler was elected at Great Yarmouth in 1885, in the expectation that the Great Eastern Railway would do much for the port, but thrown out in 1892 by disappointed fishermen.<sup>85</sup> Generally, however, after 1885 the votes of railwaymen tended to be cast more for the Liberals and the Labour Representation Committee than in support of company directors, who were increasingly attached to the Conservative Party. By 1900 Derby had elected Richard Bell, the secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.

## Notes

- 1 Philip S. Bagwell, 'The railway interest, its organisation and influence, 1839–1914', *Journal of Transport History* 7 (1965), pp. 65–86, and Geoffrey Alderman, *The Railway Interest* (Leicester, 1973). For the railways' limited role at elections see Alderman, p. 14.
- 2 E.g. of the five members of the first Parliamentary Committee of the Railway Companies' Association, only Gooch represented a railway town.
- 3 G. K. Roberts, 'The Development of a Railway Interest and its relation to Parliament, 1830–68', unpublished doctoral thesis (University of London, 1965), pp. 124–8.
- 4 H. J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management* (199), p. 87.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 41–2 and 59–62; Henry Parris, 'Sir Daniel Gooch: a biographical sketch', *Journal of Transport History*, new series, 3 (1976), pp. 211–13.
- 6 Diane K. Drummond, *Crewe: Railway Town, Company and People, 1840–1914* (Aldershot, 1995), pp. 168–77.
- 7 George Revill, 'Railway paternalism and corporate culture: "Railway Derby" and the formation of the ASRS', in *Workshops, Identity and Labour*, Institute of Railway Studies Working Paper 3 (York, 1998), p. 45. Bass was MP for Derby from 1852 to 1883. However, Samuel Beale, chairman of the Midland 1858–64, also represented Derby from 1857 to 1865. Other directors sat elsewhere, notably W. P. Price, chairman 1870–73, and Sir Joseph Paxton. In the 1874 Parliament two Midland directors were MPs and three in the 1880 Parliament.
- 8 Its failure is the subject of several works by Gordon Jackson, summarised by him in 'Do

- docks make trade? The case of the port of Great Grimsby', reproduced in Adrian Jarvis (ed.), *Studies in the History of Civil Engineering VI, Port and Harbour Engineering* (1998), pp. 75–81.
- 9 G. Dow, *Great Central I* (1959), p. 177.
  - 10 Edward Gillett, *A History of Grimsby* (1970), p. 226.
  - 11 PRO, RAIL 463/179.
  - 12 R. J. Olney, 'Rural society and county government in nineteenth-century Lincolnshire', *History of Lincolnshire X* (Lincoln, 1979), p. 22.
  - 13 Gillett, *Grimsby*, p. 217.
  - 14 R. J. Olney, *Lincolnshire Politics, 1832–85* (1973), pp. 33–4 and 44.
  - 15 PRO, RAIL 228/3, minute of 12 November 1847.
  - 16 Geoffrey Channon, 'Capital, labour and operating policies, 1830–1939', introduction to *Studies in Transport History: Railways II* (1996), pp. x–xi.
  - 17 Gillett, *Grimsby*, p. 221.
  - 18 Olney, *Lincolnshire Politics*, p. 153.
  - 19 North-east Lincolnshire Archives Office, Wintringham Papers (WP) 223/1/1, Andrew McDougall to John Wintringham, 14 January 1862.
  - 20 *Times*, 22 January 1862.
  - 21 1840–97, younger son of Alderman John Wintringham, who was five times mayor of Grimsby and for many years the leading man in the public life of the town. The younger John qualified as a solicitor in 1861 and was made a partner in Grange & Wintringham, who acted as stewards to Edward Heneage.
  - 22 WP 223/1/7, McDougall to Wintringham, 17 March 1862.
  - 23 *Times*, 17 February and 11 April 1862; *Grimsby Guardian*, 17, 24 and 31 January, 14, 21 and 28 February and 4 April 1862; Select Committee on Great Grimsby Election Petition, *Parl. Papers* 1862, xvi, 1–117.
  - 24 PRO, RAIL, 463/76, MS&LR half-yearly, 29 January 1862.
  - 25 WP 223/1/1, McDougall to Wintringham, 14 January 1862.
  - 26 WP 223/1, particularly 1/8, McDougall to Wintringham, 18 April, 1/13, McDougall to Wintringham, 14 August 1862, and 1/18, draft of letter from Wintringham to McDougall, 2 June.
  - 27 WP 223/2/3, Fildes to Wintringham, 4 February 1863.
  - 28 WP 223/2/25 and 27, Fildes to Wintringham, 18 and 28 October 1863, and 223/3/2, 12 January 1864.
  - 29 WP 223/3/43, 18, 12 and 35, Gibbons to Wintringham, 2 March, Fildes to Wintringham, 23 and 17 February and 3 August 1864.
  - 30 Lincolnshire Archives Office (LAO), 2 HEN 5/11/7, Fildes to Wintringham, 26 September, and Heneage to Wintringham, 29 September 1864.
  - 31 *Times*, 10 and 14 June 1865.
  - 32 WP 223/2/13, Fildes to Wintringham, 28 April 1863.
  - 33 WP 223/4/28, Fildes to Wintringham, 3 June 1865.
  - 34 *Grimsby Guardian*, 16 June, 7 and 14 July 1865.
  - 35 WP 223/5/3, 4, 25, 26, 29 and 39, Fildes to Wintringham, 16 and 23 February, 9, 10 and 14 September (the last was written on a tram in Manchester immediately after putting his accusations to Watkin) and 9 November 1866; 223/4/80, E. R. G. Salisbury to Wintringham, 27 November 1865.
  - 36 PRO, RAIL 463/9, 26 October 1866 and 11 January 1867.
  - 37 WP 223/7/7, Fildes to Wintringham, 29 July 1868.
  - 38 WP 223/5/21, Fildes to Wintringham, 28 July 1865; 223/6/25, Salisbury to Wintringham, 29 January 1867.
  - 39 Hanham, *Elections*, pp. 26–7, 41–2 and 381. Gooch retained his seat at Cricklade. He believed the Liberals would be content to have only one seat if he was the Conservative to hold the other in the railway interest (Gooch to Disraeli, 23 October 1868, quoted in Hanham, *Elections*, p. 42).
  - 40 LAO, Daubney Deposit, 1/IV/4/15, memo of conversation between Daubney and Hon. Fred Cadogan (acting for Lord Yarborough); Olney, *Politics*, pp. 5 and 166.
  - 41 Hanham, *Elections*, p. 75; LAO, Daubney, 1/IV/24, Cadogan to Daubney, 12 June; 2 HEN 5/1/34, Heneage to Wintringham, his agent, 10 November 1868.
  - 42 *Grimsby Gazette*, 6 and 20 November 1868; PRO, RAIL 463/10, 6 November 1868.
  - 43 Sheffield Central Library (SCL), Wharncliffe Muniments, 418, Watkin to Lord Wharncliffe, 13, 14 and 15 November 1868, and draft of Wharncliffe's reply, n.d.
  - 44 *Railway Times*, 6 October 1877.

- 45 *Grimsby Gazette*, 31 January, 7 and 14 February 1874; *Railway Times*, 6 October 1877.
- 46 E. W. Watkin, *Canada and the United States: recollections, 1851–86* (1887), p. 38.
- 47 West Sussex Record Office, Goodwood Archives, Watkin to Captain Peel, 26 November 1867.
- 48 *Folkestone Herald*, 15 December 1914; *Locomotive* 31, p. 325.
- 49 PRO, RAIL 635/42, 15 January 1874.
- 50 The fourth Baron Auckland and the first Earl of Wharnccliffe both had substantial coal interests in south Yorkshire.
- 51 SCL, Wharnccliffe Muniments 418, Watkin to Wharnccliffe, 5 November, and Wharnccliffe to Watkin, 6 November 1875.
- 52 PRO, RAIL 463/14, 15 and 28 October and 12 November 1875.
- 53 PRO, RAIL 635/44, 13 January 1876.
- 54 Greater London Record Office, Acc. 1297, Met 1/6, 16 February 1876.
- 55 *Kent Messenger*, 17 June 1876.
- 56 PRO, rail 635/44, 14 September 1876.
- 57 PRO, rail 635/45, 22 March 1877.
- 58 PRO, rail 463/45, 5 January, 11 May, 13 and 25 July 1877; *Grimsby Gazette*, 30 June 1877.
- 59 *Railway Times*, 6 October 1877, for Watkin's account.
- 60 Geoffrey Channon, 'The recruitment of directors to the board of the Great Western Railway' 1, *Journal of Transport History*, new series, 17 (1996), p. 10. Potter became 'a capitalist at large' according to his daughter, Beatrice Webb: *Diary of Beatrice Webb* I, ed. N. and J. Mackenzie (Cambridge, 1978), p. 3.
- 61 *Sir Robert William Perks, Bart* (1934), pp. 73–5. There is no suggestion that Perks was there. His account was probably based on what Shaw told him. Perks was recruited by Watkin to help in *ad hoc* tasks and then appointed solicitor to the Metropolitan Railway. He was Liberal MP for Louth from 1892 to 1910.
- 62 Winn, later Lord St Oswald, Conservative MP for North Lincoln since 1868, and a Lord of the Treasury and Chief Whip, 1874–80.
- 63 *Times*, 23, 27 and 31 July; *Grimsby Gazette*, 21 and 28 July and 4 August 1877.
- 64 *Grimsby Gazette*, 4 August 1877.
- 65 *Times*, 3 August 1877; *Grimsby Gazette*, 4, 11 and 18 August 1877.
- 66 Buerie was Liberal MP for Kilmarnock 1844–74.
- 67 PRO, RAIL 635/45, 5, 6 and 20 September 1877.
- 68 Edward Knatchbull Hugesson, a Kent landowner and director of the SER. Lord of the Treasury in Palmerston's administration of 1859 and served at the Home and Colonial Offices in Gladstone's first Ministry. In 1880 he was not given a post by Gladstone and was compensated with a peerage. As Lord Brabourne he quickly became a Conservative.
- 69 LAO, 2 HEN 5/6/31, Heneage to Wintringham and to Josse, 19 April 1879.
- 70 LAO, 2 HEN 5/6/12 and 42, Heneage to Wintringham, 19 February and 17 May 1879.
- 71 LAO, 2 HEN 5/6/100, and Hanham, *Elections*, p. 354.
- 72 *Grimsby News*, 12, 19 and 26 March 1880; Olney, *Politics*, pp. 182–3; Hanham, *Elections*, p. 27.
- 73 T. A. Jenkins, *Gladstone, Whiggery and the Liberal Party, 1874–86* (1988), p. 127.
- 74 *Times*, 3 March 1893.
- 75 British Library (BL), Add. MSS 44337, Watkin to Gladstone, 10 June 1892.
- 76 *Grimsby News*, 24 June 1892.
- 77 *Sheffield Weekly Independent*, 20 April 1901.
- 78 Perks, 75; LAO, 2 HEN 5/11/33, 5/16/77, 5/17/18, 21–3 and 83; 5/9, 8, 15 and 29.
- 79 BL, Add. MSS 406054, Watkin to Herbert Gladstone, 8 October 1892.
- 80 Gillett, *Grimsby*, p. 86.
- 81 Henry Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections, 1885–1910* (1967), p. 190.
- 82 Except for a few months in 1910.
- 83 M. W. Kirby, *Men of Business and Politics* (1984), especially pp. 55–9.
- 84 PRO, RAIL 1066/1408, Minutes of Evidence on the Hundred of Hoo Railway, 14 June 1880.
- 85 Pelling, *British Elections*, p. 3.

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