

At Dundee the Fifteenth day of February Eighteen hundred and fifteen At a Meeting of the Nine Trades held within their Hall this day in consequence of a previous advertisement in the Newspapers.

The Minutes of the General meeting of the 29th November last having been read the Committee then appointed were called upon to report their proceedings: - which were highly approved of and the thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to the Members of the Committee for their spirited conduct.

The following Resolutions were then proposed and passed unanimously by the Meeting: with the exception of the two Counsellors present who objected to the language though they did not attempt to deny the facts.

First that the Nine Trades regard with indignation the cold and disrespectful treatment which their Committee have received from the Magistrates in the matter of the Harbour Bill. That Bill it seems is on the eve of being brought into Parliament; and though it should have been in general circulation many months since yet even at this late date the Trades have not been able to procure a Copy of it: a concealment which the Trades are left to infer must have sprung from a consciousness of impropriety – from a meditated encroachment upon their peculiar rights and privileges and an abandonment less or more of the true interests of the community.

Second That considering themselves as justly entitled to three votes in the Harbour Commission as the Guildry are to five and much more so than the Magistrates are to seven the Nine Trades will not concur in the proposed Bill unless it shall provide for their freely electing three commissioners to represent the Trades, Neither will they concur in any Bill for increasing the Shore dues of Dundee – which is in other words levying a new tax upon the public - if the Magistrates of Dundee self appointed as they are at present are to form a majority of the Commissioners for managing the money so levied

Third that the Nine Trades think it high time to put a stop to the dilapidation and waste of the Public property which has been occasioned by the ignorance or mismanagement of the Magistrates such as the alienation of lands, the loss of ill founded and expensive Law suits, the ruin of the Hospital*, the letting of public property to members of the Town Council under value and on long leases, with other foolish illegal acts too numerous to mention. The Magistrates cannot without being guilty at common Law turn the Public property to their own private advantage; neither can they without breach of an express Statute grant leases longer than three years (James IV. 3d Parl. Chap.36 That the rentes of burrows as landes, fishings, farmes, maills, milnes and waters zearly revenues be not set bot for three zeiris allenerly; and gif ony happens to be set utherwais, that they be of nane avail force nor effect in time to come).

Fourth, That the Nine Trades are of opinion that the numerous train of malepractises ruinous to the public weal and disgraceful to this town can have arisen only from encroachments made by the Magistrates upon the just rights of the Trades and other inhabitants; and are likely to continue till such encroachments, and the present degrading system of borough government be done away.

Fifth That the Nine Trades applaud the spirit and activity with which the Guildry are at present endeavouring to recover their rights.

Sixth That the existing Committee of the Nine Trades be augmented to Twenty eight in number (nine to be a quorum); and appointed to meet from time to time to ascertain the rights and privileges of the Trades, especially their right to elect their three counsellors to represent them in the Town Council and the right their Deacons have to sit as constituent members of the said council – to procure information and to correspond with the Committee of the Guildry, with the Magistrates or with any individual or body of men from whom useful advice or information can be procured, The Committee is also impowered to appoint an agent in London to watch the progress of the Harbour Bill and to manage all other matters pertaining to it.

Seventh That until such time as our legal rights shall be fully recognised and established we do direct our Deacons not to sign any Bonds or Obligation whatever for the borrowing of money or otherwise, and neither the Deacons nor the three trades counsellors to sanction the expenditure of any of the towns funds, and they are hereby inhibited from doing so accordingly. Without the concurrence of the Trades the town Council is incomplete and its Security ineffectual. This also is established not only by the set and ancient practise of the borough but by an express Act of Parliament (15 William and Mary 1st Pad. Cap 28 And father that it shall not be lawful hereafter for the Magistrates and town Council of any borough royal to Contract any debt or give Bond for the same obliging them and their Successors in Office, without a previous act made in the town council, in their fullest convention booth of merchants and Deacons of Crafts condescending upon the causes and uses for which the said debts are contracted and Bonds granted. Certifying the foresaid Magistrates and others who shall contract debts and grant Bonds without the said previous act – or if the causes and uses condescended on in the said act shall not be found to be just real and true – that in any of the said cases the said Contractors and subscribers shall be personally liable they and their heirs and Successors in their private fortunes, to relieve and disburden the town of the said debts)"

Eighth That these Resolutions be transmitted to the Honourable William Maule member of Parliament for the county and Sir David Wedderburn Member of Parliament for the boroughs; that they also be published in the Dundee & Advertiser and that copies be printed for the use of the members and one officially transmitted to each of the Deacons for their government, with instructions to have them inserted in the minute book of every particular

trade.

The thanks of the meeting were unanimously voted to Convener James Mitchell for his impartial conduct in the chair.

* **1747** By Act of Parliament of George II the magistrates and town council were empowered to convert the Hospital of the town then used for the reception of decayed Burglaers into a work house for employing and setting the poor inhabitants of the Town to work; and to enable them to do so the Magistrates were authorised to levy two pennies Scots upon every pint of ale and beer Brewed and vended within the Town and Suburbs of Dundee. The power to levy this impost has been renewed from time to time as each successive act expired. The last renewal of in proceeded on this statement -"Whereas the money arising from said duty hath been applied according to the direction of said Act, and great progress hath been made in carrying on the works thereby directed to be done whereby a considerable debt is now owing on the credit of former acts which cannot be paid off and the repairs and other necessary works carried on and completed". It is evident therefore that the public are paying a considerable tax levied expressly for the maintenance of a building which has been mutilated and Follows the names of the committee as augmented by the above Resolutions. (28 Names)

At a Meeting of the Nine Trades of Dundee held within their Hall on Tuesday the eighth day of August Eighteen hundred and fifteen at four o'clock afternoon.

It was unanimously resolved:

First . That the Nine Trades of Dundee having perused & maturely considered the report of the Guildry Committee & the Resolutions of the Guildry Incorporation are decidedly of opinion that the Merchants Letter dated 1515 and the Charter of James V gave to that Incorporation the privilege of Electing by it's suffrage the Dean of Guild & his assessors & other office bearers as well as the management of its own funds.

Second. That the Nine Trades are unanimously of opinion that although in 1605 the Guildry by a bye Law consented (by some inexplicably weakness) to allow the magistrates and Council to elect the Dean and although that right had been exercised by the said magistrates and Council ever since yet it may at any time resume the right with the strictest propriety.

Third. That it is just and expedient and will promote the public welfare that the Guildry at Michaelmas first resume the election of its Dean in terms of its Charter & therefore the Nine Trades unanimously approve of the resolutions of the Guildry passed at its Meeting of 28th June last resuming its privileges and the Nine Trades will give to the Guildry every assistance in their power for the recovering the same being fully convinced that it will be highly conducive to the best interests of the Community especially in the proper expenditure of the revenues of the Burgh and in using other public property to act to the greatest advantage.

Fourth. That the Nine Trades are unanimously of opinion that the Magistrates and Council not only not oppose the resumption by the Guildry of its rights but should recognise those rights and take such measures as may be deemed necessary for placing the exercise of the same by the Guildry beyond challenge in all time coming.

Fifth. That in case the Magistrates and Council shall take such a different view of the matter as may in any way obstruct The Guildry in the recovery of their rights; then the Nine Trades shall instruct and they hereby do instruct the Deacons to resist the expenditure of any part of the public funds in opposing these just & unquestionable rights of the Guildry that is to say the electing of its Dean, assessors & other office bearers & managing its own affairs.

Sixth. That a copy of these Resolutions be immediately transmitted to the Magistrates, Dean of Guild and Guildry Committee.

Dundee 3rd October 1815

At a meeting of the Nine Incorporated Trades, held within their Common Hall, at 11, o'clock P.M.

On the Conveners taking the chair, Robert Jobson Esquire, who had yesterday by the United Suffrages of the Guildry, been chosen to fill the Office of the Honourable the Lord Dean of Guild of this Burgh was introduced to the meeting, and, with the loudest acclamation of applause was requested to take his seat on the left hand of the Convener.

His Lordship stated, that he attended this meeting, at the request, and on behalf of his Brethren of the Guild, to communicate to the Convener, the Deacons, and the Nine Trades the thanks which had unanimously been voted to them by the Guildry, for their strenuous exertions in support of the Guildry's endeavours to recover their Chartered Rights – His Lordship then handed the Convener an Extract from the Minutes of the Guildry, containing the expression of their thanks, which was read by the Clerk, and ordered to be engrossed in the Sederunt of the Meeting. – It is in these words.

"Mr David Blair Junior moved. That the thanks of this Meeting be voted to Convener Whittet and the Nine Trades of Dundee, for the manly, firm, and energetic manner, in which they had come forward to support the Guildry in the recovery of their Charter Rights and privileges, and likewise to the Deacons, as Members of the Town Council for the faithful and honourable discharge of their duty to the Public. At the election of the Magistrates on Thursday last. – This motion was carried with loud acclamation, and the Dean of Guild was requested to intimate the Vote of Thanks, in person at the first Meeting of the Nine Trades.

Dundee 3rd October 1815. The above is extracted from the Minutes of the Guildry, held at Dundee, the second October, eighteen hundred and fifteen, by (signed) James Saunders, clerk to the Guildry."

The Convener in reply addressed the Dean in a short speech, acknowledging the high honour done to the Nine Trades, the Deacons and himself, by the very handsome manner, in which their efforts had been characterised by the Guildry, and begging his Lordship to assure his Brethren, that they might at all times rely upon the most determined and Cordial Co-operation of he Nine Trades, whenever the Cause of Corruption had to be combated, or that of freedom to be supported.

The Dean then retired amidst the cheers of the whole meeting.