

It may be questioned if a moderate expenditure for dredging the river, even if not accompanied by the privilege of levying tolls, coupled with an improved system of transport and loading, would not have secured sufficient shipping facilities to have permitted the postponement of the construction of a costly railroad and wharf for a number of years.

It would almost appear that a spirit of vindictiveness against New Glasgow actuated the company in abandoning the old railway and wharfs valued at £15,376, and constructing a new road and shipping place at a cost of £76,109, when the expenditure of a few thousand pounds would have deepened the channel sufficiently to permit the greater number of the vessels then engaged in coal transport to load directly from the coal shoots near New Glasgow.

The new railroad was about six miles in length to an excellent shipping point on the west side of the East River, a little above its mouth. The location and supervision of the construction of the road was entrusted to a local surveyor who built it on the principles most approved of in England. As nearly five miles of the road was level and the remainder a very easy grade, it will readily be seen that its cost was heavy. The engineer's estimate was £35,574; the actual cost, £76,109. At that date roads were being constructed over more difficult ground in the United States at from £4,000 to £5,000 per mile. The road was equipped with three locomotives and about one hundred and fifty wagons, each holding two chaldrons or about 7,000 lbs. of coal. Shipments were carried on over this road until 1889, when the Government road to Fisher's Grant, and the pier of the Acadia Coal Company at that point, were utilized. The locomotives originally introduced were kept in good repair and effective service until a short time before the closing of the road, and were interesting specimens of the earliest stages of railroad transportation.

Before 1827 the coal was sold at 13s. 6d. per chaldron, but there is evidence to show that whenever practicable a higher price was demanded. Up to 1836 the price averaged per Newcastle chaldron about 14s. 6d. at the mine, the cost of the coal being about 12s. A complaint that the coal was being sold locally at higher figures than before elicited a statement that no profit was made on the coal owing to the costly nature of the establishment. This can readily be credited when out of 618 men there were only 146 miners, and no less than 40 men employed at the foundry, and as many more in the brickyard. As the proportion of coal miners to other labourers was so small, it is not surprising that the returns showed a meagre margin over the cost of the coal, and left next to nothing to meet the fixed charges.

From a report of a committee of the House of Assembly in 1836, it appears that the coal was being sold in Pictou at 18s. 3½s., and that the total average price was 17s. This inquiry arose out of a formal complaint by the people of Pictou that they were being subjected to a mon-