A HISTORY OF COAL MINING IN RUTHERGLEN AND CAMBUSLANG

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Front cover: Old Farme Pit, copyright South Lanarkshire Council (rg.1983.5.33).

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FOREWORD

From the 15th century until the mid 20th century coal mining was a common site around Rutherglen and Cambuslang. By the latter part of the 19th century Lanarkshire became the largest coal producer in Scotland. Being so familiar to the local population, it was seldom recorded and with the removal of the coal bings and surface workings in the latter part of the 20th century, the industry has been gradually slipping from local memory.

It is important that future generations appreciate and know of the role that miners, along with their families and communities, played in creating the wealth that generated from the coalmining industry, to help build what we have today as a nation. It is also equally important that future generations never forget that there was a terrible price paid at times by the above through loss of life, injuries and industrial diseases in order to produce that coal from the bowels of the earth.

This book, on coal mining in the Rutherglen and Cambuslang area, is a follow-on from the authors' involvement in a Heritage Lottery project undertaken by South Lanarkshire Council between 2014 and 2017, called Pits Ponies People and Stories. This was a community based, learning, research and interpretation project based on the development, working lifespan and decline of the coal mining industry in South Lanarkshire.

This book will be a valuable historical resource, and is provided free of charge to schools, libraries, museums, and groups with an interest in local history. I hope that future generations will continue to be stimulated by local history and may discover further information about the coal industry that can be added to this record.

Nicky Wilson
National President
National Union of Mineworkers

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- Frank McKirgan, grandson of Robert Phillliban, Deputy, Manor Powis Colliery.

INTRODUCTION

This book is the result of collating research undertaken by the co-authors on coal mining in the Rutherglen and Cambuslang areas. This joint co-operation came because of a Heritage Lottery project undertaken by South Lanarkshire Council between 2014 and 2017, named Pits Ponies People and Stories.

The project was a community based, learning, research and interpretation one, based on the development, working lifespan and decline of the coal mining industry in South Lanarkshire.

Although there was much written evidence of the social and working conditions of the local mining community over the centuries, evidence of the science and art of winning the coal was not so readily available.

The purpose of this book is, therefore, to record facts and references that we have since discovered for any future researchers on the coal mining industry, which once played a major role in the development of Rutherglen and Cambuslang.

Now, there are so few traces and memories of coal mining in Rutherglen and Cambuslang that many people do not even realise that coal was mined in the area. A mining memorial was erected in Cambuslang in 2005 at the location of Kirkhill Colliery, also known as the Toll Pit. However, Rutherglen is one of the few former mining towns in Scotland not to have a memorial. To correct this, the authors have raised funding for a mining memorial, in the shape of a flame safety lamp. It is hoped that this will be located in Rutherglen Main Street, opposite the town hall, during 2020.

Previous residents of Rutherglen and Cambuslang, going back over 600 years, would have seen collieries and their waste bings dominating the landscape. During this time, coal was won by hard manual labour, below ground under both towns, for many miles in each direction, at depths of generally 17 to 215 metres but up to 500 metres at the deepest point around Hallside.

Coal mining goes back to at least Roman times, however the first written records in Scotland date to 1210, when the monks of Newbattle Abbey worked a coal heugh at Whytrigg near Prestonpans, and 1265, when coal was supplied to the castle at Berwick.

Coal mining in Rutherglen and Cambuslang probably dates from a similar time and this book provides a record of that industry, from the earliest written record, in 1490, until the last mine in the area, Newton, closed in 1964.

In this book we have extended the work carried out by six earlier authors, who took an interest in local coal mining: The Rev Dr John Meek for his record on Cambuslang, and the Rev David Ure for his record on Rutherglen in the 1793 Statistical Account of Scotland; The Rev John Robertson for his record on Cambuslang, and the Rev Peter Brown for his record on Rutherglen in the 1845 Statistical Account of Scotland; H Ross Shearer for his 1922 book “Rutherglen Lore”; and, especially, John Anderson for his 1943 book “Coal”, with special reference to the Cambuslang district.

Our researches have also made use of the, 25 inch to the mile, first and second series of Ordnance Survey maps dating from 1859 and 1896 for locating collieries (digital copies of these maps are available online at the National Library of Scotland website). We have also reviewed the Coal Authority mine abandonment plans for many of the collieries and consulted the British Geological Survey and several retired mining engineers.

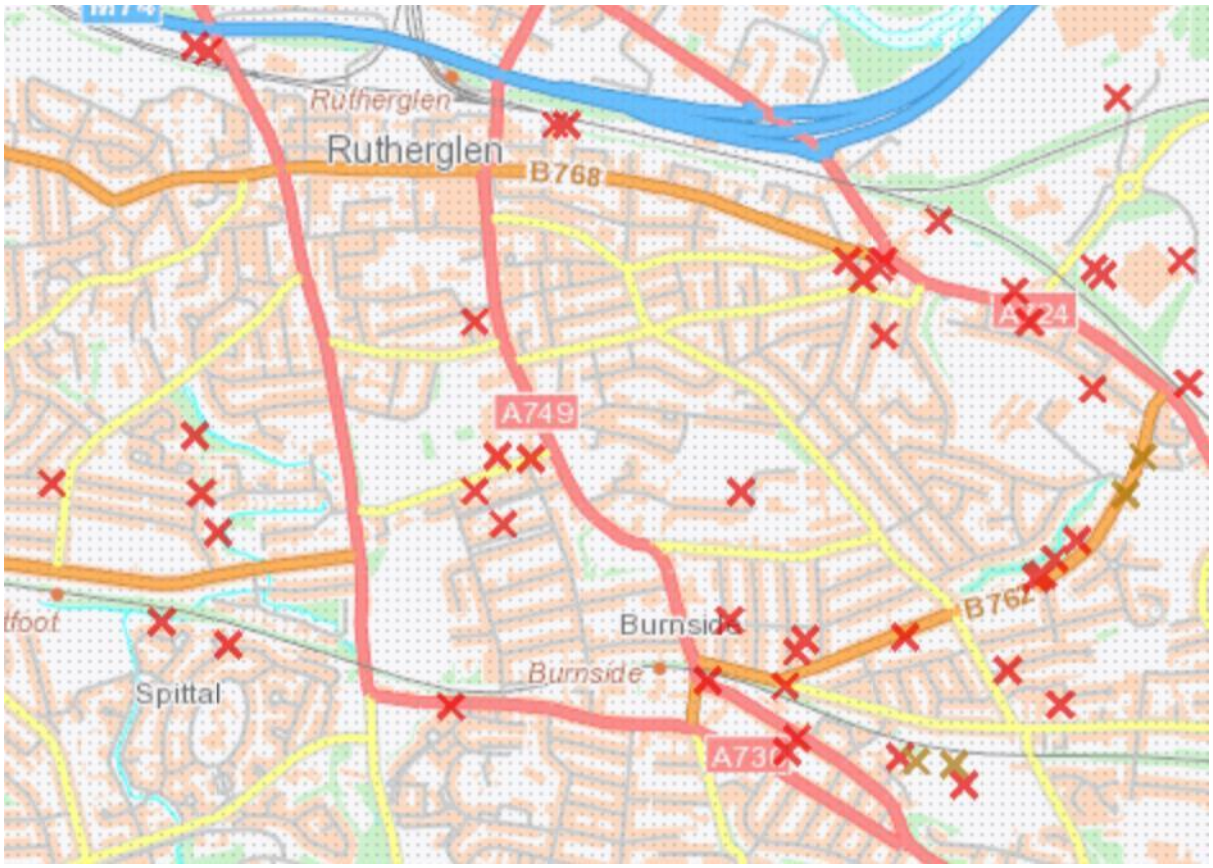
We hope that future readers and researchers may be able to discover more and build upon this history.

Within the text that follows:

- a **colliery** refers to the entire workings on the surface and underground;
- a **mine** refers to a roadway driven within a colliery or a roadway driven from the surface;
- a **pit** is a vertical shaft, there are often several pits within the boundary of a single colliery;
- a **blind pit** is an underground vertical shaft from one seam to another.

RUTHERGLEN

Coal mining in Rutherglen can be traced back to at least 1595. The last colliery operating in Rutherglen was at Coatspark which closed in 1958. Others surviving until the 20th century were at Farme (1931), Govan (1923) and Stonelaw (1903).



The above is a Coal Authority Interactive Map, with crosses showing the known location of pits and mine entries in the Rutherglen area (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved). There were other collieries at Crookston, Bankhead, Spittal, and the six pits of Dixon; and, according to the 1922 book "Rutherglen Lore":

> *"The south of Rutherglen in early times was the Eldorado of the "black diamond" hunter, and within half a mile of old Stonelaw colliery (the shaft of which is enclosed within the four- square blocks of buildings facing Stonelaw School), there are upwards of twenty other shafts we could locate, but, in case it might lead to an exodus from the district, or a demand by residenters for a reduction of rent in consequence of the shafts' proximity to their bedrooms, we shall refrain from describing these too minutely."*

Although Rutherglen was once a substantial mining community there are now no visible surface remains to remind the community.

At the time of writing, however, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the British Geological Survey (BGS) are working on creating two UK Geoenergy Observatories: in Glasgow and in Cheshire. The site in Glasgow is in the area worked by Farme Colliery, at Dalmarnock and Cuningar, and the co-authors were invited to its official inauguration, on 7th December 2018, by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Rt Hon Lord Henley.

This £31m investment in the UK Geoenergy Observatories will provide the UK with its first 'macroscope' for understanding of how the geological environment reacts to natural and human change over time. A network of boreholes carrying sophisticated sensors is being created at both sites enabling Earth scientists to measure tiny changes in the water table, physics, chemistry, biology and the temperature of the rocks.

The aim of the Glasgow site is to explore the potential for geothermal energy using waste heat recovered from water flowing through the old colliery workings.

It is ironic that the coal workings once used to produce heat energy, with resulting air pollution, may now be used once again to produce heat energy without air pollution.

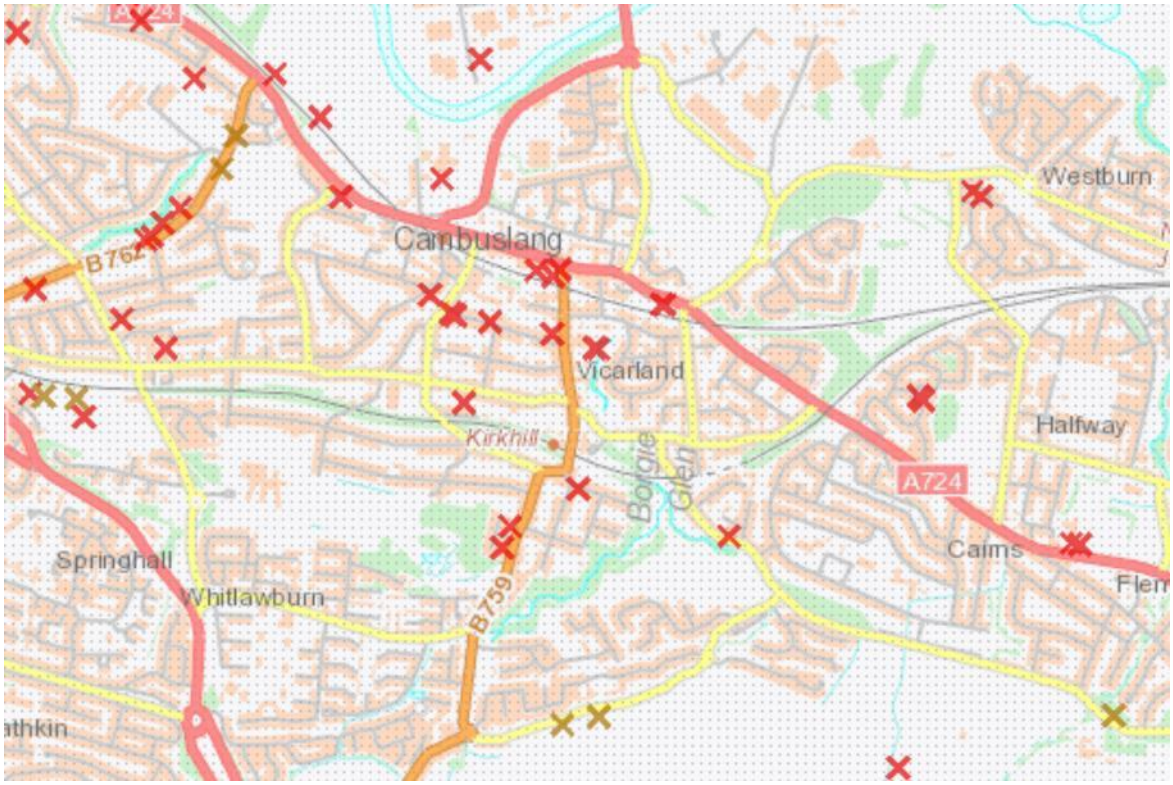
CAMBUSLANG

Coal mining in Cambuslang can be traced back to at least 1490, but during the 20th century most of the signs of mining gradually disappeared, apart from a few remaining traces of the bings to the east of Cambuslang, towards Blantyre. However, in the 18th and 19th centuries Cambuslang would have looked very different.

Ordnance Survey Map of Cambuslang, 1856 (reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

The 1859 OS map of Cambuslang shows that it was then a collection of smaller villages comprising: Main Street and Bushyhill, Kirkhill and the mining rows of East Coats and West Coats, surrounded by fields. There were no stone built houses “up the hill” and no housing along the north side of the Main Street.

The population of Cambuslang, which had been less than 1,000 people, grew to 1,558 by 1801 and to 3,740 by 1871. The coming of the Caledonian railway in 1849, plus steelworks and the second industrial revolution, then saw a huge increase in the population of Cambuslang, to 20,000 by 1911.



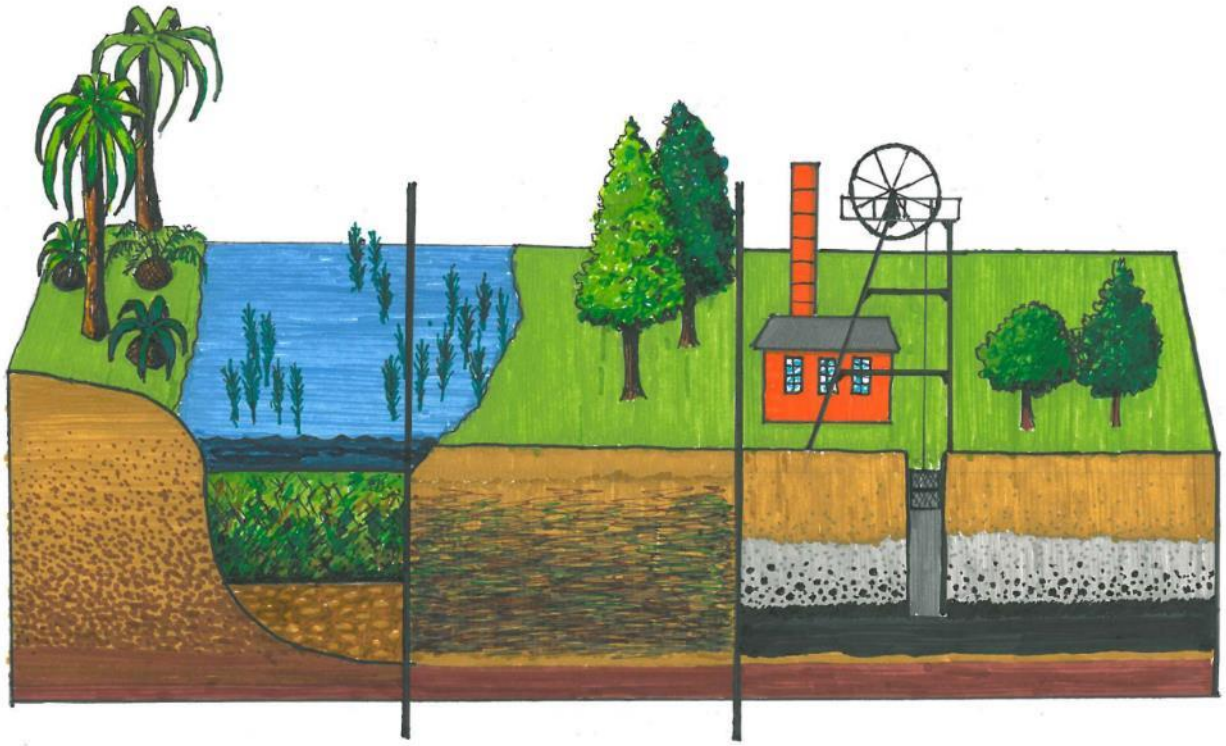
The above is a Coal Authority Interactive Map, with crosses showing the known location of pits and mine entries in the Cambuslang area (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved). Whilst these are the known location of pits, based on mine abandonment plans, there are many more pit shafts whose location are unknown. Evidence of mining in Cambuslang goes back some 600 years and in the Statistical Account for Scotland of 1791, the local Minister notes that up to that time “there are about 100 coal pits which have been wrought” (Ref 13).

Mines in the Cambuslang area belonged to the Duke of Hamilton and the miners were bound to their owners, following an Act of 1661, until a subsequent Act of 1799 finally abolished bondage in the coal mines and salt pans of Scotland. The Duke of Hamilton sold the collieries to the founder of the firm of Archibald Russell in the 1860s.

In a lease of a colliery near Cambuslang, dated 1760, there were let, not only the coal in the lands, but also "the coal hewers, coal bearers, putters, cleeksmen, banksmen, gatesmen, and others bound to the said work, and any others that shall be legally employed and become bound during the currency" of the lease. The tenant is "allowed to employ as many coal hewers as he pleases, and to have full power over them, to require and claim them from other coal-works, imprison and otherwise punish them according to law, in the same manner as the proprietor could do himself." (Ref 1).

HOW COAL WAS FORMED

The trees that formed coal were not as we know them today, they were like giant ferns and had a thicker bark than modern trees. The atmosphere had a higher oxygen content which promoted growth, and the likelihood of fire. The trees flourished in swamp like conditions beside great rivers with new growth constantly replacing old. When conditions changed and the river changed course, or when the ground sank, the sea moved in and covered the rotting trees with mud and sand. Eventually, a build-up of silt would allow the forest to begin to grow again, starting the cycle of growth, decay, silt cover and re-growth. This process would be repeated many times over the centuries and as each layer of rotting vegetation was compressed under tons of mud and sand it was gradually turned through time, pressure and heat into coal with the mud and sand being consolidated into various types of rock.



This diagram (created by Tim Kingwell, volunteer at the Scottish National Mining Museum) shows coal formation in 3 stages. On the left, some 300 to 400 million years ago, when central Scotland was located on the Equator, dead plant matter fell into swampy water and, over time, a thick layer of dead plants lay decaying at the bottom of the swamps. In the centre of the diagram, some 100 million years ago, the surface and climate of the earth changed, and more water and dirt washed in, halting the decay and forming peat. The weight of top layers of water and dirt packed down the lower layers of peat and under heat and pressure this underwent chemical and physical changes. This removed oxygen, leaving the coal deposits seen on the right side of the diagram. The coal deposits in the Clyde valley are in the form of a curved basin under the river Clyde and rise to the surface to the north and south of the river.

In modern times this coal forming process is still taking place, an example of this is tropical vegetation on the slowly subsiding Ganges delta in India forming beds of peat, with regular flooding of the delta which lays down sediments.

During the geological periods that followed, massive earth movements bent, buckled and broke the flat beds of coal, molten volcanic rock flowed around them and the land masses that formed Scotland buried them at different depths.

Then for millions of years, wind, rain and then ice wore away the covering rocks, until they became so eroded that the coal appeared close to the surface again.

The geological era when coal was formed is known as the Carboniferous period. It lasted approximately 60 million years and ended around 200 million years ago, just when dinosaurs were beginning to appear. In terms of highlighting the timescale, dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago and modern humans evolved around 2 million years ago, while Scots are known to have been burning coal for about a thousand years.

Several types of coal can be found in the UK, at different depths, being:

- Peat - not coal as such, but compacted vegetable matter which has broken down in water and become partly carbonised; if buried and subjected to enormous pressure for millions of years it would turn into coal;
- Lignite - lesser developed form of coal to those above;
- Cannel coal - hard and rich in gas, ideal for gas production;
- Bituminous coals - bright, smoky, and easily lit; general uses are household but can be used in power stations, steelmaking and gas generation, two important types are:
    - Steam coal is mainly used in power stations and for boilers, locomotives and ships;
    - Coking coal, is used in iron works blast furnaces as part of the steelmaking process;
- Anthracite - shiny, high carbon, hard, brittle, clean, smokeless with a high heat content and formed by volcanic action.

THE LANARKSHIRE COALFIELD

To help understand the geology of the Lanarkshire coal field, it can be useful to know of some geological terms commonly used by mining people.

Fault - A fault occurs when the strata has slipped or sheared so that the strata is moved vertically, either upward or downward. Where a coal seam is being removed by mining, a fault causes it to be lost and can only be found by following the strata upward or downward.

Outcrop - This is where the coal seam comes to the surface, although usually covered by earth and vegetation. In the early days of mining much of the removal of minerals was by inclined shafts or adits, locally known as ingonees, driven into outcrops.

Dip - This explains the slope of the strata at any position.

Whin Dyke - This is where igneous lava flows have created a disruption in the strata in past geological times. These are often associated with fault planes and the coal adjacent to the dyke is burnt and worthless.

Fathom – is a measure of depth, where one fathom equals 6 feet, or 1.83 metres.

Wants – as shown on colliery abandonment plans at Stonelaw and Farme Collieries.

From - The Coal Fields of Scotland by Dron, 1902

"At many of the collieries "wants" occur in the seams, where the coal has been washed away by aqueous action at the time of its formation. It is very frequently found that running parallel with the wants there is an equivalent area in which the seam has about double the thickness. One of the most remarkable of these wants has been traced in the Upper coal seam at Farm, Govan and Stonelaw Collieries for a distance of nearly 2 miles. It maintains a pretty uniform average breadth of about 165 feet, and on both sides the coal is of more than average thickness. None of the under seams were in the least affected by this want. Professor James Geikie has given the following description of the cause of those "wants ". "When one remembers the conditions under which our coal strata were accumulated, it is not hard to see why 'wants' should be common, and perhaps why the so- called 'doublings' should so frequently be associated with 'wants'. Our coal-measures always suggest to me a great river with numerous effluents and affluents winding through interminable mud-flats. The flats covered with luxuriant vegetation and interrupted here and there with creeks and lagoons. One can readily fancy how, during heavy floods, the large river with its effluents and affluents might undermine their banks, or overflow the flats, and cut new channels and courses through the jungle. It is possible to conceive also how, after unusually heavy rains, or a prolonged rainy season, the spongy vegetable soils, becoming surcharged, might burst and roll forward upon a comparatively slight slope. Or the under-soils upon an inclined surface might become so slippery with moisture as to cause a slide of the overlying jungle-growth and great club-moss trees. Again, one can conceive yet another way in which a coal-seam may appear to be doubled. Let us suppose a wide-spread marsh in which vegetation is rapidly accreting. It is not unlikely that (owing to the irregular consolidation of the underlying sediments and buried soils and sub-soils), some portions of the marsh might become depressed below the general level for a few feet, and this depression would by and by be filled up by the continuous growth of vegetation creeping in, as it were, from all sides. Possibly the depression might at first be occupied by water—a shallow lagoon—in which fine carbonaceous mud might be deposited. Sooner or later, however, it would be filled up by vegetable growth, and thus we should have a thickening of one and the same coal-seam, with possibly thin partings of daugh [*a black substance, composed chiefly of clay, mica, and coal dust]*, or coaly-blaes, dividing the thickened portion into two or three seams."

In the late 19th century, collieries in the Rutherglen area extended from Toryglen in the west, across Rutherglen to Farme Cross and Eastfield in the east, and south towards Croftfoot and Spittal.

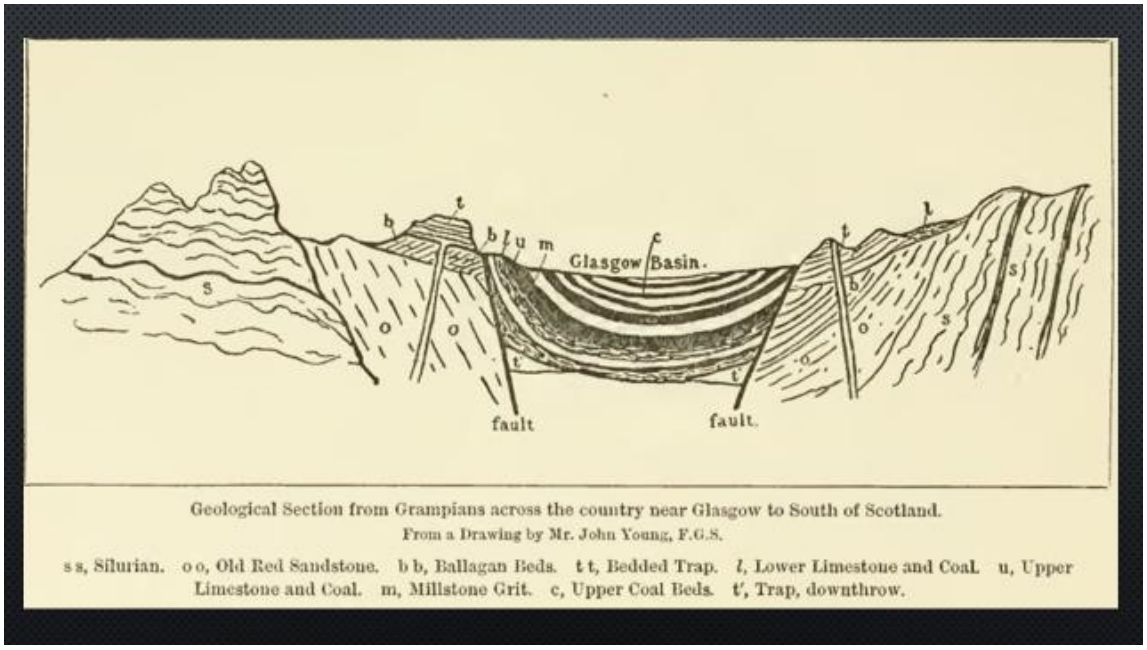
The Cambuslang coalfield covers an area between Eastfield in the west to the Blantyre border to the east with East Kilbride to the South and the River Clyde to the north. The geology of the coalfield in the area shows that it is bounded to the south by a very large fault which throws the strata upwards to the south, and denudes this area of productive coal measures. The area is mildly faulted mainly in a North-South direction and the principal coal seams outcrop in the area between the Borgie and the present location of the Cambuslang Rugby Club at Langlea Road.

Adjacent to outcrops at Holmhills Farm the coal seams dip at 15-25 degrees to the north east and ultimately become reasonably level in the region of Hallside which (at 480 metres) is the deepest part of this coalfield.

The dip from the north part of the coalfield is of the order of 10° towards Hallside again, while very steep dips take place from the main fault at Dechmont Hill toward Flemington and becoming reasonably level at Hallside. Due east from Hallside the strata remains reasonably flat.

A major Whin Dyke is exposed running east to West from Westburn Junction to Newton and extending toward Uddingston.

The geological section of the coal seams in the area is as shown in the Strata Section below, from which it can be said that up to twelve seams have been worked in the area, while the original reserves of coal in the Cambuslang area would have been in excess of 100 million tonnes.

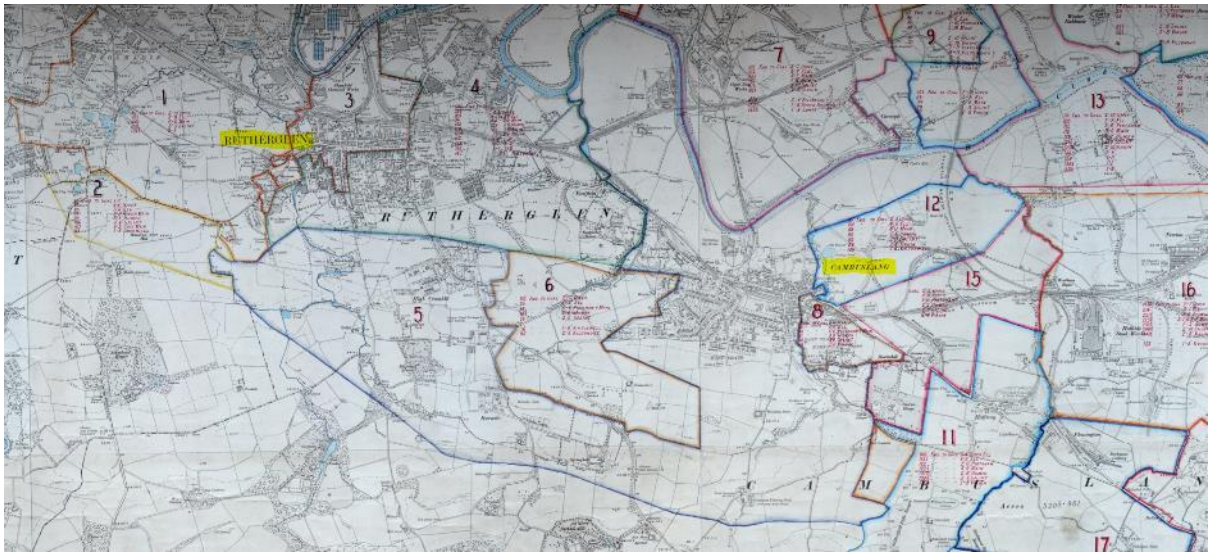


Geological Section from Grampians across the country near Glasgow to South of Scotland.
From a Drawing by Mr. John Young, F.G.S.

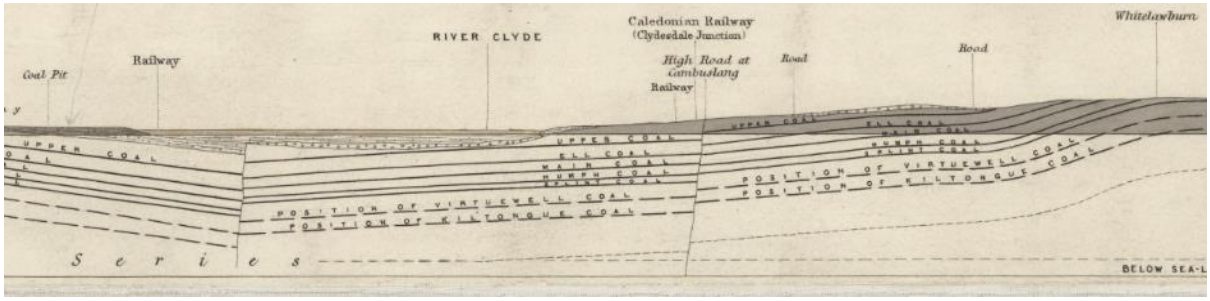
s s, Silurian. o o, Old Red Sandstone. b b, Ballagan Beds. t t, Bedded Trap. l, Lower Limestone and Coal. u, Upper Limestone and Coal. m, Millstone Grit. c, Upper Coal Beds. t', Trap, downthrow.

Diagram by Professor John Young, president of the Geological Society of Glasgow in 1867.

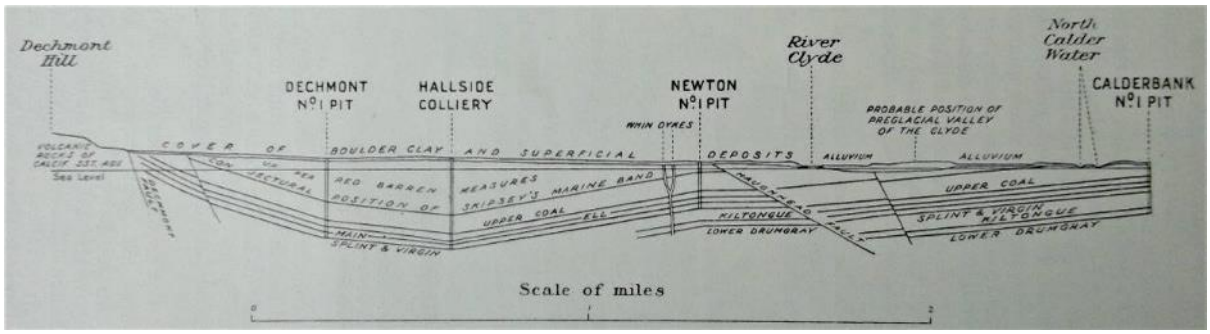
The development of the large coalfield in central Lanarkshire did not take place until the latter part of the 19th century. Originally, the coal was not thought to exist, as the coal basin between Hamilton and Cambuslang is covered by "Red or Barren Measures" which were thought to belong to the underlying Old Red Sandstone. By 1836 these deposits were reclassified as Upper Red Sandstone and truly a portion of the coal formation. Most of the collieries in the deeper part of the coal field, from Cambuslang to Hamilton, opened up from about 1870, the development being stimulated by the growth of the railways for transporting coal. By 1897 Lanarkshire produced half the total coal output from Scotland. By 1907 the output, of 17.96 million tons, had fallen to 45 percent of Scottish output (Ref 2, 3).



1898 map (Ref 14) showing the areas leased for coal mining in Rutherglen, Cambuslang and Carmyle. This shows how coal mining developed to the east of Cambuslang once it was realised that the "Red or Barren Measures" were not the Old Red Sandstone



Cross Section of the Clyde Valley at Cambuslang looking east, 1877, showing coal deposits (Ref 68) Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018].

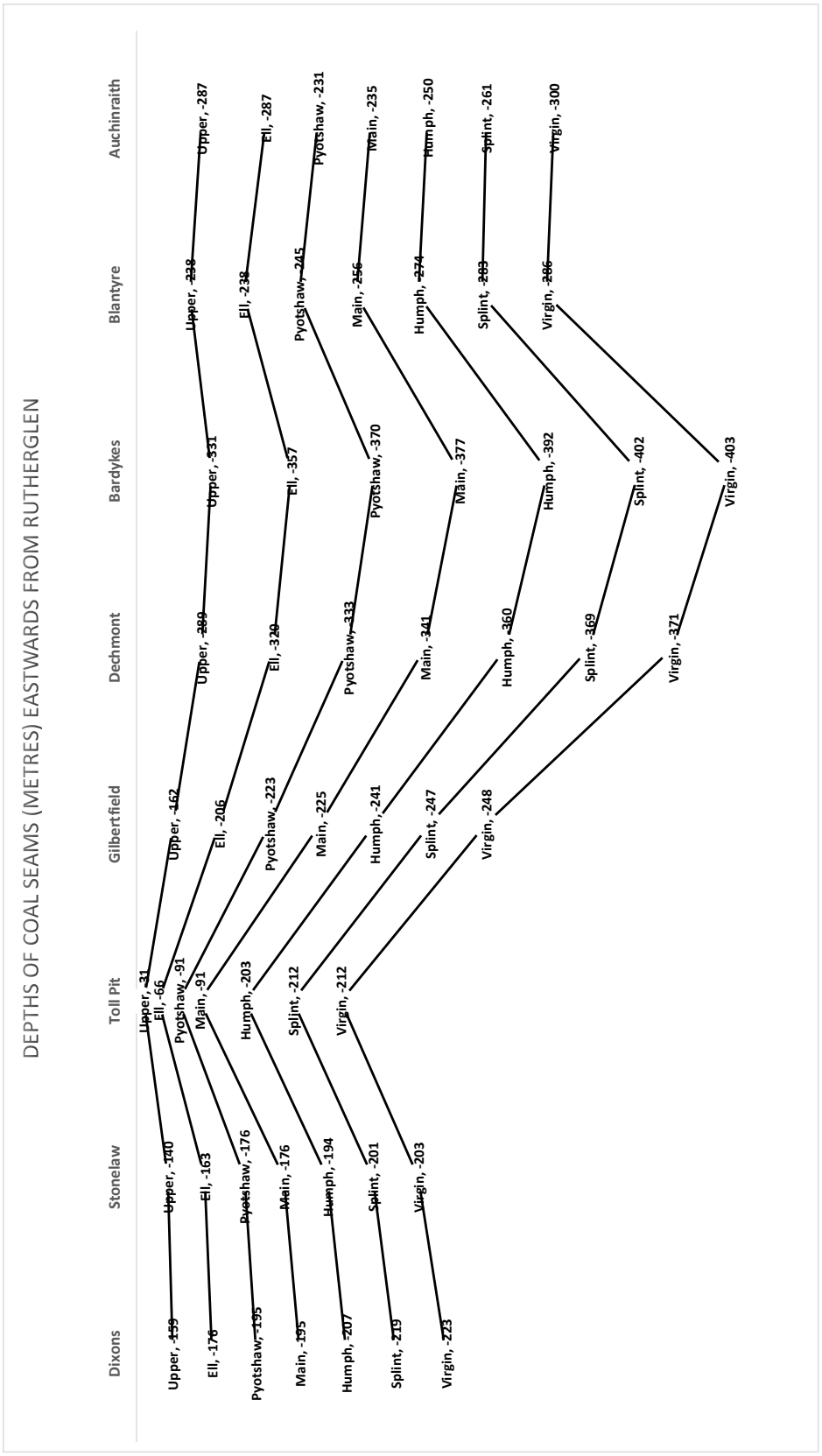


Horizontal Section from Dechmont, Cambuslang, to Calderbank, Airdrie (Geological Survey of Scotland 1920) Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018].

With transport of large quantities of coal by rail (from the 1840s), and a greatly increasing demand for coal for ironmaking by about 1870, more than half of the Scottish output of coal came from Lanarkshire. A characteristic of the Lanarkshire coalfield was the large number of smaller leaseholds into which it was divided. There must be few coalfields in Britain which contained a greater number of small or moderately sized pits.

THE COAL SEAMS OF THE LANARKSHIRE COAL FIELD

The bituminous seams of coal encountered were, in descending order of depth, as follows.



Co-author Joe Cunningham, based on his experience as a coal mine surveyor in this area, has provided the following descriptions of the coal seams.

The depth and thickness of the seams shown are typical values for Stonelaw colliery in Rutherglen. The depth varies between collieries, as shown in the chart above. The seams also rise towards the surface across the coal basin and, in places, outcrop at the surface.

1. Glasgow Upper Coal (Depth 140m, Thickness 1.31m)

This coal was extensively worked throughout the area and was known as the Soft Coal. As the name implies its soft nature made it very easy to work, but it was often wet due to the impervious nature of the clay, which was found below this coal. The coal was worked by longwall methods, where all the mineral is removed in panels and high percentage of coal extraction is achievable.

2. Ell Coal (Depth 163m, Thickness 1.45m)

This coal was again extensively worked throughout the area, and by virtue of its thickness it was often worked by the stoop and room system. This mining method involves making roadways in the seam in a rectangular layout (rooms) and leaving pillars of coal for support (stoops). This method of mining was very efficient and easy to develop with the stoops possibly removed or reduced in size at a later date. It is also very suitable where protection of surface features is necessary e.g. below Kirkhill Church where during World War II the thick seams were removed by this method and the stoops were left to protect the Church. These workings were operated by Gateside Colliery.

3. Pyotshaw Coal (Depth 176m, Thickness 1.46m)

This coal, which occurs in close proximity to the Main Coal, was extensively worked by longwall methods, but occasionally it occurred so close to the Main Coal that stoop and room working could be used to extract both coals at once. Gateside Colliery worked a previously sterilised area below the main trunk railway toward Cambuslang by this method.

4. Main Coal (Depth 176m, Thickness 1.46m)

This seam, which was one of the ‘vanguard’ seams in the coalfield with excellent roof and floor conditions, was extensively worked by longwall methods.

Between the Main and the Ell coal is a 0.4 metre band of limy ironstone packed with crushed shells of ‘Carbonicola’, known as ‘Cambuslang Marble’. This varies from grey to reddish in colour, takes a good polish and was used in marble manufacture in Glasgow. This marble was used for a mantelpiece at Chatelherault, Hamilton, in the college library at Glasgow University and at Duddingstone near Queensferry.

5. Humph Coal (Depth 194m, Thickness 0.79m)

This seam, which is somewhat variable in thickness throughout the area, was worked at most of the collieries in Cambuslang although generally to a lesser degree than some of the richer seams available. It is possible that some of this seam may still be intact near Bankhead pit, south west of Crosshill.

6. Splint Coal (Depth 201m, Thickness 0.84m)

This was a very high quality steam coal extensively mined and marketed throughout the world. It is said that a steam locomotive could travel at high speed with a full complement of carriages / wagons from Glasgow to Beattock without once de-ashing the boiler, which indicates the quality of this hard coal. In some areas of

Lanarkshire this seam combined with the Virgin Coal to produce a seam of around 2.3 metres thick which was extracted using the stoop and room system.

7. Virgin Coal (Depth 203m, Thickness 0.57m)

This seam occurs below the Splint Coal but, as previously explained, its close proximity to the latter coal often meant that they were worked together but, in fact, in the Cambuslang area much of the coal remained unworked for the reasons previously described.

8. Blackband Coal (Depth 214m, Thickness 0.35m)

This was a relatively thin seam of no outstanding quality, but in the Lanarkshire Clyde Valley area it became one of the mainstays of the coalfield during the latter years of the coalfield's working existence. Excellent roof and floor conditions made the seam easy to work and roadways relatively easy to maintain. Co-author Joe Cunningham can recall travelling through Greenlees Colliery in 1956 and seeing a face in this seam which had been abandoned in 1946 on the closure of Gateside No.1 Colliery, Halfway. This face was still in good condition.

9. Virtuewell Coal (Depth 245m, Thickness 0.52m)

This was a good quality coal which, unfortunately, comprised of an upper leaf of coal around 900mm thick, a dirt band of around 450mm thick, and then a lower leaf of coal around 450mm thick. The adopted method of mining this seam was to cut out the dirt band using a coal cutter on one shift, remove the dirt, and then remove the coal on the next shift. The seam proved to be variable in thickness in the Cambuslang area but was extensively worked by Gateside No.2 Colliery, which resulted in the huge spoil heaps which existed behind this pit.

This seam was also worked at Newton No.1 Colliery (Blantyreferme No.3), and Dechmont Colliery, and in the latter years the dirt was cut and partially stowed underground at the former colliery with great savings both in labor and cost. Roof, floor, and roadway conditions were again excellent, where this seam was extracted.

10. Kiltongue Coal (Depth 269m, Thickness 0.76m)

This coal was of excellent quality and of workable thickness in various areas of the Cambuslang Coalfield. It was wrought out in the late 1800s at Wellshot colliery and to the west of Rutherglen. In 1911 considerable quantities remained round Farme colliery and south at Bankhead and Crosshill. In the 20th century it was only worked extensively by the Coatspark Colliery and to a very limited degree at Gateside No.2 Colliery. The seam was worked at Fishescoats colliery and also attained a workable thickness in Newton No.1 Colliery but remained unworked. Just above the Kiltongue coal is the Kiltongue Mussleband containing crushed mussels. At Dixons No 6 pit at Govan the oil shale associated with the Musselband is around a metre thick. The Mussleband coal was worked at Fishescoats colliery.

11. Upper Drumgray Coal (Depth 286m, Thickness 0.37m)

This seam had no economic significance within the Cambuslang area.

12. Lower Drumgray Coal (Depth 298m, Thickness 0.20m)

This seam was extensively worked at several collieries in the area during their latter working years, and although it was of workable quality and thickness, difficult roadway maintenance problems often made its extraction of dubious economic value.

The above details the seams available for extraction in the Cambuslang area, and give proof of the huge reserves which preserved the area as a very important contributor to the industrial prosperity of the nation over a period in excess of 100 years. The coals extracted were utilised mainly for household, manufacturing and steam raising outlets. Some gas coal, ironstone, and fireclay were also mined in the adjoining areas.

The Coal Trades Review in 1889 (Pg. 298) describes the Lanarkshire Coal Field thus:

> *Assuming the average thickness of coal seams to be 50 inches, the average output of 166,000,000 tons represents the produce of 27,000 acres, or 42 square miles, a tract of country from Glasgow to Hamilton 4 miles wide which was excavated by the labour of our miners.*

[Authors Note: assuming the density of coal as 50 pounds/cubic foot (800kg/m^3) the coal would need to be 75 inches (190cm) thick, or cover a larger area, for an output of 166 million tons.]

The collieries in Rutherglen and Cambuslang were part of this great coal basin and, until the introduction of coal cutting machinery in the early 1900's, the coal was all hand won.

COAL MINING METHODSFROM EARLIEST TIMES - BELL PITS AND INGONEES

As the surface of the land is covered with soil and clay, coal outcrops were hidden from the view of the early explorers. However, the land is so distorted by faulting that commercial seams could outcrop under this thin surface layer several times. Sometimes such seams were exposed by stream or river erosion, by the digging of a well for water, or during the quarrying of sandstone.

In the distant past, the earliest form of coal mining often involved sinking narrow shafts into coal outcrop areas and 'bell' out from the bottom of the shaft, removing the coal, for as far as was safely practicable, then abandon the shaft, and move on to the next 'bell' pit.

In the early 1800s the ground around the original collieries was explored using boreholes, the results of these being interpreted using the latest theories of geology. It would be a pleasant surprise for the landowners to be told of a fortune lying beneath their feet.

As shafts got deeper the coal often had to be carried up a series of wooden stairs, usually by women, carrying up to a hundredweight (50 Kg) at a time. Over the course of a day this could be equivalent to carrying this weight to the top of Ben Nevis (1,345 metres high).

The coal seams in the Clyde Valley lie in an arc, under the River Clyde and, in the south, rise to the surface in a line from Croftfoot and Burnside to Cambuslang. Where these coal seams outcrop at the surface can be seen on the Coal Authority Interactive Viewer.

Coal Authority Interactive Map, showing coal outcrops, as purple lines, at the ground surface to the north and south of the River Clyde. (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved.)

Streams, flowing down from the Cathkin Hills towards the Clyde cut through these outcrops and in places, such as Cambuslang Park, miners drove tunnels known as “ingonees” into the sides of the burn to follow the coal. These would be narrow enough to be self-supporting and when the air became too foul to breathe, another heading would be started.

Adit mining was also used, this involved driving a slightly rising drift into outcrop coal, using the slope to drain away any water which occurred. During the 1926 strike such a drift was driven in Cambuslang Public Park by striking miners to remove outcrop coal. This drift was closed down by the authorities.

Early uses for coal were mainly for industries such as iron smelting, salt pans, breweries etc., but it was often restricted to being used locally, as it was heavy and bulky and could only be transported by horses, and by boats which could travel up-river beyond Dalmarnock.

It was not until later in the 16th century, as supplies of wood became insufficient, and as improvements were made in the design of domestic hearths, that the use of coal as a domestic fuel began to expand.

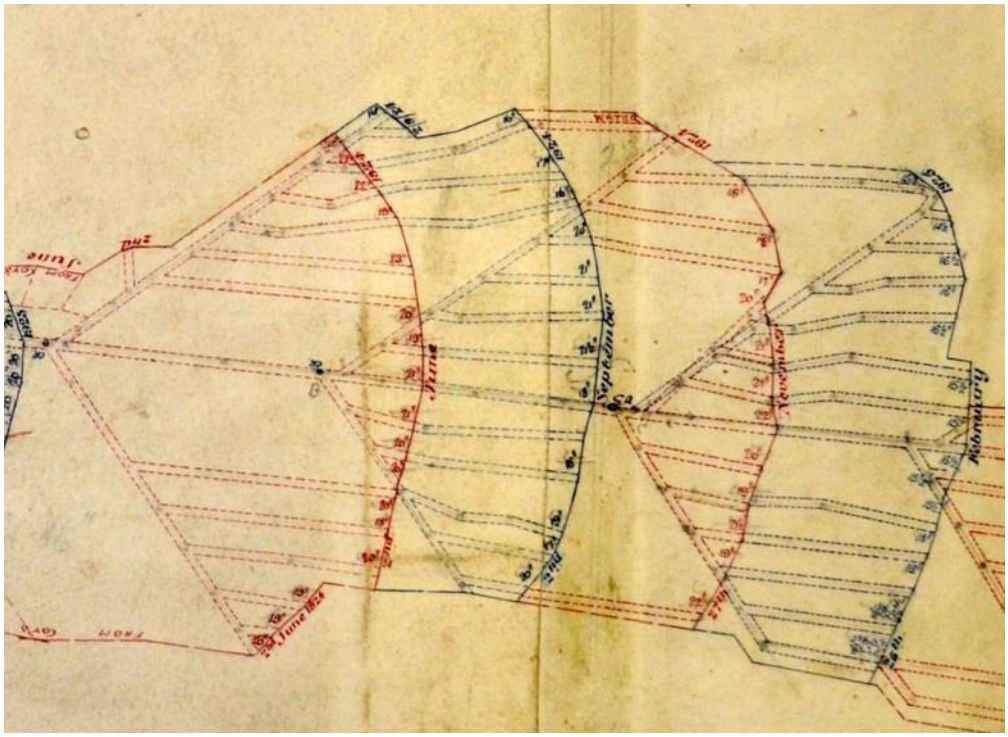
MANUAL INDUSTRIAL MINING

A great deal of coal was left by the early coal mining methods and, as miners became bolder, they dug cross tunnels in order to extract more coal. This method was also used to extract coal from the bottom of shafts, with the miners working outwards through the coal seam. Pillars of coal were left to support the roof but, as

knowledge improved, the coal pillars were reduced in size or removed altogether in a systematic retreat from the area. This method of working was known as ‘stoop and room‘, or ’room and pillar’. However, it caused about forty percent of the seam, be it coal or ironstone, to be lost in the unworked stoops.

This photograph shows old stoop and room workings, of a 31-inch-thick seam from the 1830s, that were exposed in 1936 at Cowglen, Glasgow during the building of a new Fever Hospital (SCRAN / BGS reproduced with permission of the British Geological Survey).

To extract more of the coal from a seam, the longwall method of working could be used (Ref 4). This was introduced to Central Lanarkshire by William Dixon, after a strike in 1837, using a method of working coal which had been developed in his Govan colliery a decade before. The new method was known as the longwall. It effectively reduced the need for skilled pickmen. The method consisted of having several adjacent working places in line with the cleet (the main cleavage planes in a coal seam).



Underground Mine Plan, c1926, showing old longwall method of face progression. A collier and his helper would work the end of each roadway facing the curved arc of the longwall face. Reproduced by courtesy of The Duke of Hamilton.

In the second half of his shift, the stripper, as the collier now became known, holed the bottom of his seam to the usual depth. Then he went home. During the night, the roof of the working place weighed down on the props. The undercut seam now broke off at the back of the cut, causing whole lengths of the face to fall out on the floor. Next day, the stripper attacked the huge blocks of coal with his hammer and wedges and loaded his hutch or creel. The most skilful part of the pick work was now obsolete. In order to access the face for the stripper and his drawer, roads had to be created in the broken strata behind the face. This road was made as follows - a shot hole was drilled in the roof, using a hammer and long shafted chisel, known as a jumper, about five feet above the floor and to a depth equal to the undercut. The hole was loaded with gunpowder, fused and stemmed with clay and fired. The holes were drilled into the roof at distances of about thirty feet apart. The broken rock was built into packs on either side of the road for a width of just over six feet, to form stone pillars to prevent the weight of the over lying strata from crushing the road. This work was done on the night shift. The miners involved were known as brushers. The Mines Inspector reported, in 1851, that longwall working had become very prevalent.

Although wooden props were used to support the roof near the coal face, falls of coal were frequent, causing injury and fatalities.

Seams greater in thickness than four feet thick continued to be worked by the stoop and room method, as did all seams with a strong roof, where the roof would not collapse in the waste between the roadside packs.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Prior to 1750 coal was not used to any extent for domestic purposes. As coal workings got deeper, water became a problem. Some workings had to be abandoned because the quantity of water flowing in could not be pumped out.

However, a great expansion in coal mining took place from the early 18th century, following the invention of the steam engine. The steam engine allowed water to be pumped out and coal to be hauled to the surface, thus allowing mines to become deeper to exploit further lower seams of coal. The steam engine also required a great deal of fuel, something readily available at a colliery.

Although steam engines allowed coal to be wound to the surface, the transport of the coal in the underground workings was mainly carried out by ponies. A description of the use of ponies in 1890 is given in Appendix 3 - PIT PONIES.

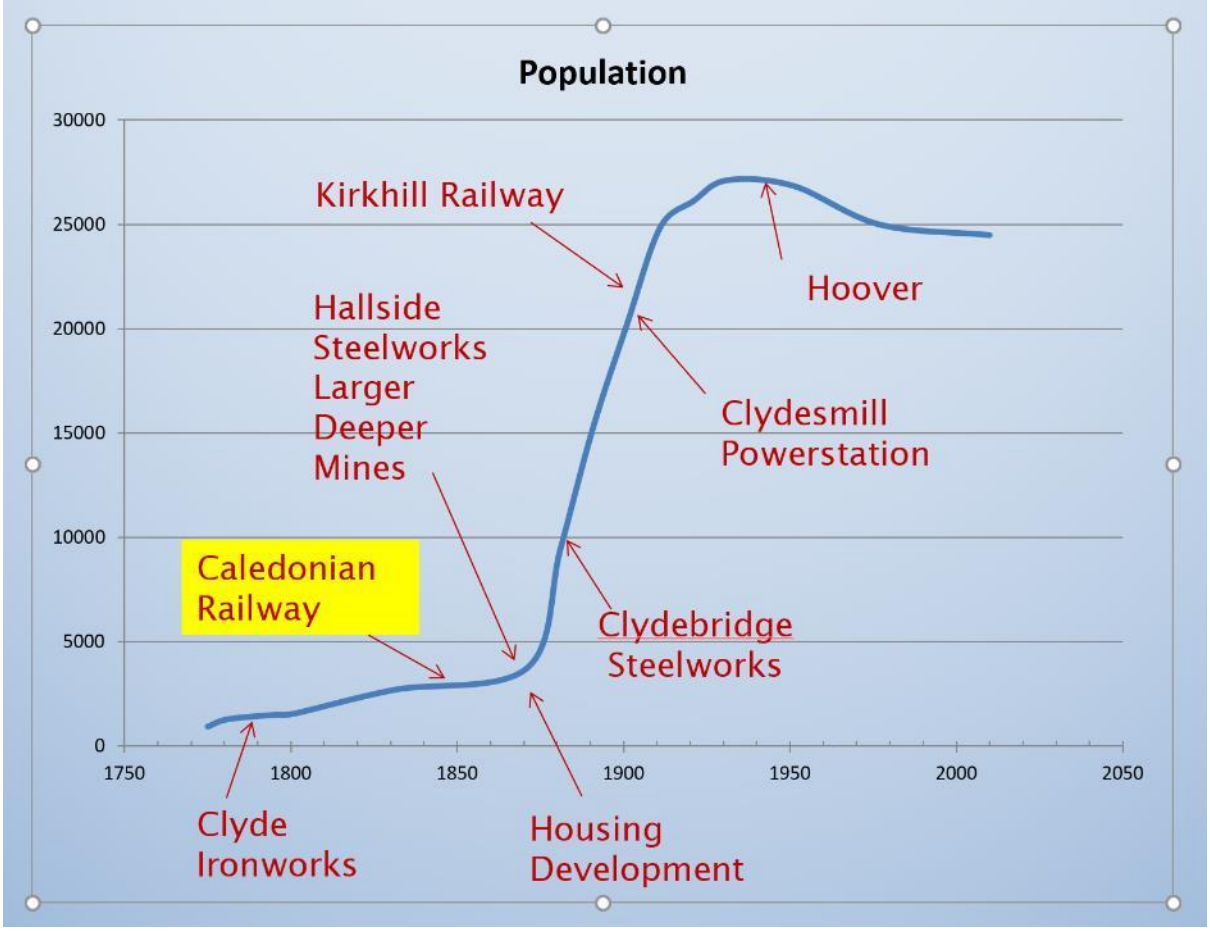
As roads connecting villages and towns improved, horse drawn waggons could be used to transport coal. David Ure's History of Rutherglen and East Kilbride describes crowds of people going to see the first cart in the parish, in about 1720, carrying a few coals from Cambuslang, and returning home, with astonishment.

In the Statistical Account of Scotland, of 1791, the main turnpike road through Cambuslang is from Hamilton to Glasgow. There were two other south to north roads, much frequented by coal, lime and ironstone carts.

Clyde Iron Works opened in 1786 to exploit the local coal and iron deposits on the north side of the Clyde from Cambuslang.

The earliest records of Newcomen steam engines being used at Scottish collieries is about 1719 (Ref 5). By 1760 a steam engine was in use at Govan Colliery and in 1787 at a colliery at Cambuslang Cross (the corner of Main Street and Greenlees Road). The Glasgow Mechanics' Magazine, Vol 3, 1825 records 58 steam engines employed in collieries in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, including eight at Govan, four at Eastfield, five between Farme and Wellshot, and five at Stonelaw.

In the 19th century the coming of railways allowed much larger quantities of coal to be transported. This was fundamental to the industrial revolution, allowing coal to reach wider markets, industries to develop where required and in turn further increasing the demand for coal. Coal provided the fuel for the railways and transport of coal generated the major revenue for the railways. As a result, the new railways were routed through the Lanarkshire coalfield with numerous branches to the collieries. The railways also allowed the movement of people and the development of the towns along the railway lines, throughout the coalfields, as shown in the graph below for Cambuslang.



Graph showing the population explosion in Cambuslang, from about 1870, following the opening of the railway, in 1849, and the growth of industry (C Findlay).

Uses for coal increased in the 1760s when coke* from coal took over from charcoal for ironmaking. The coal consumed by four ironworks in Scotland in 1780 was about 29,000 tons, increasing to 250,000 tons by 1808 when 20 blast furnaces were in operation. Clyde Iron Works opened in 1786 to exploit the local coal and iron deposits on the north side of the River Clyde from Cambuslang. (*Note: coke is a solid fuel made by heating coal in the absence of air, so that the volatile components are driven off.)

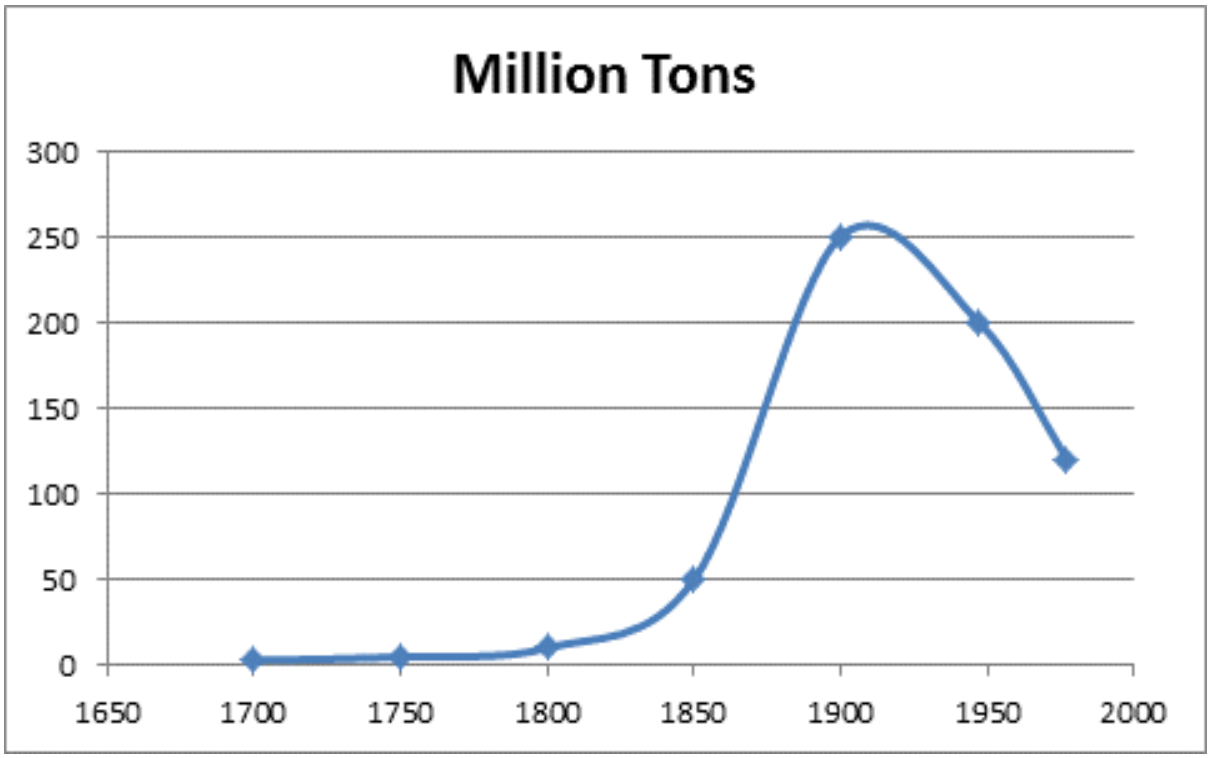
The 1796 Statistical Account of Scotland records the output from the area around Cambuslang as about 30,000 tons.

By the early 1800s the total coal consumption in Scotland was about 1.5 million tons and Lanarkshire was the largest producer. Apart from ironworks, the other main users for coal at this time were the cities, for domestic and industrial use, lime kilns, salt pans, and distilleries.

In the 1820s the Scottish iron industry, and thus the coal industry, received a major boost when David Mushet discovered the native Black Band ironstone in North Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and Stirlingshire and when James Beaumont Neilson, invented the hot blast process. Interestingly, both men worked at one time at Clyde Iron Works, near Cambuslang.

Although the hot blast process dramatically reduced the amount of coal used to produce iron, the price of iron fell and demand soared. At Dixons Wilsontown Iron Works it was discovered that the local hard 'splint' coal could be used directly in the furnace without previous coking; the first successful use of coal direct in blast

furnace practice. From 1830 onwards, the combination of black-band ore, splint coal and Neilson's hot blast brought about very rapid progress, English iron works were slow to adopt the untried hot blast process, giving the Scottish industry an advantage. Between 1830 and 1847 Scottish iron production increased from 37,500 tons a year to 540,000 tons a year (27% of UK iron production) thus hugely increasing the demand for coal.



UK Coal Production 1700 – 2000, showing the impact of the industrial revolution from the early 1800s. Note how the steep rise in the graph matches that of the population graph of Cambuslang above.

The growth of the iron industry put heavy demands on the coal industry, as shown by a Commission on coal in the UK in 1871 (Ref 6).

> *"The following statement is necessary to enable the public to judge of the injury, in one point of light, done to the coal owners by the erection of ironworks. There are two blast furnaces at Muirkirk, two at Cleland, three at Carmyle or Clyde ironworks, in all seven, of which there are five at present in blast. Each blast furnace, blown by a steam engine, consumes, including engine coals, workmen's coals, and coals for calcining the mine or ironstone, at least 9,000 tons of coal annually: thus five blast furnaces will consume 45,000 tons. And as on an average each collier in Scotland does not turn out above eight tons of coal weekly, it will require 112 colliers to work the above quantity of coal, exclusive of other colliers and miners employed to sink pits, drive mines, and work the ironstone and limestone for the furnace. For these purposes it cannot take less than 150 additional hands; so that five blast furnaces will require 262 colliers and miners, formerly employed in preparing collieries for work, or in working coals for the domestic consumption of the inhabitants of Scotland. This evil is only beginning to be felt; it being certain, from the present high price and great demand for cast iron, as well as from the peculiar advantages attending many situations in Scotland, that twenty additional blast furnaces will be erected in Scotland within the space of ten years from present date, requiring a supply of 2,048 colliers and miners.* ***This supply of hands must either be drawn from the collieries now working coal for the consumption of the inhabitants of Scotland, in which case coal will increase in price above any calculation now possible to be made ; or, erectors of ironworks must be compelled to breed***

***hands for their works**, by being prohibited by Act of Parliament, by a bill to be brought in for the special purpose, from employing any colliers now employed at the collieries".*

According to the 1856 Geological Survey of Great Britain Mining Records there were 403 collieries in Scotland producing 7,325,000 tons. In the West of Scotland consumption of coal was:

Blast Furnaces	2,152,800
Conversion of Pig Iron to Malleable Iron	367,200
Manufactures, steam-boats, and domestic consumption in Glasgow	2,853,427
TOTAL West of Scotland Consumption	5,373,427 tons

According to the 1873 Geological Survey of Great Britain Mining Records, the Western District of Scotland had 239 collieries producing 6,715,733 tons of coal. The Eastern District had 260 collieries producing 10,142,039 tons. The total Scottish coal output being 16,857,722 tons. The Scottish iron industries 126 blast furnaces used 2,730,000 tons of coal to produce 993,000 tons of pig iron in 1873.

MINING TECHNOLOGY

As the industry developed, during the industrial revolution, changes in mining methods occurred, often brought about by the introduction of health and safety legislation which was largely in response to accidents or mining disasters; an increased social conscience within society; and advances in the available technology. Major landmarks include:

- By the mid-nineteenth century girls could no longer be employed, nor could boys under ten years old.
- This legislation encouraged the use of ponies as a means of moving coal and materials around the mine, these remained commonplace place in coal mines, the last being used in a UK colliery in 1985. In fact, ponies were used at Bardykes and Gateside Collieries until the start of the Second World War.
- Use of steam engines around the end of the eighteenth century allowed deeper mining to become an economic possibility.
- By 1850 mine plans had to be kept and preserved.
- In 1853 compressed air coal cutting was first introduced at Govan Colliery near Hampden Park.
- In 1862 at Hartley Colliery, Northumberland, a 21-ton section of steam Beam Pump fell down the single shaft trapping and killing 204 men and boys. This led to the legal requirement for every mine to have at least two shafts separated by at least ten feet of strata.
- By the end of the nineteenth century mechanised coal undercutting had been developed and became largely universal over the next twenty-five years or so.
- Electricity was used for surface lighting in the 1890s. When the lower seams came to be worked, owing to the thickness and the nature of the coal, machinery had to be introduced. Electricity was in its infancy in the Lanarkshire district but was the preferred option. The first installation by Archibald Russell collieries was in 1900 at Millburn Colliery, Larkhall, where Messrs. Anderson, Boyes & Co Engineers, Motherwell, put down a pair of 15 inch dia. horizontal steam engines to drive a 150HP Mavor and Coulson's generator. At the other collieries in Lanarkshire, electric power was supplied from outside sources, namely: Greenfield and Whistleberry were supplied by the Hamilton Burgh

Electricity Works, whilst Dechmont, Loanend, Tannochside, Spindleside, Westwood and Ferniegare were supplied by the Clyde Valley Electric Power Company. By 1921 there were 307 motors working in the Archibald Russell collieries, developing a total of 8,890HP (Ref 7).

John Anderson describes the introduction of mechanisation in Cambuslang collieries in his 1943 book "Coal".

> *"In the year 1889 a new epoch in mining history was created in Cambuslang by the introduction of the compressed air coal cutter into Westburn Colliers, by two contractors from Airdrie. This was a machine with a circular wheel or disc, resting on skids, with iron picks contrary wise on the outside of the wheel. The wheel was carried by two long steel plates attached to the side of the machines and as near the pavement as possible. The wheel was placed in an opening at the end of the run from 10 to 12 places and undercut to a depth of 3 feet. Men were employed to bore holes and blast down the coal ready for the miners in the morning, who stripped it and wooded it preparatory to the next cut. For many years this was the only colliery in Cambuslang that used the coal cutting machine, but by the beginning of the 20th century it became universal throughout the country.*
>
> *With the advent of electricity more extensive developments took place in the mines. It was used for haulages and pumping operations. In fact, in the mines locally it was used, and there was one mine in Carmyle district which was completely worked by this method. Power was supplied from a power station close at hand [Clydesmill – opened 1903]. Other collieries sunk, built generating plants of their own, such as the Bardykes colliery, it being much cheaper to convey the cables underneath the ground than to lay steam pipes. It was also used for driving the engine that worked the pans, which hold from 3 to 5 hundredweights of coal.*
>
> *When the day's work starts with the noise of the pans and the sound of shovels the miner is unable, like his predecessors, to hear the natural workings of the roof or waste behind him. His nerves are so highly tensioned with fear and dread of the empty chaos behind him that the dread of the average miner today is far greater than that of the miner of forty years ago".*

In the 1930's coal face conveyors came into use, and these fed roadway conveyors prior to discharge to tubs at main loading stations. After the Second World War this method of mining and level of mechanisation became commonplace as seen by co-author Joe Cunningham at Bardykes Colliery, Blantyreferme Colliery, and Greenlees Mine till the time of their closure. However, Blantyreferme 3 Colliery was the only local colliery to adopt total coal face mechanisation, when the Coal Plough was introduced here in 1963.

By 1959 cheap oil imports introduced competition and financial problems for the coal mining industry. To improve competitiveness, the industry strived to reduce costs through increased productivity brought about by mechanisation. Full mechanisation was achieved by 1977.

However the future of coal mining in the UK was put in doubt by the discovery of North Sea oil in the early 1960s. Co-author Bob McDonald recalls Lord Alf Robens, Chairman of the National Coal Board, speaking to senior staff of the North Derbyshire area, in 1966, where he commented on the political decision to reduce coal production in favour of the new found oilfields off the north east of Scotland.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE ISSUES

As previously stated, many of the advances in mining technology over the years were driven by health and safety issues. In the mid-nineteenth century 83 million tons of coal per annum were produced in the UK by 282,000 miners of whom 943 were killed, i.e. 1 in 300. This is an average of 3 miners killed per working day. By

1984 coal production was 102 million tons with a manpower of 191,500 miners of whom 30 were killed, i.e. 1 in 6380.

The mines in the Cambuslang area were not too 'gassy' and therefore no large-scale disasters occurred. However, the huge coal dust explosions experienced in 1877 at Blantyre No.2 Colliery, High Blantyre (207 deaths), in 1879 at Blantyre No.1 Colliery (28 deaths), and in 1887 at Udston Colliery, Hamilton (78 deaths) highlight the potential risks which existed in the Lanarkshire Coalfield of explosions created by firedamp and airborne coal dust basically arising from inadequate ventilation.

However, this did not mean that the mineworkers in the area worked in a totally safe environment as fatalities and serious injury due to falls of roof, haulage accidents, shaft accidents etc. were fairly commonplace. A list of some of the serious and fatal accidents at each colliery is included in the book. These are from records in national newspapers.

In addition, serious work-related diseases, such as silicosis and pneumoconiosis, were extremely common resulting from inadequate ventilation and exposure to excessive coal and hard rock dusts, while nystagmus (involuntary eye movement) was relatively widespread brought about by long-term working in inadequate levels of illumination.

For much of the working period of the Cambuslang Coalfield there were few facilities for washing after a shift at the Colliery and the usual practice for miners would be to bath in a tub adjacent to the open coal fire at home. However, as the twentieth century progressed pit head baths became an increasingly common feature throughout the industry and in 1943 installations were finally completed at Gateside Colliery and Blantyreferme No.1, 2 & 3 Collieries. The buildings at Gateside Colliery have been demolished and were used latterly as a used car showroom.

Canteen facilities were also provided at Gateside, Bardykes, and Blantyreferme No.1 & 2 Collieries.

The rapid expansion of the mining industry in Lanarkshire, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, created a situation where Cambuslang became the largest village in the Scotland. This, in turn, led to severe problems from a point of view of available facilities and housing. This quickly led to the building of generally poor-quality housing throughout the village. Typical of these were 'miners rows' built in Silverbanks, Kirkhill, Gateside, Flemington, Spittal, Newton, Westburn, Hallside, and Coopers Buildings and Grahams Square in Halfway. Although better quality housing was built at Loanend, these houses may have been for colliery officials and these still exist after having been used for a period to house cattle prior to refurbishment.

This may have been a factor in that it was once said that the Cambuslang area possessed some of the poorest quality housing available in the UK. Although council house building had started in the area around 1930, large scale demolition and re-development of the worst areas occurred from 1950 onwards into the 1960's to reverse this trend.

Schooling was generally good for the time and sporting facilities were also available in the village. Miners Welfare facilities were also built at Halfway and Newton after 1927. The Halfway Miners Welfare was designed originally with a Reading Room, Snooker Room, Function Room, and Dance Hall together with accommodation for the Caretaker and his family. It opened on 12 March 1927, at a cost of £8,500, closed in 2008 and was demolished about 2013.

Great advantages were brought about by the employment the industry created, but these were not achieved without the negatives which created bad health, poor housing, and general deprivation of the landscape.

EARLY RECORDS OF COAL MINING IN CAMBUSLANG AND RUTHERGLEN

The first official record of coal working in Britain is in the charter granted by a Norman noble, Sieur de Quincy of Fa'side, to the monks of Newbattle Abbey around 1210, giving them the right to work his coal heugh at Whytrigg near Prestonpans. The monks used the coal to fuel their saltpans and indeed part of the road from Newbattle through Wallyford to the coast is still called Salters Road.

The earliest written record for coal that we had in Cambuslang is from the J Anderson book “Coal”, which records that:

> *John Gemmell was charged at Cambuslang Kirk on 21st August 1659, with having "imprecated a curse on Sir Ludovic Stewart and all his workmen several times." A fortnight later the offender confessed guilty, adding with charming simplicity (in mitigation of the offence) that he "did it while he wist not what he was doing, being suddanlie surprysed at the news of his father's death in the coal heughs."*

A possible earlier written record is from the Records of the Parliament of Scotland (Ref 8) with a reference, to coal at Easter Cotis, belonging to the Provost of Bothwell:

10 February 1490

> *The lords auditors decree and deliver that John of Dunlop and Conwell Dunlop do wrong in occupying, labouring and manuring 8 acres and more of the lands of Easter Cotis, called the Hill, and therefore [the lords] ordain them to desist and cease from that in the future, to be used and manured by Master Robert Hamilton, provost of Bothwell, according to the form of the charter and sasine made to him for that, shown and produced before the lords, and [they] appoint 15 June next, with continuation of days, for the said Master Robert to prove the value and quantity of the mails, grassums and duties from the said lands [that were] collected by the said persons and for how many years, and ordain him to have letters to summon his witnesses and the party to hear them sworn. And [the lords] also decree and deliver that the said John and Conwell shall restore and return to the said Master Robert 800 horse-loads of coal, or their value as he can prove before the sheriff they are worth, spulzied and taken by them, as was proven by the records of the sheriff court of Lanark, shown and produced before the lords, and ordain that letters be written to the sheriff to take the said proof before him, set a day for it and warn the parties of it, and insofar as it is proven make the said Master Robert be paid.*

Easter Cotis is likely to be East Coats in Cambuslang, but Bothwell is a separate parish. However, in 1490 the parish of Bothwell was much larger and included Cambuslang. Coat, Cotis is a small house or cottage, so it is possible that Easter Cotis could be anywhere associated with the Provost of Bothwell. On the other hand, East Coats (with different spellings) is shown with Cambuslang on some of the oldest maps on the National Library of Scotland website, and is indeed on a hill as mentioned.

Records of the Parliament of Scotland 22 March 1661 (Patent delivered; acts approved)

> *Sir Ludovic Stewart of Minto petitioned Parliament that the colliers at Noblesferme be compelled to work and be prevented from diverting themselves from his service.*

Noble's Farm as a distinct property does not now exist. Farme castle was a royal domain called "Ferme" in the possession of the Crown. King Robert the Bruce granted it to Robert Stewart. In David the Second's reign the Douglases had it, and afterwards it was divided into several estates, one being Crawford Farm, another Hamilton Farm, and a third Noble's Farm (Ref 9).

Evidence of coal mining in this area going back to at least 1599 is provided in James Wilson's 1929 History of Cambuslang (Ref 62). This refers to a meadow in Cambuslang, owned in 1467 by a family called Nobel. When the land was sold to Walter Crawfurd of Ferme in 1537 it was called "Nobilli's-ferme," and when Walter Stewart of Minto married Christina Crawfurd of Ferme in 1599, his father-in-law transferred to him the "lands of Cottis called Noble-ferme, with coal and coal-heughs" (Ref 63).

Later the area was broken up and one part was added to the Rosebank estate. When this estate was sold to the Provisional Committee of the Caledonian Railway, in 1845, it included the lands of Coats or Noble Farm, viz. the lands of Chapelcroft and Bushyhill being part of the lands of Mid Coats. It also included that part of Mid Coats, being part of the farm thereof called Shielhill (eleven acres), one acre rendered unarable by coal-pits and coal hills, bounded on the north by part of the land of Coats, the property of James Dunlop, upon the east by Wood-side Braes, upon the south by the lands of East Coats belonging to the Duke of Hamilton and upon the west by a line of pits, all in the parish of Cambuslang (Ref 62).

A "Description of the Sheriffdom of Lanark and Renfrew", compiled in 1710 (printed in 1833) by Mr. William Hamilton of Wishaw, mentions coal in Rutherglen and Cambuslang:

> *There was anciently a profitable coal within the bounds of the town of Rutherglen, belonging to Sir James Hamilton; but because of the difficulties of that family, it hath not been wrought thir many years.*
>
> *Sir James Hamilton of Jeliestoune heth also the lands of Greenlees,… where there is coal considerable. There is also in this parish …. the lands of Coatts, Chapel and Moriston …. Where there is good coal, now belonging to the family of Hamilton.*

Coal from even earlier times was also found in some of the cairns in the area around Rutherglen, Cambuslang and the Cathkin hills. This was in the form of armlets worn as jewellery and made from cannel coal but, so far, there is no evidence of coal being used as fuel at that time (more on this can be found in History of Rutherglen and East Kilbride by David Ure, 1793).

In 1757, the second lighthouse to be built in Scotland was lit by coal from Cambuslang. This lighthouse was located on the privately owned Little Cumbrae, in the Firth of Clyde, on the centrally situated Lighthouse Hill.

Lighthouse Hill was home to an original lighthouse which dated to 1757 and comprised an open coal fire in a grate at the top of a 28 foot stone tower. Coal for the fire came from pits near Cambuslang, brought by horse and cart to Irvine (some 33 miles), and then by boat to the island. The lighthouse was authorised by a 1756 Act of Parliament (Ref 11).

For further information readers should see the entries for Cambuslang in the New Statistical Account of Scotland 1791 and 1845.

EXTRACT FROM "COAL" BY JOHN ANDERSON

John Anderson wrote the book "Coal - A history of the Coal-Mining with special reference to Cambuslang" in 1943. The book is based on his experience of following his father by becoming a miner at Gateside Colliery in 1884. He also worked at Tollcross, Benhan and Dykehead collieries, until he had an accident in 1913 at Gilbertfield Pit. The book includes experiences he heard from his predecessors, who had been miners since the year 1800.

The following are a few quotes from his book to show the extent of mining in the area.

"There were a very large number of mines all across the area, following the coal seams out from Glasgow to Blantyre. Along the main road alone, from Rutherglen to Cambuslang, in the late 18th and early 19th century there were mines at Farm Cross, Richmond Park roundabout, Bogleshole Road, Dukes Road, Silverbanks, and the Village Pit was at the bottom of Greenlees Road. It was the first pit to have a steam engine for drawing the coals up the shaft. This was an atmospheric Newcombe engine that was a duplicate of the one at the Farme Colliery near Dalmarnock Bridge, and which was given to the Kelvingrove museum. The pit flooded and, as could not be pumped clear, it was filled in about 1800 and a public house built on the site.

The public park and the Borgie burn are full of old pits. One of the last to be worked in the park was in 1921 at the south west end of the park, at Greenlees Road. This was during a four-month miners strike when the locked out miners began manually tunnelling into the bank at the side of the Kirkburn. During an earlier strike, in 1820, miners had similarly re-opened an old abandoned mine from the 1700s, known as Toad's Hole, on the south of the burn, a little nearer the duck pond. On both occasions the coal, being in scarce supply during the strike fetched a good price and helped the miners families to survive.

Before this, coal was mined by hand with a pick and shovel. The earliest mines, known as "Ingonees", were dug into the sides of the Culloch Burn, the Kirk Burn and the East-Greenlees Burn to follow coal seams exposed by the erosion of the Burn. Other mines, known as "stair pits", were vertical shafts, usually from 10 to 20 fathoms (60 to 120 feet) deep. Coal was cut following the seams out from the foot of the mine, in roads about 6 feet wide, leaving stoops (pillars) of coal about 12 feet square to support the roof. Women carried the coal, in one hundredweight baskets strapped to their shoulders, up the stairs to the surface.

Wooden Picks, wooden shovels with iron tips, were found in the old workings of Toll Pit at Kirkhill Colliery by James Hogg, manager, Thomas Brown oversman, and Joe Griffith a pit boy.

John Anderson records that the public park is full of old pits where exciting incidents sometimes took place. A little girl was playing on the North side of the Preaching Braes when she fell into an old pit there. Her absence from home caused alarm, a search party set out, discovered where she was and a man named Weir volunteered to go down by rope. He managed to rescue the little girl more frightened than hurt.

The depth of the mines was limited by water levels causing flooding. Some mines could be drained using drainage tunnels to lower levels, but it was not until steam engines allowed water to be pumped out that mines could reach lower depths

The pits of Stonelaw, Crosshill, Wellshot (Fairies) were the three then in operation, and the roads in and around Glasgow were bad and hilly. Sometimes, in wet weather, the carts sunk to the naves, and trespassed on the ploughed land. It was a common thing to see coal carried on horse-back, camel-wise, in panniers holding a very small quantity. In 1783 the price of coal at Stonelaw was 1/6 per cart, but in 1785 the price at Wellshot rose to 5/6 per cart. Coal was scarce, and it was a large pit that could put out sixty carts per day, with the result that vessels sometimes had to wait eight days for a cargo. The boats were fishing gabberts, long, flat-bottomed' vessels .

There were also masted ships, carrying from 20 to 40 tons burden, with the masts so constructed that they could be lowered when passing under the old bridge at Glasgow. This transport was regular until the Rutherglen Bridge was built in 1775 when the coal boats ceased to ply to Rutherglen Harbour.

In 1821 a wooden bridge was built at a ford at Dalmarnock, greatly beneficial for the transport of coal from Rutherglen (Eastfield), Wellshot, Silverbanks and Cambuslang pits. This bridge lasted until 1848 when it was replaced by a somewhat picturesque structure of the same material, later removed to make way for Dalmarnock Bridge.

A subsidence look place in the 1870s in Main Street Cambuslang in which a horse and cart were swallowed up. This subsidence was caused by an old pit 17 fathoms (31 metres) deep which had been partially filled for carrying water from the old pits worked in a bygone day.

Newton pit was sunk in the early 1850s, Westburn in the 1870s, Flemington, Gateside, Gilbertfield and the Toll pit were all sunk a short time after each other and where the old pits produced only a hundred carts a day, most of these newer pits produced an average of 1,000 tons per day".

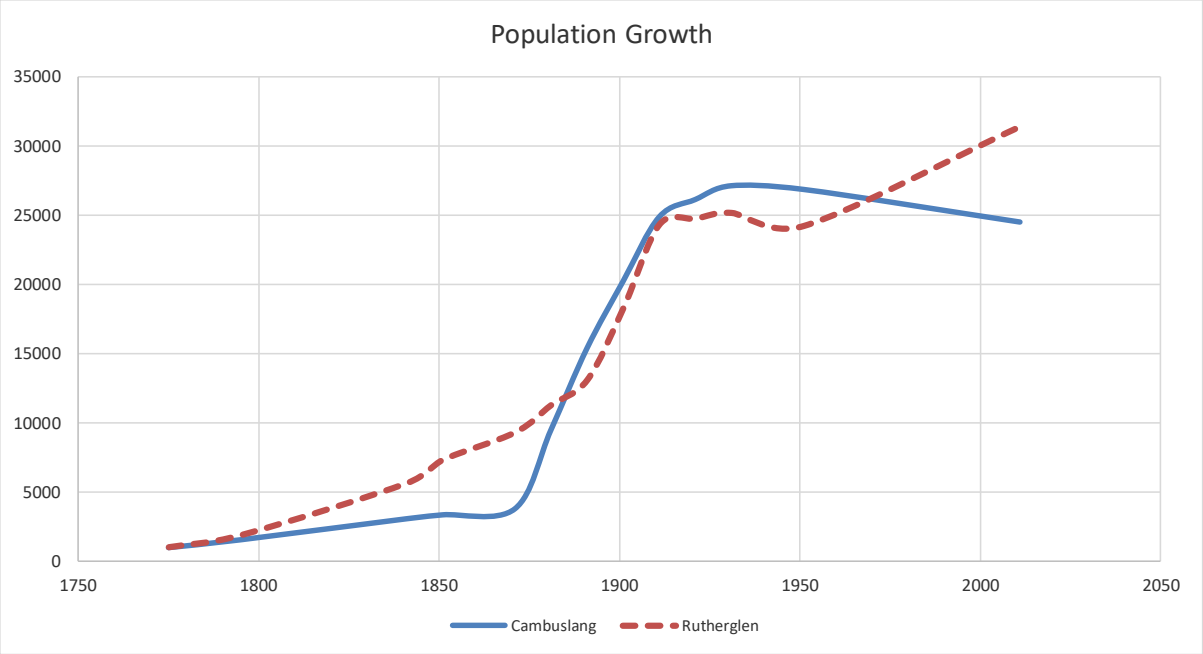
More about these old mines and the miners' conditions can be found in James Anderson's book (Ref 12).

The number of men, women and children employed at the mines in Rutherglen and Cambuslang were:

		1790		1896		1901		1945	
Name of Mine	**Situation**	**Workers**		**Workers**		**Workers**		**Workers**	
		U/G	**Sur.**	**U/G**	**Sur.**	**U/G**	**Sur.**	**U/G**	**Sur.**
Bankhead	**Rutherglen**								
Bardykes	**Cambuslang**			**351**	**108**	**378**	**121**	**673**	**171**
Bogleshole	**Tollcross**			**93**	**22**	**69**	**19**		
Cambuslang									
Coats Park	**Cambuslang**							**80**	**33**
Dalmarnock	**Glasgow**								
Dechmont	**Cambuslang**			**265**	**74**	**339**	**95**		
Eastfield	**Cambuslang**								
Farme	**Rutherglen**			**189**	**41**	**180**	**42**		
Gateside	**Cambuslang**					**226**	**72**		
Gilbertfield	**Cambuslang**			**282**	**56**	**278**	**48**		
Govan	**Rutherglen**			**501**	**154**	**509**	**142**		
Hallside	**Cambuslang**			**257**	**68**	**223**	**54**		
Hamilton Farm	**Cambuslang**								
Kirkhill	**Cambuslang**			**69**	**21**	**129**	**26**		
Newton	**Cambuslang**			**437**	**81**	**504**	**90**		
Rosebank									
Rutherglen Muir	**Glasgow**								
Silverbank									
Spittal									
Stonelaw	**Rutherglen**			**185**	**51**	**188**	**52**		
Wellshot	**Cambuslang**	**42**	**20**	**107**	**20**	**202**	**38**		
Westburn	**Cambuslang**			**383**	**51**	**283**	**89**		
TOTALS				**3866**		**4396**			

This shows that over four thousand people were employed in the Rutherglen and Cambuslang collieries at the turn of the 20th century (10% of the population). However, we have not found records showing the number of people employed at several early collieries and ones that closed in the later 1800s. The large Cambuslang, Eastfield and Hamilton Farme, collieries, in particular, would have had many employees.

For comparison, the chart below shows the population of Rutherglen and Cambuslang at various periods and demonstrates the tremendous growth that occurred with the second industrial revolution.



With steam engines for winding, and the Caledonian railway (1849) to transport the coal, plus coal-cutting machines invented in the 1880s, larger and deeper mines were developed.

By the 1950s the Lanarkshire coalfield was exhausted. Nearly all the coal then being produced was from thin seams and much of the remaining reserves in thick seams could not be mined because of the danger from water collected in old colliery workings.

The individual collieries in the Rutherglen and Cambuslang area are described below.

INDIVIDUAL COLLIERIES

COLLIERIES IN THE RUTHERGLEN AREA

Coal mining in Rutherglen can be traced back to at least 1595 when the presbytery had to transmit letters to the bailie of the burgh, enjoining him to stop various activities, including the colliers selecting Sundays for the settlement of their accounts (Ref 64). It is likely, that as in Glasgow and Cambuslang, coal mining in Rutherglen would have begun at an earlier date.

William Forrest Map of 1816 Showing Dixon's Govan Coal Pits and Engines, and Coal Pits at Farme, Stonelaw and Eastfield. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

With the rapid increase in demand for coal to fuel the industrial revolution, larger and deeper collieries were developed, and the Lanarkshire coalfield was divided into leasehold areas by the land owners. The first Ordnance Survey maps, in the 1850s, show Lanarkshire in detail for the first time and record the location of the surface workings at these collieries.

Below ground, it was not until 1850 that The Inspection of Coal Mines Act required "a coal mine owner to maintain maps and plans showing details of all workings of the mine and the inspector can demand that maps and plans be made". This was brought about because a report by the Commissioner of the Mines and Collieries Act 1842 highlighted examples of problems for want of accurate plans. Although coal owners used mining engineers and consulted old colliers about previous workings the information could be inaccurate. There is an example in the report that at Kinneil colliery £10,000 (about £1.2 million in 2019) was lost sinking two new pits only to find old workings.

In 1872 the Coal Mines Regulation Act and Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act made it a statutory requirement for plans of abandoned mines to be deposited with the Secretary of State unless there had been less than 12 men employed below ground.

The Act only required plans showing the boundaries of the mine workings at the time of abandonment. They did not have to show the surface position relative to the workings, or the depth or cross sections of workings.

These deposited plans are now held by the Coal Authority, in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. However, the many workings abandoned before this time are unrecorded and, probably, lost forever.

The Rutherglen collieries for which some records exist are:

Aikenhead	1800s - 1918
Govan	1771 - 1923
Dalmarnock	1800s
Bankhead	abandoned 1861
Farme	1805 - 1928
Spittal	Abandoned c1860s
Low Crosshill	1700s
Stonelaw	1774 – 1903
Eastfield	c1758 – 1883

Apart from the mine abandonment plans, other local sources on mining are "Rutherglen Lore" by W. Ross Shearer, printed in 1922 and the Statistical Account of Scotland 1791. Rutherglen Lore provides the following information.

> *"At an inquiry held in 1841, some exceedingly curious and highly interesting facts were ascertained on the subject of the trade and shipping to and from Rutherglen about this time (1770).*
>
> *Witnesses remembered the coal trade of Rutherglen, and boats coming to Rutherglen Quay. Some of the boats would carry 30 carts of coals of 12 cwts. Boats then went up as high as Clyde Iron Works, to a coal pit there called Smylie's Work, close upon the river on the north side. The men on board were Highlanders and could speak little English.*
>
> *The coal pits of Stonelaw (Gray's), Crosshill (Scott's), and Wellshot (Fairie's) were the three then in operation, and the roads from Rutherglen to Glasgow were very bad and hilly. Sometimes in wet weather the carts sank to the nave and trespassed on the ploughed land; it was a common thing to see coals carried camel-wise on horseback. In 1783 the price of coals at Stonelaw was 1s. 6d. per cart; but in 1785 the price at Wellshot rose to 5s. 6d. Owing to the Great Strike, £3 per ton was the price in the early part of 1921.*
>
> *The route from and to the pits was via the Main Street and Glasgow Road, the Quay road only being causewayed; part of the Quay still stands, and the old road still exists. It was a fine quay in those days. At a time when there was a fresh on the river, and boats could not be laden, as many as twenty could be seen lying off the Quay, waiting for coals.*
>
> *On ordinary occasions, only two or three boats would be waiting. In those days coals were scarce, and it was a; large pit which could put out sixty arts a day; so that a vessel was obliged to lie sometimes eight days for a cargo. Highland fishing boats with fresh herrings came to the Quay during the summer months; they were smaller than the coal boats. The bellman generally was sent through Rutherglen, announcing their arrival, and the populace flocked to the Quay to purchase them. The boats which came to Rutherglen were lighters, fishing gabbarts, or long flat-bottomed boats. There*

were also masted vessels, carrying from twenty to forty tons burden; the masts were so constructed as to admit lowering them when passing through the old Bridge of Glasgow.

The boats usually went down the river with the ebb tide, propelled by poles to keep them off the banks. After Rutherglen Bridge was built (1775), the coal boats ceased to ply, but the shipment of herring, timber, sand, slates, iron, etc., continued for some considerable time longer.

Of coal and coal-getting, we had intended making an extended reference, but restricted space now curtails that to briefest limits. Unlike the weaver and the tailor, the poor collier in those far-off times was not only a wage- slave, but, by a common law of Scotland, was bound soul and body to the master he served, and his family with him; and when a colliery changed hands, the workers and their families were included in the purchase price, and made over to the new owner in much the same fashion as slaves were dealt with prior to the Emancipation Act. In an earlier part of this book, we quote the price of coal at Stonelaw in 1873 at 1s. 6d. per cart weight about 8 cwts. The selling price in Glasgow about the same time was 2s. 2d. The reader may figure out the miner's share of this munificent sum at his leisure—the task is beyond our reckoning.

Collieries on the west and north of Rutherglen include New Stonelaw, New and Old Farme, Crookston [Aikenhead], Bankhead, Spittal, and the six pits of Dixon; but the south of Rutherglen in early times was the Eldorado of the black diamond hunter, and within half a mile of old Stonelaw colliery (the shaft of which is enclosed within the four- square blocks of buildings facing Stonelaw School), there are upwards of twenty other shafts we could locate, but, in case it might lead to an exodus from the district, or a demand by residenters for a reduction of rent in consequence of the shafts proximity to their bedrooms, we shall refrain from describing these too minutely. Nearest to old Stonelaw there were two shafts in what is now Rodger Drive, and one of these was 54 fathoms to the splint coal. The round circle marking the site of these on the grass may still be seen in the springtime. In Overtoun Park, opposite Bankhead Estate, another shaft was discovered many years ago, after it had fallen in. Two pits stood on the north of Albany Drive and one on the south; this is probably what was called Scott's or Crosshill. Balmoral Crescent covers the site of one of the Stonelaw pits; within the woods stood another. In the Woodburn policies two shafts were sunk, and one at Eastpark. A pit, 54 fathoms to the virgin coal, was sunk midway up Buchanan Drive; while the one at the top of the same drive was 64 fathoms to the splint. Between the Cripple Children's School [later Greystone School] and the Whorlpit, a pit existed; while the battlemented portion of Stonelaw Tower is actually the engine-room of two pits that formerly stood there. There was also a pit behind the new motor garage at Burnside, and other two in the fields east of Springfield Park. The Honey Pit, opposite Fishescoats Farm on the East Kilbride Road, was so named by its owner because of its prolific output. Until within recent years (i.e. 1922), four other pits, two at Wellshot and two at Eastfield, were in constant operation".

The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791 (Ref 13) provides further, early, information:

"The coal-works carried on at Stonelaw, by Major John Spens, are of long standing. There is no account when coals were at first wrought in this place. But from the number of old wastes, the period must be very remote. At present, about 126 persons are employed in the works. The water is raised by a steam-engine, which, about the year 1776, was erected by Gabriel Grey, Esq: of Scotstown. The coals turned out are of different qualities, but all of them are very good. They are sold on the hill at 10d the hutch, weighing 400 lb. but it commonly exceeds that weight; carriage to Glasgow is 4d. so that a cart load of three hutches, weighing about 13 cwt. is laid down in the street for 3s.6d. But two wheeled waggons, containing 6 hutches, are commonly used. Some of them that lately were occasionally weighed, contained no less than 33 cwt. of soft coal; which, however, is specifically heavier than hard

coal. The empty waggon generally weighs about 8½ cwt. The whole, amounting to 41 cwt. is drawn by a single horse, which goes to Glasgow three times a day. Glasgow is distant from Stonelaw 3½ miles. Such heavy draughts, drawn by one horse, even for a greater length of road, is not unfrequent in this country. The waggon is generally 2 feet in depth; 3½ [feet] in breadth; and 5½ in length; the wheels are 4½ in height; the horses employed are of the Lanarkshire breed. Their superior excellency, after the above-mentioned exertion of their strength, to which they are daily accustomed, need not be called in question. A considerable quantity of iron stone is turned out along with the coal at Stonelaw. It sells at 5s 6d the ton on the hill; and is delivered at Clyde Ironworks for 6s 6d. There are two excellent freestone quarries in the parish, which have been wrought for some hundred years past. The stones find ready sale in Glasgow and its neighbourhood".

The Statistical Account of Scotland 1845 (Ref 36) also provides further, information:

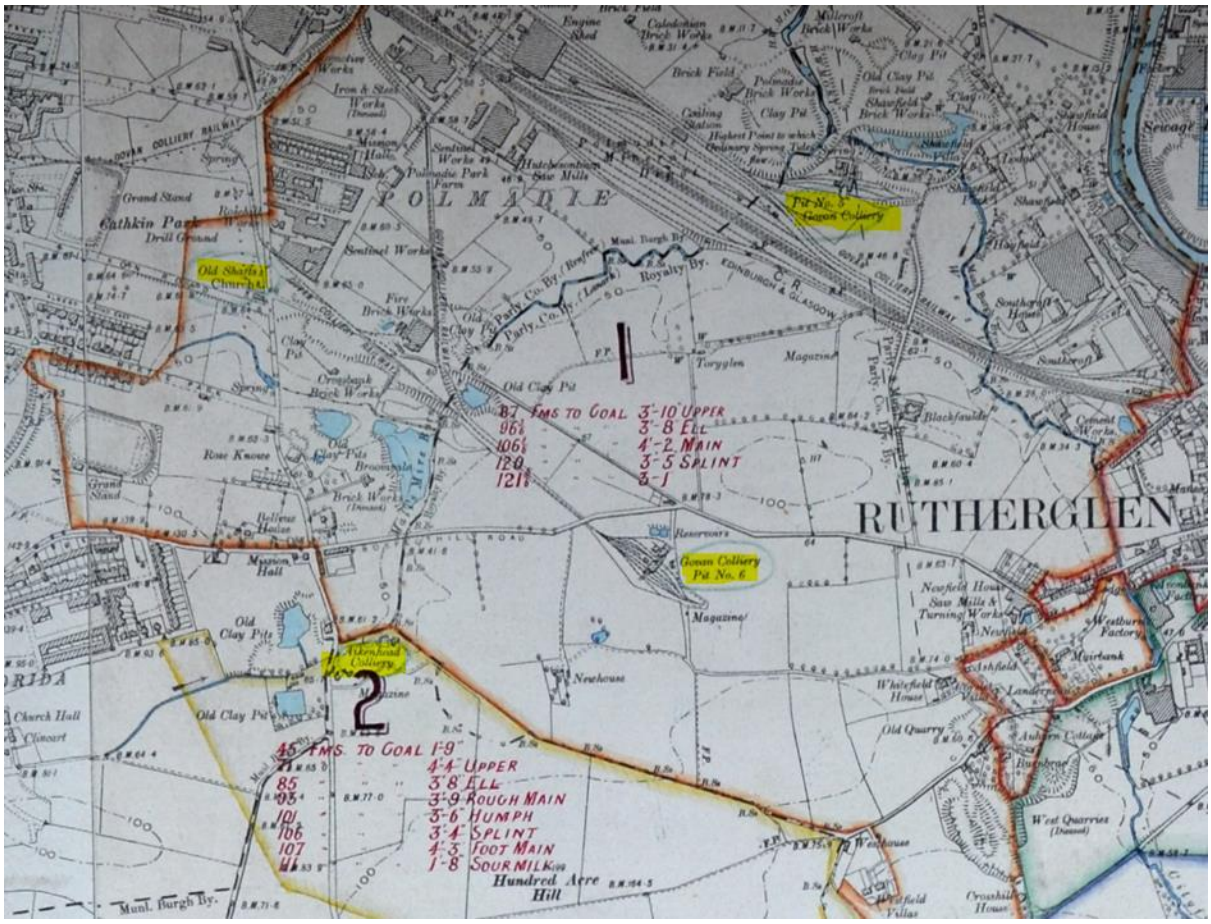
There are five coal-mines in the parish, viz. one worked by Mr Farie at Farme; two by Mr Gray at Eastfield; one by Mr Cunningham at Stonelaw; and one by Mr Colin Dunlop at Hamilton Farm. Some of these mines produce a small quantity of ironstone. It appears from the Government abstract for 1831, page 999, that 305 persons were then employed in the coal mines, and 27 in the quarries of Rutherglen. Prior to 1775, the colliers of Rutherglen, and other places in Scotland, were by the common law in a state of slavery. They, and their wives and children, if they had assisted at coal works, became the property of the coal-masters, and were transferred with the coal-work, in the same manner as the slaves on a West India estate.

In the Rev. Dr Maclae's report of the parish of Rothesay for the Statistical Account in 1791, it is said that a cart of coals containing 12 cwt. cost 3s. 6d. in Glasgow, and an equal sum to take them to Rothesay in the Island of Bute. For seven years prior to 1836, coals in quantities were delivered in Glasgow at the steam-boat quay from Rutherglen at from 6s. 9d. to 7s. 9d. per ton. The supply for families was 1s. more per ton.

AIKENHEAD COLLIERY c1870s - 1918

Photograph of Aikenhead Colliery, copyright South Lanarkshire Council.

Aikenhead Colliery No1 & 2 pits, recorded in 1896 as being operated by George Crookston & Son and employing 43 men underground and 25 men on the surface, was probably abandoned about 1918. It may well have been annexed into Govan No.5 and No.6 given their relative closeness. The Colliery was located on Aikenhead Road some 300 yds (274 metres) south of the Hangingshaw Junction opposite the original Hampden Park and was connected to the Kirkhill Railway by its own mineral railway. No.2 Colliery is given as 78½ Fathoms (144 Metres) to the Upper coal and 112½ Fathoms (206 metres) to the Splint coal. The sinking was located about 300yds (274 metres) north of the very large fault up-throwing to the south and removing all Upper Coal Measures from the south. From co-author Joe Cunningham's experience in the Cambuslang area, this area of coal is likely to have been heavily faulted.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area worked by Aikenhead (area 2) and Govan (area 1) collieries (Ref 14).

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 20 October 1875 - Yesterday morning the Rutherglen police capture two men, miners, named Patrick Collins, residing at Spring Lane, SS, Glasgow, and Patrick Lemon, Rose Street, Glasgow, at No 1 Pit, Aikenhead Colliery, on a charge of having stolen a miner's graith. The accused had been working in No 5 Dixon's Pit and had left there taking with them various articles belonging to the miners. They were conveyed to Rutherglen lock-up.

GOVAN COLLIERY c1770 - 1923

Govan colliery was operated as a large concern by John and William Dixon from about 1770, with the Dixons becoming the sole owner in 1819. However, the Gorbals coal field had been worked from about the 1500s.

Between 1714 and 1731 the Gorbals coal field belonged to the Town, the Trade's House and Hutcheson's Hospital and Robert Dreghorn, tacksman of the colliery, was putting out almost 20,000 loads of coal annually. By the end of the century the Govan Colliery was leased by two directors of Alexander Houston & Co, Houston Rae and Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Houston (Ref 71).

Prior to Govan colliery opening there had been complaints about the exorbitant price of coal in Glasgow. A minute book entry dated 12 June 1760, in the Trades House of Glasgow records this.

> "John Stark, late deacon of the taylors gave in a memoriall touching the exorbitant price of coalls of which memoriall the tenor follows:
>
> The city of Glasgow used to be served with coalls in great plenty before the year 1743 att and from 13 pence to 15 pence per cart. Ever since that time coalls have gradually arisen in their price and this year the more numerous and poorer of the inhabitants have paid from twenty five pence to thirty pence per cart. This exorbitant price it's believed is not occasioned from the real scarcity of coals but from the certain arts and methods used by the proprietors of the coalls and the persons employed to drive or carry them into the city, its affirmed to be certain that there is plenty of coall never wrought in the lands belonging to Mr. Rae of Little Govan and in the lands of Gorballs and Muir thereof, and had to coall works in these lands been duely wrought and carried on coalls never would have risen higher than eighteen pence per cart.
>
> The House is humbly of opinion, not it is just and reasonable the state and condition of the coall in the Muir of Gorballs should be enquired into and examined and if it shall be found that there is a field of coall in the Gorballs grounds still unwrought there are of opinion that such coall should be sett to some person of skill and integrity but upon this condition that he shall sell the coall wrought out of the said grounds for four pence each hutch ordinary measure".

Two receipts, each for £25, dated 13 March and 17 July 1769, held in the archives of the Trades House of Glasgow show that the above suggestion was acted upon:

> "Received from the Trades House by the hands of James Brodie present collector Twenty-five pounds sterling in part of their subscription for making Tryal for coal in the Gorbal Lands. William Simpson Treasurer".

The entry for Glasgow in the Statistical Account of Scotland, 1793, Volume 5, page 533 records:

The fossil to which this city owes its greatest advantage is coal, which is found in great abundance in the ground toward the east in which there are five different strata, or seams, from 3 to 4 feet thick, all of which are wrought at present to a very considerable extent. These seams have been wrought for many years, so that all near the city, at a moderate depth, has been dugout. Some of the pits are at present above 60 fathoms (110 metres) deep, and most of them are obliged to be wrought by the assistance of steam engines. The price of coals varies at the different pits, being from 2 s. 9 d. to 3 s. 3 d. (14 to 16 pence) per cart, of 12 cwt. ; when delivered in any part of the city, from 3 s. 6 d. to 4 s (18 to 20 pence). In some of these pits, there is a vein of iron stone of very good quality, of a whitish colour, which is used in the smelting furnaces in the neighbourhood, There is also in the till found in these pits, many impressions of fern and other plants, and

shells of different kinds ; and in the neighbourhood there are many fossile marine bodies, particularly different species of shells and entrochi.

The entry for Govan in the Statistical Account of Scotland of 1793, volume 14, page 284 records:

The coal work is in the land disjoined from Govan by the Presbytery. Coal has been wrought for many years, about a mile and a half north from the ferry, and a new pit has lately been opened at nearly the same distance from it in the opposite direction. But notwithstanding this, a cart containing 12 cwt coals in the village of Govan, at least a shilling (5 pence) more than in Glasgow.

The extensive Govan Colliery had a long life, comprising some 6 pit shafts and at one time was one of the most advanced in Scotland. The underground workings stretched from Crown Street to Cathcart and into the west of Rutherglen.

The colliery was operated and managed by William Dixon senior (1753-1822) of Govanhill. He was the son of John Dixon, a Sunderland miner, who founded coal pits at Knightswood and Gartnavel. The Dixons became lessees of the Govan coalfields about 1770, becoming a part owner in 1813 and the sole owner in 1819. William quickly gained wealth and status and became one of the pioneers of the trade. Bit by bit, he acquired the mineral workings of a large tract of Lanarkshire. Coal, iron, and steel were not so important factors in industry then but, with a shrewd prescience of the future, certain Glasgow capitalists started a company for the purpose of manufacturing iron and steel and Mr. Dixon was a partner in the company.

William Dixon died in 1822, by which time he employed about a fifth of the miners in Lanarkshire [Ref 72]. He was succeeded by his two sons, John and William. John had no interest in the iron business and sold his share in the Calder works to his youngest brother William who continued to expand the business started by his father. William Dixon Jnr (1788 – 1859) carried on the extensive coal and iron works inherited from his father, and greatly extended them, operating industries at Wilsontown, Gorbals (Dixons Blazes), and Calder/Coatbridge. He took an active interest in public affairs, and was an ardent promoter of every public improvement, largely aiding the introduction of the railway system around Glasgow. Deeply interested in politics, in 1847 he contested the city of Glasgow in the Liberal interest (Ref 15).

The firm of William Dixon became bankrupt in 1849, and from that date until 1856, when the claims of the bank were satisfied the estate was managed by trustees and managed by the clerk of the firm, John Campbell, until 1866 [Ref 73].

The Caledonian Mercury newspaper of 22 July 1813 carries the following advertisement.

> *Valuable Coal Mines for Sale, at an upset price of £34,000 in the estate of Govan. This tack of coal, entered into a good many years ago, has 61 years of lease to run on the valuable Farm of Govanhill, extending to about 127 acres of rich arable land. A purchaser might not find it necessary to keep the farm for the purposes of the colliery and might dispose of the right to great advantage [subsequently, in 1822,]. There is also an excellent dwelling-house on the lands, with suitable offices and gardens. At Glasgow, Paisley and Dunglass Castle, there are convenient coal quays, which will be sold along with the colliery, also the benefit of a railway to the Ardrossan Canal, which gives the Govan Colliery a great superiority, for supplying the Paisley market with coals. The purchaser of the colliery will get the right to the whole colliers houses, steam engine, and other machinery, as well as the gabberts [barges] and boats, which belong to the concern; also the whole stock of horses, cattle and labouring utensils. Mr William Dixon, manager at Govan Colliery, will shew plans of the seams of the minerals, and workings of the colliery.*

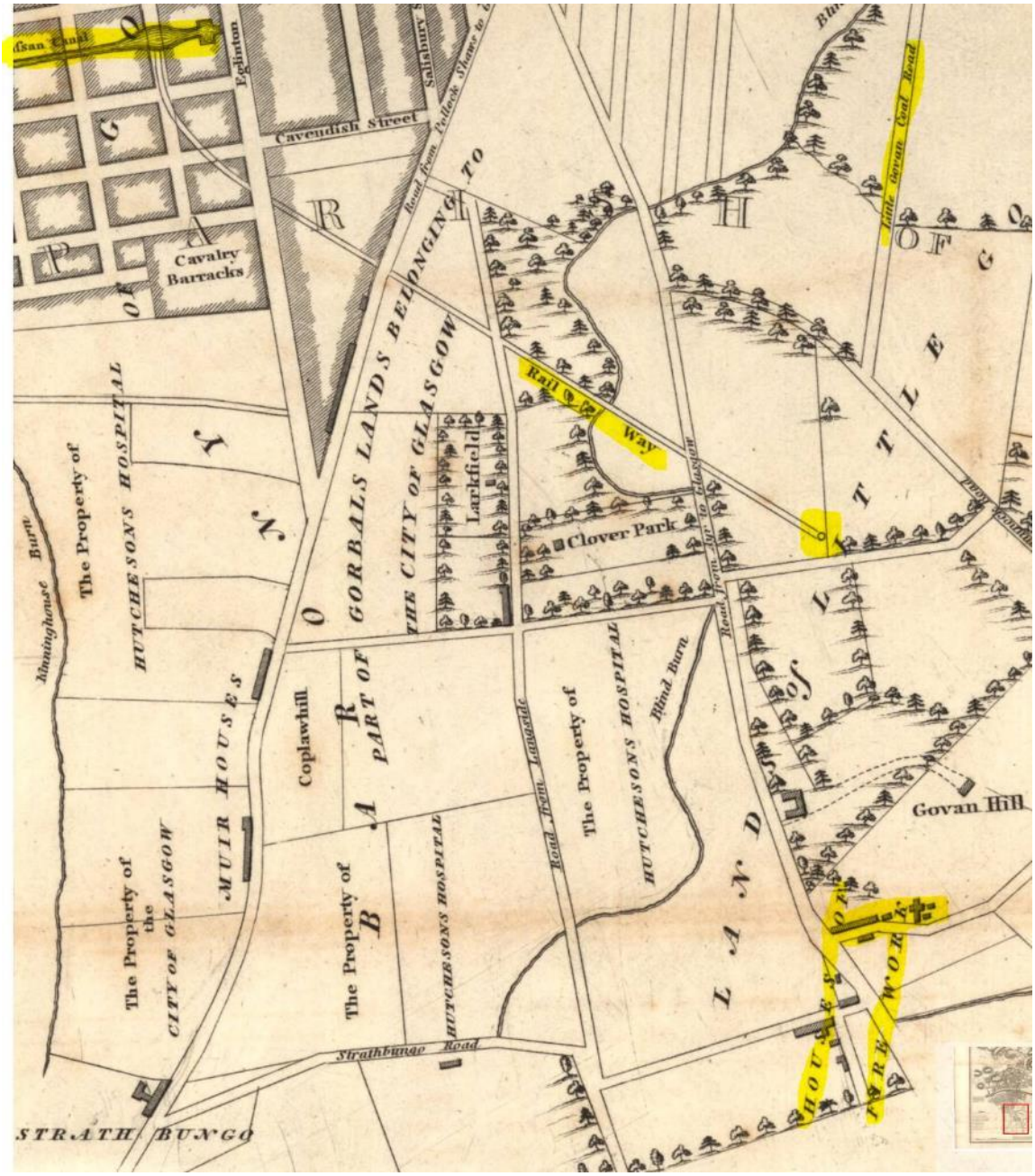
As regards the farm, in 1822 16 grass parks were advertised for let; and in August 1875, Polmadie Farm was instructed by Govan Colliery Co sell 6 acres of Walkers early potatoes in lots to private families and dealers.

Govan colliery was at the forefront of technology, making early use of rail tracks, steam pumping and winding engines and coal cutting equipment. Some examples of this are described below.

GOVAN RAILWAYS

William Dixon established a horse drawn wagon way for conveying the coals on from his Little Govan pits, across the empty lands of Gorbals, to Springfield Quay on the river Clyde. This wagon way is shown on a 1778 McArthur town plan of Glasgow (Ref 16).

In 1811, after the opening of the Paisley and Johnston Canal in 1810, Glasgow's first ever railway was built by Dixon, with a short length of track from Govan colliery carrying coal wagons to Port Eglinton, at the terminus of the canal. This railway had wooden rails and sleepers, and horse drawn wagons with flanged wheels.



1822 Map, by John Wood, shows the “Little Govan Coal Road” and the “Rail Way” to the Paisley and Johnston Canal (reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland). The map also shows the possible location of a pit at the south east end of the railway (now the Junction of Aitkenhead Road and Cathcart road) and “Houses of Fire Work”, this was later known as Fireworks village, also as Govan Colliery Houses, a company village belonging to the Dixon family (the present location is at Bankhall Street).

The railway benefited from the effects of gravity as the track carrying the loaded wagons ran downhill on a gentle gradient from the colliery to the canal terminus. Extensive horsepower was mainly needed to transport the empty wagons back uphill to the coal pit.

The Caledonian Mercury of 8 April 1816 records an accident on this railway.

Friday forenoon, the following melancholy accident happened at Govan colliery, near Glasgow: - About ten o'clock, as a waggoner was driving eight waggons on the railway from one hill to another, three boys were diverting themselves on the road side. He had just passed them, when, hearing a cry, he looked about, and saw the hindmost wheel of a waggon, loaded with coals, passing over the neck of one of the boys. The body was taken to the, Gorbals Police Office, and proved to be David Murdoch, son of Mr Murdoch boot-closer, Rutherglen Loan. He was about eight years of age.

Twenty years later, Dixon promoted the Pollok & Govan Railway to replace the wagon way, and extend it to Rutherglen in one direction and to Windmillcroft on the south bank of the river Clyde in the other. The railway opened in 1840 and the line now forms part of the West Coast Main Line (Ref 17).

The Caledonian Mercury newspaper of 27 August 1840, describes the opening of the railway.

The Pollock and Govan Railway was opened from Rutherglen to the Broomielaw harbour on Saturday the 22nd, with a train of carriages containing the son of the spirited proprietor, William Dixon Esq of Govanhill, and friends, the engineer and contractors upon the line, and also trains of coal wagons. Considerable exertions were required to complete this line within the time limited by the act - 2100 lineal yards of this railway having been laid down within 4 days. On this line is to be seen every species of railroad engineering – tunnelling, right angled and skew bridges, of stone, brick, iron and wood, all of which do credit to the engineer Mr Andrew Thompson, Buchanan Street, Glasgow. The whole opening went off with great eclat, under the direction of Mr Allen, manager of Govan Colliery. The Colliery Band who had volunteered their services, contributed very much to enliven the proceedings of the day. The contemplated extension of this line of railway, with a terminus at Broomielaw harbour to the Monkland, Wishaw, Coltness and Hamilton coal and ironstone fields, will render it one of the most available means of opening up the richest district in Scotland.

GOVAN STEAM ENGINES

The first steam engine in Scotland was erected at Elphinstone Colliery, in Stirlingshire, about the year 1750; and the second more than ten years later, at Govan Colliery, near Glasgow, where it was known by the startling name of "The Firework" (Ref 18). The map of 1822 above shows the location of the “Houses of Fire Work”.

The entry for Govan in the Statistical Account of Scotland of 1845, volume 6, page 671 records:

> The Govan colliery has two excellent machines, the one for drawing up the water, the other a steam engine for bringing up coals 100 fathoms, which saves a number of horse. There are 3 seams of coal, the undermost 14 feet thick. Upwards of 200 men are employed about it.

By 1825 over three hundred steam-engines were at work in or near Glasgow, some no doubt of the Newcomen type, but the only one mentioned as of unusual construction was a "rotatory" of 16 horse-power, in use at Govan Colliery.

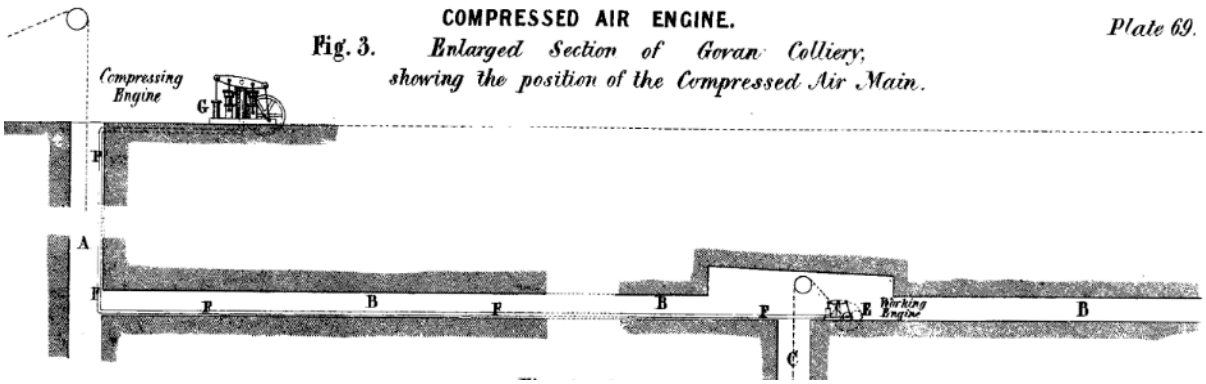
At this time Govan also had two pumping engines, of 54 and 42 Horsepower, one pumping and winding engine of 20 Horsepower, four winding engines, of 18, 14, 14 and 9 Horsepower (Ref 19).

James Beaumont Neilson, famous as inventor of the hot blast for iron making, left school before he was fourteen (c1803) and was employed for two years as a gig boy on one of the winding engines at the Govan colliery (Ref 20).

GOVAN COAL CUTTING EQUIPMENT

Compressed air was first used in British mining at Govan Colliery, Glasgow, where an air compressor was installed in 1849 to supply the motive power to operate haulage and pumping machinery situated underground about half-a-mile inbye.

The need arose to provide power for the winding and pumping of a blind pit (underground vertical shaft from one seam to another) at a distance of nearly half a mile from the first shaft.



A steam boiler was inadmissible in that situation, and the distance was too great to convey steam from the surface. Some application of water power was contemplated and it was then proposed to make use of compressed air, supplied by a compressing steam engine at the surface, and conveyed down by a pipe to work an engine at the top of the second shaft. The discharged air was vented into the workings to aid in the ventilation of the mine. The engine, was designed and constructed for the purpose by Messrs. Randolph, Elliot, and Co. and in 1856 had been working successfully for more than six years, (Ref 21).

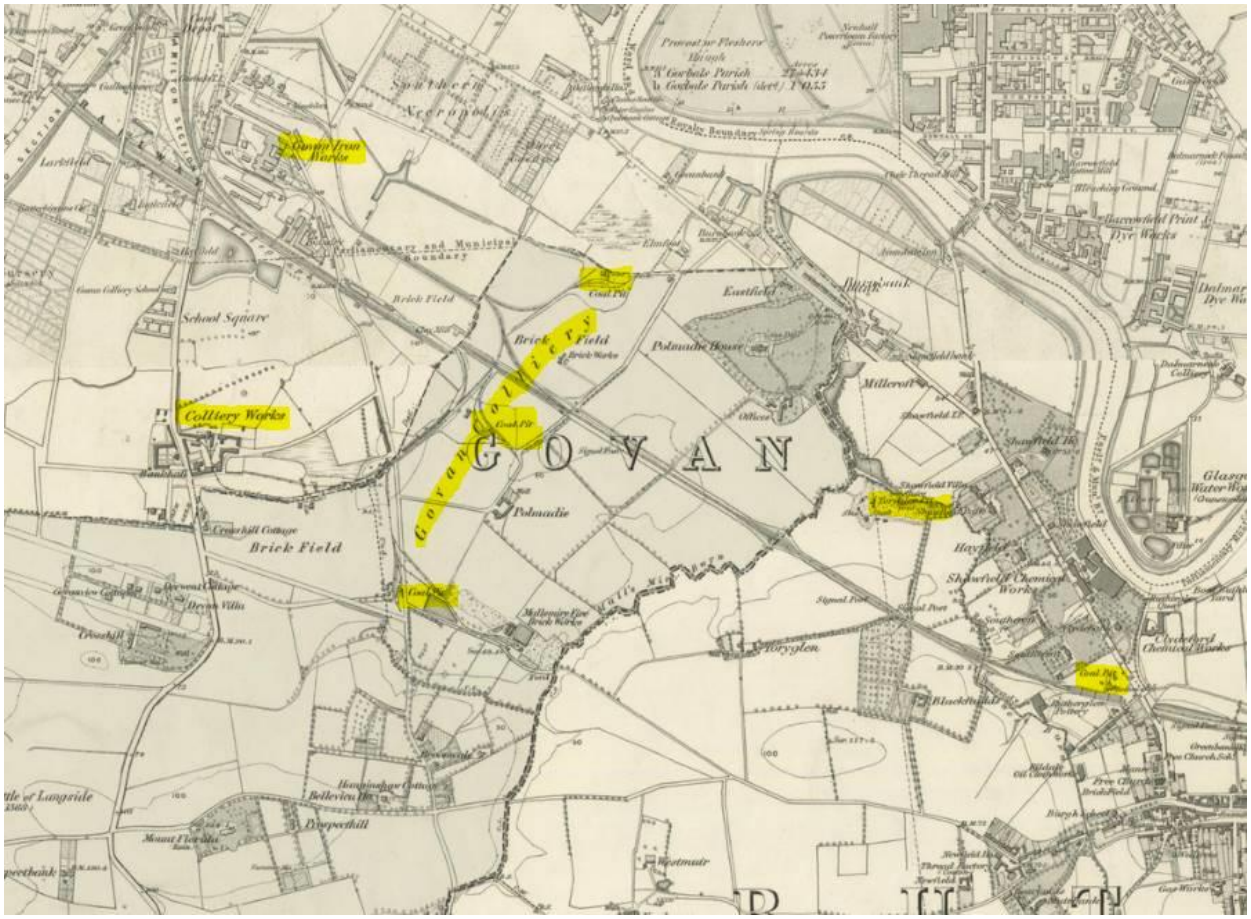
The engine, located on the surface, operated on the beam principle, having the steam cylinder at one end of the beam and the crank at the other, with two single- acting air compressors intermediate.

The air was compressed to 30 pounds per square inch, and passed into a central receiver, from which it was transmitted inbye in cast iron pipes. Although the installation at Govan colliery appears to have been successful, little further headway in the application of compressed-air power took place for many years afterwards.

“Smyth’s Coal and Coal Mining”, published in 1866, has no reference to compressed air, which infers that, other than these examples, it played little or no part in coal mining up to that time. In 1900 only 3 per cent. of the coal produced in Scotland was machine cut—the percentage for England being even lower. By 1920 the Scottish figure was 34 per cent.

GOVAN COLLIERY - PIT LOCATIONS

Govan colliery consisted of at least six pit shafts. Based on the above 1822 map, by John Wood, the railway terminates at what may be a pit at the northern edge of Govanhill near the junction of Cathcart Road and Aikenhead Road.



1858 Ordnance Survey map showing the location of five Govan colliery pits, plus Govan Ironworks (also known as Dixon's Blazes) and Colliery Works. No 6 pit had not been sunk at this time. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

From left to right across this 1858 map there are:

- Colliery Works – this is the location of the 1822 "Houses of Fire Work", or Fireworks village;
- three pits in a row - the bottom pit is No.2 Pit (Hangingshaw) and is located at the present junction of Polmadie Road and Aikenhead Road, on the 1896 OS map is shown as "old shaft";
- the middle pit is at the present location of Polmadie Road and Calder Street, on the 1896 OS map it is no longer shown;
- the top pit is at the south side of Kilbride Street, and on the 1896 OS map is shown as "old shaft";
- further to the right is No 5 pit Toryglen, which is at the north west end of Southcroft Road;
- furthest to the right, near to Rutherglen, is No 4 pit, 186 metres deep. which is on the west side of Glasgow Road, opposite Quay Road; it was also connected into Dixon's Mineral Railway which ran alongside the main Caledonian Line; on the 1896 OS map this pit is shown as "disused", and it was closed by 1914.

There is an abandonment plan recorded for a No 3 pit, dated 20 June 1888. The coal seams recorded are, Upper or Mossdale, Rough Ell, Rough Main, Humph Splint Ell and Splint Main.

Leasing Plan, of about 1896, showing part of the area (1) worked by Govan Colliery. By this time only Govan No 5 and No 6 pits are shown as working (Ref 14).

Govan No 5 pit at Jennies Burn, (copyright South Lanarkshire Council (rg.1983.25.112)).

No 5 pit, (304 metres deep) locally known as Toryglen pit is described in an 1858 Ordnance Survey description (Ref 1) as “the property of N. Dixon Esqr, and it is recently opened for coals, with the workings not yet commenced”.

No 6 (Blackfauld) pit was sunk in 1871 and is not shown until the map of 1896. It was 237 metres deep and situated approximately 600 metres along the road to Rutherglen from Hangingshaw and was again connected by a Mineral Railway into the Dixon’s System. Co-author Joe Cunningham recalls the Bleezes remains being used as a large car park for matches at Hampden Park prior to the construction of council houses in that area. The red ash had probably been the remains of an ‘Ash Bing’ from the Steam Boilers at the site.

In 1873 the colliery employed 950 workers, and in June they had their annual excursion to Ayr. Mr Robertson was then the manager of the colliery [Ref 74].

In 1874 a builder and a brick manufacturer brought a court case against Wm Smith Dixon & Co to prevent the company from padlocking a gate erected near the colliery works and offices that prevented the complainers from using the road leading from Aitkenhead westwards to the Cathcart Road and Allison Street [Ref 75].

In 1910 there were 540 persons employed underground at Govan colliery, and 132 above ground, giving a total of 672. Almost all the employees resided in the City of Glasgow and the Burgh of Rutherglen. Some 125 were in mine owners' houses, and the rest in rented houses (Ref 23).

In 1918 it employed 426 men below ground and 143 men on the surface. In 1923 it employed 249 men below ground and 69 men on the surface, but abandonment or partial abandonment occurred in June 1923. The 1923 Colliery Year Book and Coal Trades Directory shows the manager as James Andrews.

Dixon’s Iron Works (Dixon’s Blazes) operated until 1958, with a Brick Works at Polmadie.

The abandoned No 5 shaft, and its adjacent air shaft, were located and treated in 1983 (Ref 22).

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Caledonian Mercury 17 November 1774 - As a collier was coming up from the coal pit, about mid-day, a dog running by the hole mouth, fell down upon him, which made him quit his hold, when he fell to the bottom and was killed on the spot. He has left a wife and six children.

Caledonian Mercury 5 May 1787 - On Friday last, as a man was going down a coal- pit at Rutherglen, he was scorched to death by an explosion of sulphurous fire.

20 December 1788 – one man was killed and another injured when a bucket being lowered down the shaft overturned.

Caledonian Mercury 30 September 1790 - Friday a man was killed in one of the Rutherglen coal pits, by a piece of the roof falling on his head.

Caledonian Mercury of 5 August 1805 - Friday night, about seven o'clock, one of the workers at Govan Colliery fell from the scaffold to the bottom of the pit, in which there was 10 fathoms of water. His body was not got out until nearly two hours after the accident. A wife and four small children are left behind him in a destitute condition.

Edinburgh Advertiser 30 October 1818 - On Saturday, a boy, having gone to the pit with his father's dinner, was running past, at the time the hutch was elevated for the purpose of lowering, and was dashed by it into the pit with such violence that killed him in a moment. The feelings of the agonised mother who had no notice of the accident till the dead body of her son was brought home, may be conceived, but cannot easily be described.

Glasgow Herald 2 November 1821 - Wednesday morning, about 6 o'clock, an Irishman, who lodged in Gorbals, and worked at the engine-pit presently sinking at Govan Colliery, fell into the pit and was killed. The fall was occasioned, it is believed, by the slippery state of the planks on the mouth of the pit.

Glasgow Herald 18 January 1822 – On Saturday forenoon, a man was standing in the bottom of a pit at the Govan Colliery, a piece of coal fell from an ascending hutch, and unfortunately lighting on his head, killed him on the spot. He has left a wife and eight children to bewail his death.

Glasgow Herald 4 March 1822 – Between Saturday night and this morning, the office of the Govan Colliery was broken into, the desks rummaged, and the money, consisting of a quantity of bank notes, and a guinea in gold, carried off.

Glasgow Herald 16 June1845 - On Wednesday morning, a collier named Dunlop, had his back dislocated, from the roof giving way and falling upon him. We are glad, however, to be able to state that, notwithstanding the severe injuries sustained, he is going on favourably. Four accidents of a similar nature have occurred in this same mine within the last few months.

Glasgow Herald 20 February 1846 - Yesterday morning, a young man named King, who was employed as a redesman *[cleaning up waste],* in the coal pit, No. 3, Polmadie, belonging to Mr. Dixon, met his death by an explosion of fire damp. On account of the absence of one of the other colliers, the deceased had gone to work in a part of the pit to which he was unaccustomed, and in some of the crevices of which it was known that foul air was lurking, although from the contractor not being present, the poor man was not warned of the danger, which he might otherwise have easily avoided. Distressing though this occurrence may be, it is satisfactory to state, that accidents in these pits are extremely rare, although there are nearly 1000 people employed in them under ground.

Glasgow Herald 4 October 1847 - Fatal Accident. On the afternoon of Friday last, a collier, named Connely, a native of Ireland, had been looking over the railings into a shank of a coal pit in Mr. Dixon's works, used for the descent of empty cages, when a bell was rung - the signal to the engine-man to proceed to pull up the full cage and lower the empty one. This signal was either unheard or unheeded and the empty cage, on its way down, came in contact with his head and shoulders, crushing him very severely. He was taken to the Infirmary, where he expired shortly after his admission. He was unmarried.

Dundee Courier 10 July 1867 – On Monday afternoon, while a man named Peter Gillan (60), was driving a horse yoked to a cart along the road near Blackfauld Pit, parish of Rutherglen, the animal ran off. In his attempt to stop the horse, Gillan was struck on the breast, and one of the wheels passing over his body he was killed.

Glasgow Herald 10 July 1871 - Early yesterday morning, three men lost their lives at a pit (No 6), situated close to the Mallsmyre Road. They were engineers in the employment of Mr Dixon, and were making some repairs on the steam-valve of boilers. This required the removal of the cover of the valve, and the steam ought to have been let off at the boilers, but this it appears the men had neglected to do. As soon as the cover was removed the steam escaped in great volumes, and the men were so severely scalded that two of them, Robert Reid and John Binning, died almost instantly, the third, John Boyd, expiring while being conveyed to the Infirmary. Boyd,

who was a widower, lived in the Cowcaddens, Glasgow; Reid, who leaves a wife and a large family, resided in South Wellington Street; and Binning, who was a young man, and who is a native of Hamilton, also, we believe, lodged in a house in the same street.

Glasgow Herald 22 July 1872 - A serious fire broke out yesterday at No 6 Pit, Govan Collieries, belonging to Mr W S Dixon. The pit is situated a little to the north of Hangingshaw Road, about half way between Glasgow and Rutherglen. It was opened about eighteen months since, and has been working during that time, but the fittings were finally completed only about six weeks ago. It has been sunk to a depth of 130 fathoms, and is wrought according to the usual principle, with upthrow and downthrow shafts. About half past one o'clock yesterday, Mr James Rae, the engineman at the pithead, was startled to observe smoke issuing from the upthrow shaft. He at once sent information to Mr Robertson, the general manager, who resides at Eastfield House, near Rutherglen, that the pit was on fire, and messages were also dispatched to summon as many workmen as could be collected in the neighbourhood. About two o'clock the fire reached the top of the shaft, and a great body of flames burst forth, enveloping the whole of the woodwork about the pithead, and rising to a height of fully 50 feet. The upthrow and downthrow shafts are only separated by a distance of about 20 feet, but the fury of the fire in the upthrow shaft was soon spent. The pithead platform was cut in the centre, and a plentiful supply of water being procured, the fire was eventually subdued, but not before the woodwork had been charred and burnt in several places. Attention was then directed to the protection of the mine – the fire having communicated with the workings at the bottom – and water was carried in rhones to the mouth of the downthrow, and poured into it. In the course of the evening Mr Robertson, the general manager, and Mr Borland, the oversman at the pit, went down several times and inspected the workings, but they found the heat so intense that it was impossible to remain. Mr Robertson was first inclined to close both shafts until the fire had burnt itself out, but between eight and nine o'clock it was found that the temperature had fallen so considerably as to permit of an attempt being made to extinguish the fire. A squad of 28 men descended the pit, with a small hand engine, and made considerable head against the fire. The damage already done is considerable. The whole of the bratticing and machinery in the upthrow shaft has been it is feared destroyed, and it alone is valued at £3,000. There were five horses in the pit. Three of these, it is believed, escaped but two were in a portion of the workings in which the fire is raging, and it is supposed that they have perished. The closing of the pit will throw about 200 men for a time out of employment.

Glasgow Herald 21 December 1872 - Yesterday afternoon about one o'clock, a miner named John Cairns, residing in Waterloo Row, Govern Colliery, was killed in number 6 Coal Pit. It appears that deceased was in the act of filling a hutch with coal at the "face," when a large stone, weighing several tons, fell from the roof and crushed his body and a dreadful manner.

Glasgow Herald 26 April 1883 -Yesterday forenoon a turner named William Robertson residing at Burnbank, Rutherglen, was seriously injured on the back and other parts of the body by a fall of stone from the roof of number 6 Pit Govan Colliery, belonging to Messers Dixons limited. He had been engaged at the soft coal seam at the time. Dr Kirkwood was early in attendance and ordered his removal home in a cab. It is thought that he is internally injured.

Glasgow Herald 31 December 1883 - On Saturday morning, whilst a miner named Robert Ross was working in the face of number 5 Pit, Govan Colliery, belonging to William Dixon Limited, a fall from the roof took place, breaking one of his legs. Dr Kelly was in attendance and ordered his removal to the Royal Infirmary Glasgow.

Glasgow Herald 13 August 1884 - Yesterday afternoon whilst engaged at the face of one of the seams of number 6 Govan Colliery, William Dick, collier residing at Govanhill, sustained severe injuries by the fall of a quantity of coal. Dr Kelly was early in attendance and found that besides a fracture of the skull, Dick's jaw bone had been broken. He was removed home, and little hope is expected of his recovery.

Glasgow Herald 12 January 1889 - Yesterday a serious accident occurred at number 6 Pit, Govan Colliery, whereby a lad named William Inglis Baggeley (14) residing in Bouverie Street, Rutherglen, sustained a severe fracture of the skull, He had been engaged filling a hutch at the face of the main coal seam, when a stone about 10 Cwt fell from the roof, striking him on the head. Dr McKenzie, Rutherglen, was immediately in attendance and ordered his removal to the Royal Infirmary.

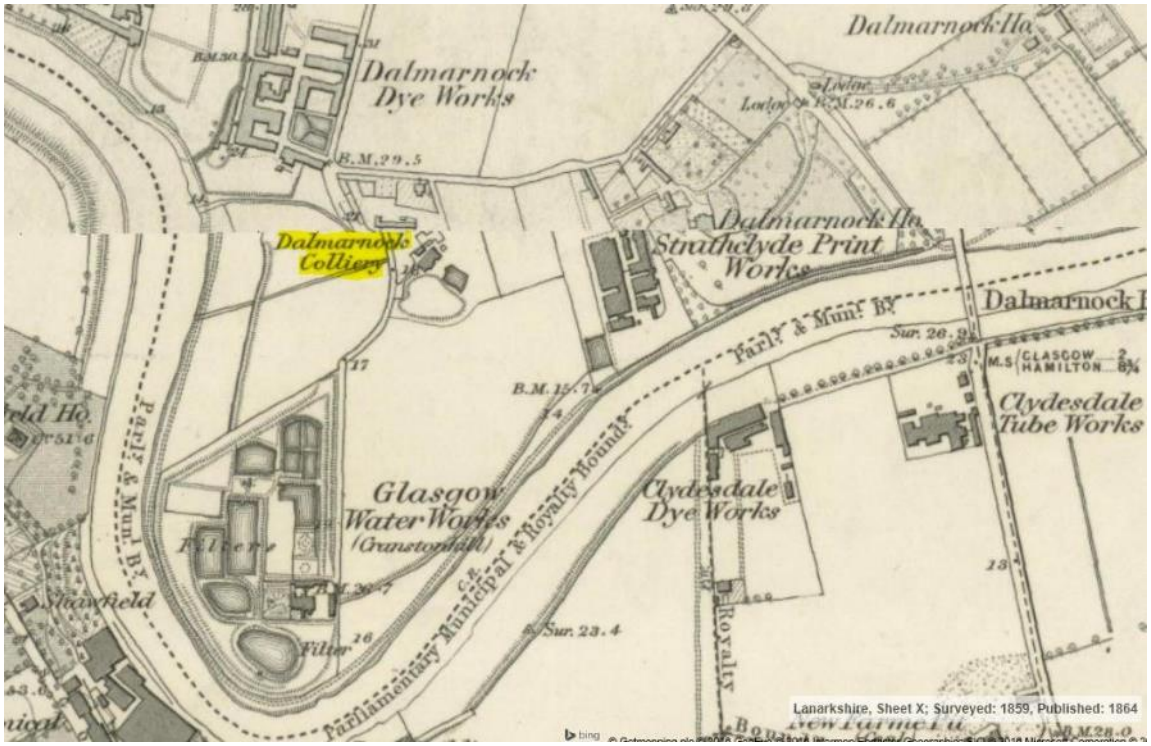
Scotsman 10 February 1893 – At Glasgow Sheriff Criminal Court, yesterday, David Clements and James Black, Rutherglen, miners were each fined £1, with an option of 7 days imprisonment, for having failed to take the precaution, as set forth in the Coal Mines Act, of setting up the necessary supports at the face of the coal seam at which they were working in No 6 Pit of the Govan Colliery (Dixon and Company, Limited).

Scotsman 8 September 1915 –John Maxwell, who resided at Millcroft, Rutherglen, was instantaneously killed yesterday while working at No 5 Pit Govan Colliery by a fall of stone.

DALMARNOCK COLLIERY pre 1820 - 1859

In a book written in 1858 (Ref 24) it was believed that the oldest coalmasters in the West of Scotland were the Grays of Dalmarnock, one of whom, John Gray, Laird of Carntyne, opened up coalfields about 1630; he died in 1687.

Dalmarnock Colliery was located across the River Clyde from Rutherglen, at Dalmarnock. Owned by John Wilson and Sons (one son being George Wilson) (Ref 25), manager Mr Montgomery (Ref 26). According to a listing of steam engines in Glasgow, the colliery had one pumping and winding engine of 18hp and one pumping engine of 64hp (Ref 27). However, at an auction in 1859, probably upon closure, it had a pair of 60hp winding and auxiliary pumping engines, a winding engine of 20hp and a winding engine of 6hp.



1864 Ordnance Survey Map showing Dalmarnock colliery. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

Messrs. George and John Wilson, of Dalmarnock and the Hurlet Alum Works became partners with Walter Neilson in the new blast furnace establishment of Summerlee. The firm, which was long known as Wilsons and Co., subsequently became the Summerlee Iron Co.

The following description of Bridgeton in 1830 (Ref 30), includes mention of Dalmarnock colliery.

> *"The 1821 wooden bridge at Dalmarnock was greatly beneficial for the transport of coal from Rutherglen (Eastfield), Wellshot, Silverbanks and Cambuslang pits. This bridge lasted until 1848 when it was replaced by a somewhat picturesque structure of the same material, later removed to make way for Dalmarnock Bridge.*
>
> *The only landmark is the Old Tollhouse which the Road Trustees built. Those same Trustees must have made a pile of money off this toll. All the coals from Cambuslang, Eastfield, Rutherglen, and Farm pits passed through, and fivepence was the charge for every waggon. At the back of the tollhouse was Dalmarnock Farm, occupied by Mr. Guthrie, who had a large family, none of whom took to farming except the eldest son. Some of the others are merchants in Glasgow and Manchester. Further south was Wilson's Coalpit. The farmhouse is still standing.*
>
> *Mr. Wilson, the coalmaster, had a train railway from the pit to the river bank, where he had erected a landing stage, with a crane for shipping coals on barges, which were drawn with a rope by men down the river to Commerce Street, Hutchesontown, where there was a coal depot. There was also a set of cart rails from the pit to Dalmarnock Road, along the road which is now Swanston Street. This ground between Arthur Street and Swanston Street is now covered with the Caledonian Railway and Dalmarnock Station, and many other works.*
>
> *A little further east is Newlands House - still standing. Opposite this house a Mr. Nimmo sank a coalpit, and constructed a horse tram-way which ran by Newlands House and down through the fields and Queen Mary's Farm and along the avenue on the west side of the orchard, crossed London Road and along what is now Peel Street to Brook Street, where there was a depot. Mr. Nimmo also tried to sink a coal-pit at what is now Ruby Street, but running sand came in upon them and two men lost their lives. He got iron cylinders made and put them down, but it was no use; the water was too much for them, and the project was abandoned. The shaft was left open full of water - a danger to all the youths round about. However, it became of use when the Baltic Jute Company laid down their works near to it. They drew the water for their engine boilers, which saved the expense of taking water from the Water Company".*

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Edinburgh Evening Courant, 26 December 1829 - Wednesday night, about eight o'clock, an explosion of foul air took place in Mr Wilson's coalpit, Dalmarnock, which unfortunately killed Hugh Richardson, collier, and severely burned other four men; in consequence of which a few more went down, carrying with them Sir H. Davy's safety lamp, for the purpose of bringing up those who had been previously hurt, when, owing to the bottom of the lamp not being properly secured it fell off, and a second explosion took place, whereby other eight men were likewise burned, some of them severely, (among whom was the brother of the deceased), but none of them dangerously ; Richardson has left a wife and three children.

Caledonian Mercury, 13 November 1830 - Thursday morning, a collier of the name of Stewart, was unfortunately killed at Dalmarnock Colliery. It appears that he was descending the shaft in the bucket at the moment of the accident, when he lost his balance, and was precipitated to a depth of sixty fathoms.

Caledonian Mercury, 14 December 1833 - Monday morning, between six and seven o'clock, an explosion of fire-damp occurred in one of Mr Wilson's coal pits at Dalmarnock, by which one man was very seriously injured, and a boy slightly scorched. It was caused by an air-hole in a platform, a few fathoms from the bottom of one of the shafts becoming blocked up, and, while a workman was engaged in clearing the opening to drain the accumulated water, the hissing noise attracted the attention of a boy in the other shaft, who, with his lamp in hand, met the carbonated gas as it was being forced out, and thus was the catastrophe occasioned. The boy was burnt, but not severely; while the man employed on the scaffolding fell with the wooden work at the sides of the pit and was so much bruised that his life is despaired of.

Glasgow Herald, 14 July 1848 - About two o'clock on Saturday morning last, a collier, named Bell, employed in Mr Wilson's coal pit, Dalmarnock, was deprived of life in a very shocking manner. The pit, which contains three distinct galleries, a considerable distance apart, has a perpendicular shaft which communicates with the whole of them. When the accident occurred, the deceased was working in the upper gallery, in the act of pushing a hutch containing coals forward to the shaft. While doing so, his lamp went out, and the consequence was that being unable to see his way clearly, he pushed the hutch too far, which was precipitated down to the very bottom of the shaft, a distance of some 30 or 40 fathoms, carrying along with it the ill-fated man, who was killed on the spot. His body being dreadfully mangled. The deceased, who resided at Dale Street, Bridgeton, has left behind him a wife and family.

Glasgow Herald, Monday 12 August 1850 - On Thursday, the death of a man named James M'Bride occurred in the coal-pit of Mr. Wilson of Dalmarnock. The deceased and some fellow-workmen were making diversion near the mouth of a shaft leading to a deeper seam than that on which they were engaged, when by some mischance he lost his footing and was precipitated headlong into the excavation, which was a considerable number of fathoms in depth. He received such mortal injuries that although living when brought to the surface, he died while beings conveyed to the Royal Infirmary. He was unmarried.

The Standard, London, 13 August 1850 - Thursday afternoon - a shocking accident, one perhaps without a parallel in character, occurred at one of the pits of Mr. Wilson's colliery Dalmarnock. James McBride, a person charged with the “overlooking” of the relay hands, was stationed at the entrance to the pit with one or two fellow workers. To amuse them he commenced the performance of some gymnastic feats close to the brink. Sudden he over-balanced himself, and, to the dismay of the onlookers, rolled over, and was precipitated down the shaft a distance of 30 fathoms. It is needless to say that when the body was got out life was extinct (Glasgow Mail).

Glasgow Herald, 13 December 1850 - On Saturday forenoon last, Wm. Clarke, was at work in the pit of Mr Wilson, Dalmarnock, when a large mass of coal suddenly detached from the roof, and crushed him so severely that death was almost instantaneous. He has left a widow and family; but the latter, we believe are able to support themselves.

Glasgow Herald, 30 December 1853 - A collier named Thomas Bryson, while acting temporarily as bottomer at Mr. Wilson's Coal Pit, Dalmarnock, was killed on Wednesday, and a second man, named Speirs, received injuries about the head. The accident arose from the cage being lifted up by the engine before the signal was given.

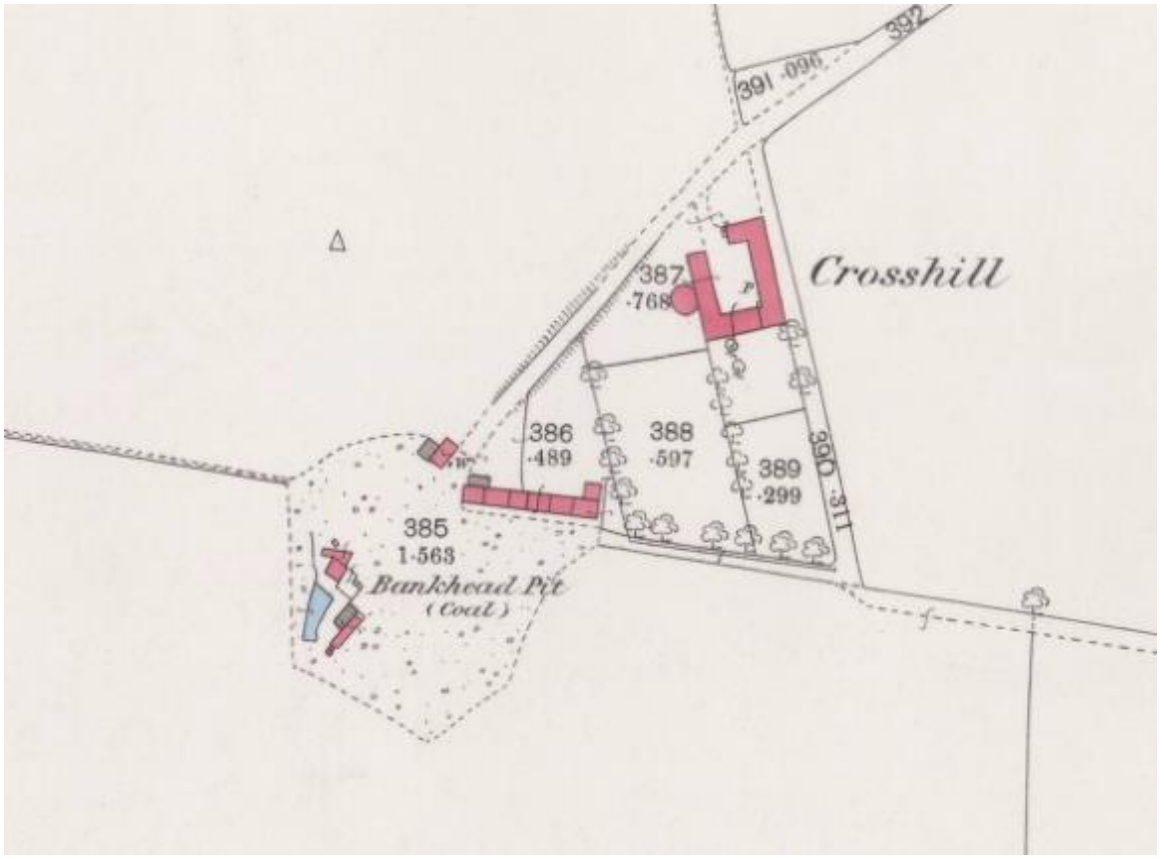
Glasgow Herald, 26 August 1859 - Hutchison and Dixon are instructed to sell at Dalmarnock Colliery, Dalmarnock Road, Glasgow, the whole valuable working plant which includes three-valved condensing pumping engine, 48 inch cylinder and 7 foot stroke, by John Nelson of Oakbank; pair high-pressure coupled winding engines, of 60 horse power (winding on first motion), cylinders 18 inch diameter, 4 feet stroke, nearly new, made by Barclay of Kilmarnock; heavy auxiliary pumping arrangements for do; condensing winding engine, 20 horse power (winding on first motion); high pressure winding engine, 6 horse power; about 30 tons

steam boiler connect 8 with the different engines; 13 inch plunger and 80 fathoms of pipes, 50 fathoms 15 inch pump rods, 5 weighing machines, 200 tonnes rails, two crab winches, with all the usual plant of a large colliery. Full particulars in catalogues for which application may be made to Messers. Ralph and William Moore, mining engineers, 24 St Vincent place, or the auctioneers.

BANKHEAD COLLIERY pre 1817 - 1861

Bankhead colliery is described in the Lanarkshire OS Name Books of 1858-1861 (Ref 1).

> "An old coal Pit nearly wrought out. The workings are not sufficiently extensive to shew as a colliery. Wrought by McNaughton & Hood. The property of W.White Esqr. estate Map William Carey, Manager W.White Esqr".



1864 Ordnance Survey Map showing Bankhead colliery. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

Bankhead Colliery, belonging to Messrs. M'Naughton & Hood, coal masters, Union Street, Glasgow, was located near Bankhead at Crosshill House and near to the railway to Kirkhill from Glasgow. The colliery extracted numerous seams and is recorded as being 32 metres to the Upper coal and 91 metres to the Splint coal. However, it was closed about 1861.

An advertisement in the Glasgow Herald on 30 July, and on 3 September 1852 offered the colliery and machinery for sale. The Tenant was to pay a fixed rent of £200 per annum, or a tenth of the value of the output of coal on the Hill, and 4d for every 22½ cwt of ironstone. The machinery included two steam engines, and a new boiler, valued at £1446. The Ell and the Upper coal seams were each 4 feet thick, the Main 4½ feet,

the Humph 3 feet, the Splint 2 foot 9 inches and the Soft coal seam 3 feet thick. A further advertisement, in the Glasgow Herald of 1 August 1860, includes two horizontal engines, with cylinders 18 and 14 inches, with boilers, used by Messers Waddell & McNaughton in extending South Quay, Glasgow and lying in their yard there. Offers were to be made to Bankhead Colliery Office, 20 Union St Glasgow. Might these be the engines from Bankhead Colliery?

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Caledonian Mercury, 25 January 1817. On Thursday last, as a collier of the name of Gathram was ascending a coal pit at Bankhead, near Rutherglen, a hook attached to his body by leathern harness, entangled with the descending bucket, and precipitated him to the bottom. As he fell seventeen fathoms, he was killed on the spot. He has left a widow and family.

Glasgow Herald, 9 April 1855 - An explosion of firedamp took place on Friday morning at Bankhead coal pit, near Rutherglen, by which one man named Reid, and four boys were injured, but not to a very serious extent. We understand that the only place in the pit at which firedamp makes it appearance is in the inside of a slip which has been newly cut. Reid had been repeatedly warned to enter at all times with the Davy lamp only, more especially when he entered for the first time in the morning; and he was also strictly enjoined never to allow boys to accompany him. Both of these precautions he appears to have neglected, and hence the accident, which, but for the small accumulation of gas, might have been much more serious.

Glasgow Herald, 28 September 1859 - On Monday evening, about eight o'clock, while James Dyer, roadsman, residing in Burnhill Street, Rutherglen, and Michael Rooney, roadsman, residing in Mill Street, Rutherglen, were at work a portion of the roof, about six inches thick, fell upon them. Dyer was instantaneously deprived of life, and Rooney was so severely injured - his back and legs being fractured - that he is not expected to survive. Dr. Gorman, surgeon, was in attendance. Dyer was forty years of age, and has left a widow and three young children. Rooney is sixty-five years of age, married, and has five of a family.

1864 Map showing location of coal pits at Spittal. (Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018]).

The Glasgow Advertiser of 5 December 1788 advertises sale of land at Spittal with "the near neighbourhood of good coal, there is the best reason to believe that the coal in the premise be of considerable consequence, the present going work lying within half a mile [of the house]."

Spittal Colliery was operated by Archibald Russel and Co. but it is not recorded as operating in the 1869 Coal Mine Listing. However, examination of the 1914 Geological Sheet for the area indicates three old shafts in the region of the Spittal village located to the south of the Kirkhill Railway at Blairbeth Road. Two old shafts are located near the village while another is situated to the north of the railway between Spittal and Bankhead Colliery. This is stated as 18 Fathoms to the Ell coal which outcrops nearby. The shafts to the south of the railway are sunk adjacent to the Ell and Splint coal outcrops and are again ½ mile from Bankhead Colliery.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Caledonian Mercury, March 5, 1842 - An explosion took place at Spittal coal pit, near Rutherglen, on Saturday afternoon, when eight men were dreadfully burned. There were ten men in the pit at the time the explosion took place, but two of them saved themselves by throwing themselves flat upon the ground. Four of the sufferers were conveyed to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, and the other four, not being so severely injured, were taken to their respective homes. The accident was occasioned, it seems, by the flame of one of the lamps being allowed to come in contact with the gas that had generated in that part of the pit.

The Morning Post, London, 5 October 1843 - This morning about four o'clock while three of the workers at Spittal Colliery, near Rutherglen, were in the act of descending the pit to resume their ordinary avocations, the key of the teething pinion, which regulates the motion of what is called the drum, round which the rope attached to the bucket revolves, suddenly gave way, and the whole were precipitated to the bottom with fearful rapidity. One of the parties, a young boy, was killed in the spot, and the other two were severely injured - indeed one of them is not expected to survive. Another man, who was standing at the mouth of the pit when the accident happened, was struck by part of the flying machinery, had his arm broken, and sustained other severe injuries. The surviving sufferers were brought to Glasgow Infirmary with all possible dispatch, shortly after the unfortunate occurrence. Two of the men, we regret to say, have wives and families depending on their exertions for support (Glasgow Chronicle of Monday).

Glasgow Herald 28 October 1844 - An accident of a very serious nature occurred at Spittal Colliery, Rutherglen, on Wednesday morning last. William Weir, 64 years of age, one of the night watchmen, having had occasion to enter the engine House of No 1 Pit, unfortunately stumbled, whereby his left hand came in contact with a portion of the machinery, and was so severely lacerated that doctor Macdougall found it necessary to perform amputation of the forearm shortly afterwards. The man still lives in a critical state.

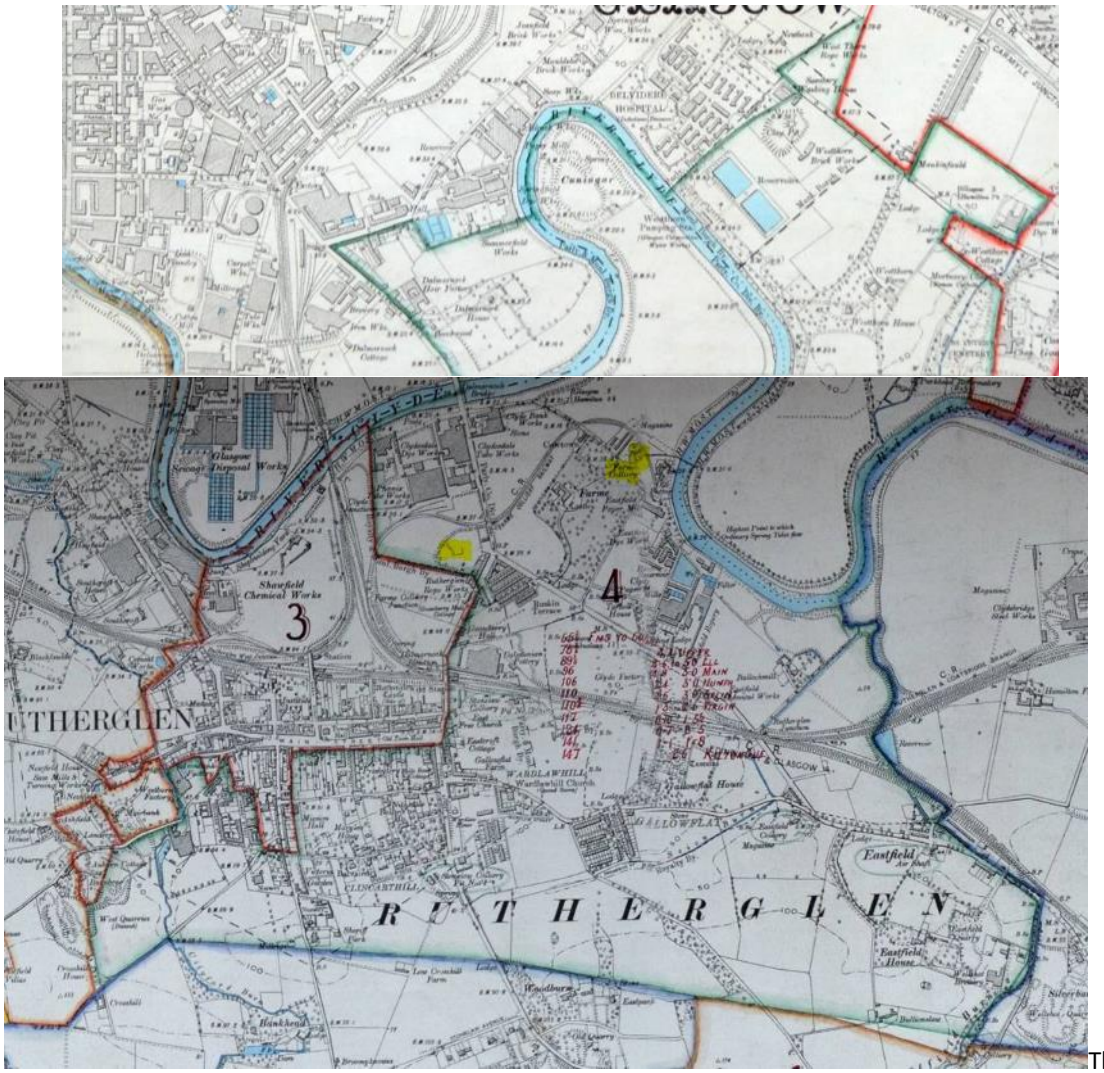
FARME COLLIERY 1805 - 1931

Farme Colliery had a very long life. It was located on the Duchess Road off Cambuslang Road at Farme Cross and sunk in 1805. From 1854 – 1885 it was owned by James Fairrie, from 1890 by Alan Fairrie, from 1895 – 1931 by Farme Coal Co Ltd. It was the last colliery to be worked within Glasgow city boundary (Ref 40).

A newspaper article about Farme Colliery, operated by James Fairie, reports that the Farie family had been continuously engaged in coal mining in the parishes of Cambuslang and Rutherglen since the days of Charles II (1630 –1685). Some early evidence is on record as shown below.

> Following the Colliers and Salters (Scotland) Act 1775 a court case took place between John Fairie and Neil McVicar. McVicar had been employed as an overseer in 1769 to John Fairie coalmaster. Mr Fairie had asked McVicar to assist at the windlass wheel or “clicking” the coal tubs that being the only work he had for him. The court found in McVicar’s favour that he was hired as an overseer, not as a common servant.
>
> The Caledonian Mercury, 20 February 1800, reports from the Kirk Session of Rutherglen that Captain Fairie of Farm distributed coals and money to the poor. Perhaps the long family historical connection with the area this may explain the many variations in the spelling of Fairrie, Ferrie, Fairie, Farie, etc.(Ref 45).

Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (4) worked by Farme colliery.



This area was also worked by Stonelaw colliery (to the south west) and Eastfield colliery (to the south east) (Ref 14). The various coal seams mined were the Upper, Ell, Main, Humph, Splint, Virtuewell and Kiltongue.

Winding and pumping were carried out by a Newcomen steam engine installed in 1810. In 1820 another was added for winding and in 1821 a third having a 60-inch cylinder for pumping. The Newcomen Engine used for winding was one of the finest of the last Newcomen engines operating in Britain (it is described in The Engineer, 6 June 1879, Pg. 403). It was preserved and is now located at Summerlee Industrial Museum.

The costs involved in installing the engine in 1821 are recorded in an 1821 account of Messers Brown and Tosh to Mr. James Farrie of Farme Colliery (Ref 48).

> *The following notes from an 1821 account of Mssrs. Brown and Tosh to Mr. James Farrie of Farme Colliery in Rutherglen Parish are interesting for the variety of work that must have been involved in setting up a colliery. Brown and Tosh were evidently general contractors: the masons' wages of 3s/2d per day and labourers' wages of 2s per day were probably somewhat "marked-up".*
>
> - *To Masons hewing and building drum and fly wheel wall at Wellshott pitt, 24 days @ 3s/2d -- £3/16/- [Additional labour and materials brought the total for this item to £9/11/11 or almost half a year's wages to a labourer]*

- *To 5 yards pavement in new pit for the water to fall on [Total labour and materials -/15/7]*
- *To building a boiler at Farme [This appears to be a part-job as the charge was only for some labour -/2/7]*
- *To building a dyke on old road to Farme [Total labour and materials £4/4/2]*
- *To masons building a support for a traveling road [Total labour and materials £2/7/-]*
- *To masons building brick walls for a Smithy [Total labour and materials £3/1/8: "a stone for the hearth and hewing" was 2s]*
- *To building a drain from engine to pond [Total labour and materials £2/18/3]*
- *To building two supports for the machine drawing water [Total labour and materials £2/16/2]*
- *To building new weights and drain from [the Wellshott Boiler] [Total labour and materials £4/10/10]*
- *To jobing at Engine, masons cutting pipe holes and building up do, sloping cisterns [Total labour 2/7/6]*
- *To masons building brick in new pit [Total labour and materials £1/4/8]*

Of the above figures, materials amounted to about 40%. A major expense somewhat related to the colliery was stone dykes at over £95. The charge for some 12,000 firebricks supplied by Malcom Paterson, John Forsyth and John Bell was £43/6/6 -- cartage and tolls were an additional £5/8/-. The common bricks came in at £19/5/1 or almost a year's wages to a labourer.

James Farrie of Farme Colliery had been one of the principal members of the Glasgow area coalowners' cartel. He could probably easily afford the costs in this account. On the other hand, James McCowan, a mere collier a short decade prior to erecting his own steam engine at Auchanbeg, quite probably took on a very burdensome debt.

In 1825 Farme had one pumping engine, of 72 Horsepower, two pumping engines, each of 19 Horsepower, and two winding engines, of 10 and 18 Horsepower. This power included Wellshot colliery (Ref 19).

From Lanarkshire OS Name Books, 1858-1861 Vol 51, Rutherglen (Ref 1).

“Old Farme - A farm steading on the banks of the Clyde. the property of J. Fairie Esqr. This steading was formerly called "Downybrae", a name now entirely disused. There is a coal pit near it, & rows of colliers dwellings, which bear the same name.

New Farme Coal Pit - a pit almost 80 fathoms deep wrought by the proprietor J. Fairie Esqr. This name was given from the pit being the second which was opened on the property. Coal Map James Fairie Esqr. John Weir, Manager.

New Farme Rows - Two long rows of coilliers dwellings built about the time the pit, from which the name is taken, was opened. The property of James Fairie Esqr”.

Old Farme Pit (copyright South Lanarkshire Council (rg.1983.5.33)).

1896 Town Plan showing Farme colliery shafts and surface structures overlaid on a present-day map. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

The 1810 engine is said to be the sole surviving rotative Newcomen engine in Europe and the only manually operated version left in the world. Farme Colliery was sunk in 1805 by John Farie of Farme Castle. The engine was installed at the colliery in 1810 by John Mackay. It has a cast iron beam and the cylinder 32in bore by 66in stroke was made at Camlachie Foundry in the east end of Glasgow. It was hand operated at all times and ran at up to 27rpm winding from a 60 fathom (360ft) shaft [Source: David Napier, Engineer, 1790-1869. An autobiographical sketch with notes. Published by James Maclehose & Sons Glasgow. 1912]. The engine worked substantially in its original form until 1915. It was then put into storage by Glasgow Museums. The engine was loaned to Summerlee Heritage Centre and rebuilt there in 1987.

During development work at Downiebrae Road, in late 2013, a watching brief by archaeologists, associated with Summerlee Museum, revealed several brick walls and a cobbled road which probably related to the colliery. Brickwork and two substantial cast iron pipes were uncovered, the size of which indicated industrial use. After the colliery was closed in 1931, the structures were demolished with the entire area then being built up. (Ref 47)

The colliery operating in 1914 was a two-shaft operation, No's 1 & 3. No 1 was 112 metres deep and No.3 was given as 57 metres to the Upper coal and 112 metres to the Splint coal. An abandoned shaft, probably No.2, is shown to the west of Duchess Road and on the site of what was Eastfield Paper Mill. A No 4 shaft was 29 metres deep.

In 1910 there were 201 persons employed underground, and 67 above ground, total 268. The employees resided mostly in Rutherglen and Glasgow. The mine owners possessed 30 houses in Rutherglen Burgh (Ref 23).

In the 1923 Coal Mines Listing, the colliery was being operated by the Farme Coal Company (1915) and employed 487 men below ground and 69 men on the surface.

Farme colliery closed for a period on 28 April 1928, after the 1921 or 1926 strikes. It resumed later and abandonment finally occurred on 17th July 1931.

From a newspaper cutting, of unknown date,

> *Mr James Anderson, the manager of Farme Colliery, near Rutherglen, has long connection with the industry of coal mining. He has personally been engaged in colliery management all his life. So was his father. His grandfather was connected with coal mining for 50 years, and his great-grandfather for a great many years. The great-grandfather became connected with mine management through his marriage with the daughter of an overseer of a lead mine at Leadhills, and her forebears were connected with mine management as far back at least as the days of the Sir Beavis-Bulmer who was sent down to Scotland in 1576 by Queen Elizabeth to develop the lead mines there and to search for gold. It may also be mentioned that the Farie family, the present head of whom is proprietor of the Farme Pit, has been continuously engaged in coal mining in the parishes of Cambuslang and Rutherglen at least since the days of Charles II.*
>
> *Mr Anderson stated, to the Geological Society of Scotland (Ref 40) that a bore, put down in the Haugh pit, found 7 inches of blackband ironstone in the supposed position of the Airdrie Blackband and that the pit was sunk down to the ironstone but it proved to be only a ball.*

From Reminiscences of Rutherglen and Suburbs, By Hugh Muir, 1890.

> *The Caledonian Railway from Motherwell to Glasgow (south side terminus) was opened on the 1st June, 1849, so that after that date the trains ran from Carlisle to Glasgow via Motherwell and Rutherglen; the Hamilton Branch was opened on the 17th September 1849. The Bill for each of these branches had been presented to Parliament some six or seven years previously and while the work was going on, Wm. Dixon (Limited), coalmaster, had a single line railway for the benefit of his works made as far as where the bridge now spans the railway on Glasgow Road, so that when the Caledonian line was finished there was (after an agreement with Mr. Dixon) an easy access to the south side of Glasgow. Sometime afterward there was a proposal to make a Branch Railway from Rutherglen Quay to Hamilton Farm, Rosebank, and Silverbank, etc, principally for the benefit of coal-works, but after some negotiations and discussions the proposed scheme was abandoned.*

In the Farme colliery workings, a remarkable series of sandstone washouts, or ‘wants’ were found in the upper coal seam, as described below.

> *The Upper or Upper Ell coal is as well-developed near Rutherglen as in any part of the Lanarkshire field, and averages 4 ft. 6 in. in thickness. In the Farme Colliery workings, north of Rutherglen, a remarkable series of sandstone "washouts," or wants, were found in this seam. Two channels were found, one of them about 200 yards east of the pit-bottom. In the discussion referred to, three channels were noted, but since that time the "Mid" and "East wants" have been proved to run together, forming parts of a curious twisted course, which runs south towards the Clyde Paper Mills, then bends round sharply towards the north, in which direction it dies out. The breadth was about 80*

yards. The western channel was more extensive. Passing through the pit-shaft, it ran south-west for over a mile, having been traced at least as far as the 45-fathom fault at the West Quarries. Under Main Street this channel was proved to be 400 yards wide, a curious little island of workable coal" being found in the middle. The coal was frequently "doubled" along the sides of the channel, and was said also to be of better than average quality: at the same time the components of the original seam were repeated in their normal order—Top coal, parting, Bottom coal. As seen in the workings, the junctions of sandstone and coal were exceedingly sharp and clean. They were also very irregular, narrow tongues of sandstone frequently projecting into the surrounding coal. It is reported that stone mines driven through the want found the sandstone coarse and pebbly at its base, as if it marked the bed of a stream (Ref 2, Pg. 18)

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald, 16 April 1821., On Saturday last, while a boy was at work in Rutherglen Farm pit, he was killed on the spot by a fall of stones from the roof.

Caledonian Mercury, 21 February 1842, Fatal Coal Pit Accident. On Wednesday, of an old man, named Sinclair, by the fall of the roof in one of Captain Ferrie's pits, near Rutherglen, was so severely injured, that he survived only a few minutes. He is the sixth or seventh member of the same family who has met his death by similar accidents in coal pits.

Scotsman, 21 July 1855. A case in which Mrs Robertson, widow of William Robertson, collier in Rutherglen, was pursuer, and Mr James Farie of Farme the defender, was tried on Wednesday before Lord Mackenzie and a jury, the issue being:- Whether the deceased William Robertson, husband of the pursuer, while in the employment of the defender, at the coal-pit at New Farme , near Rutherglen , on the 16th November 1853, was killed by the fall of a stone from the roof of the pit, in consequence of the insufficiency of the roof, and through the fault of the defender, and to the loss of the pursuer. A verdict for the pursuer was returned by the jury after about an hour's consideration, the damages being fixed at £50.

Glasgow Herald, 27 October 1925 - While coal-cutting machine was being operated yesterday in No. 1 Pit of Farme Colliery there was an ignition of gas followed by an explosion in which four men were injured. The names of the injured men are: John McMillan. 20 Solway Street. Bridgeton; Hugh McMillan, 7 Webster Street, Bridgeton: Edward McLaughlan, 27 Coalbrook Street, Cambuslang; and Thomas Anderson, Southcroft, Rutherglen. They were taken to the Royal Infirmary. Glasgow, but are making satisfactory progress towards recovery.

From the Rutherglen Reformer, 24th July 1931.

Rutherglen's last pit, Old Farme Colliery, to be Demolished.

With the closing down of the Old Farme Colliery last Friday (i.e.17th July), one witnesses the last of Rutherglen's 26 coal pits. Rutherglen at one period in its history was one of the most thriving and busiest mining communities in the County of Lanark, but with the passing of the "auld Ferme", as it was commonly called, its claim even to mining connections ceases. The pit is owned by the Farme Coal Coy.(1925) Ltd., and was solely concerned, since it was taken over by the new company in 1925, with the production of coal for domestic use. In 1928 the pit closed down for a period owing to the operation of the Scottish Coal Masters pool, throwing 550 men idle, but resumed at a later date on the basis of short time working. Some 150 men are affected now with the closing down of operations. It is understood that the superstructures of the pit will be dismantled and that pumping operations which cost the firm over £20 per day will cease. The Old Farme Pit was one of the oldest pits in operation in

the County of Lanark, the first shaft being sunk as far back as 1805, and was the first successful sinking operation to be performed by cast-iron caissons. The iron caissons were circular in shape and it was because of the bad surface at Old Farms Pit that they were experimented with. Another shaft was successfully sunk by the new method at New Farms, near Farme Cross, and its colliery soon became known as one of the largest of its kind in the country, but about 1880 it closed down and production was concentrated from the Old Farme shaft. The Newcomen winding-engine was introduced at the Old Farme Pit at the opening of the Pit in 1805, and was the latest of its kind at the time, many famous men, whose names are well-known as pioneers in engineering, visiting the pit in order to inspect the engine. James Watt, the famous inventor and engineer, was said to have been greatly interested in this Newcomen engine.

In those days the east end of Glasgow was supplied with drinking water from the Glasgow Water Works, situated at the Cuningar, and James Watt had the work in hand then of laying a set of pipes specially designed by him, across the bed of the River Clyde, and it is said that he used to pay frequent visits to this engine at Old Farme Colliery.

After being in constant use for 110 years the Newcomen engine was taken out of Old Farme in 1915 and presented to the Glasgow Corporation on condition that they would erect it beside the James Watt engine, but it is understood that the Corporation did not do so. A working model of the engine is to be seen in the Edinburgh Museum, designs from plans by Messrs. Sir William Arrol and Company.

The Old Farme Pit had a very extensive coalfield with workings extending for miles in each direction, and possessed a very fine quality of seams. There were five seams in all, making an aggregate of about 22 feet thickness of coal.

From the Rutherglen Reformer, 22nd August 1884.

FARME COLLIERY Presentation - At a meeting of the employees in Farme Colliery, Mr.Andrew Winning was presented with a compass and armature, and a gold watch for Mrs.Winning. Mr.James Anderson, manager of the Farme Colliery, paid a tribute of respect to the recipient who had been in the employ for over 15 years.

From the Rutherglen Reformer, 7th October 1876.

DEATH OF MR.FARIE OF FARME - This week the residents of Rutherglen and district learned of the death of Mr. J. Farie of Farme, the representative of an ancient and honourable family in the district and proprietor of Farme Colliery. His funeral was on Thursday (i.e. 5th October) and he was buried in the Rutherglen Churchyard.

From the Rutherglen Reformer, 17th March 1878.

FARME COLLIERY Change of Underground Manager - Mr James Park, underground manager at Farme Colliery moves to Stonelaw Colliery. A reception was held in his honour by the Farme Colliery workers and his friends. Mr James Anderson, the Manager of the Colliery was in the chair. Mr Anderson has been at the colliery as manager for 16 years and on his arrival there in 1861 Mr Park had already been there a number of years.

Note: Mr James Anderson was appointed Manager of the Old Farme Pit in 1861 when he was only 21 years of age. He held the appointment for some fifty years. He died in September 1916.

Interestingly, the Cuningar Loop of the River Clyde, where Farme Colliery was located, was also the location of one of the first municipal pumped water supplies in the world. Water filtered through sand into a reservoirs created within the Loop and flowed under the Clyde through innovative flexible pipes to two large beam engine pumps, known as Samson and Goliath, on the Dalmarnock side of the river. These pumped the water to distributing reservoirs in Sydney Street, Drygate, and Rottenrow. (Ref 70).

James Watt and Thomas Telford were involved in the design of this water supply, which commenced in 1807. As Farme Colliery opened around 1805 it is likely that it would have supplied coal for the engine boilers.

LOW AND HIGH CROSSHILL COLLIERY 1700s

Evidence of coal pits in the Low Crosshill area in the 1700s comes from a court case, in 1764, at a time when coal workers were bound to the colliery owner in a form of slavery.

In this case, a coal works was started on ground belonging to the town of Rutherglen and Robert Spence, and the coal was leased to James Scott. In 1755 James Scott gave up the lease for another, to the north of Glasgow. However, he took with him 13 miners that he had trained. Robert Spence successfully claimed that, a 'coalier' is not bound to a person, but to the coal which they worked (Ref 32).

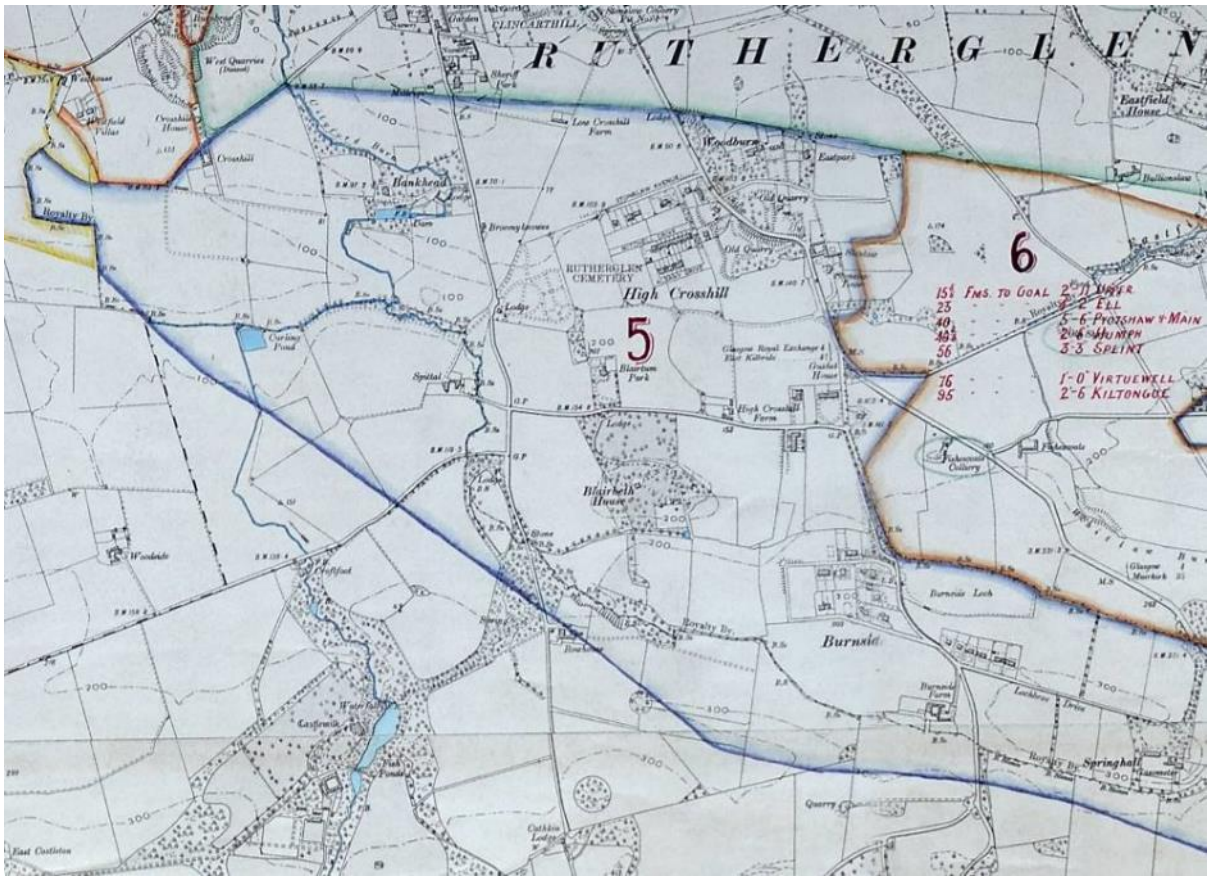
It was not until an Act of Parliament was passed in 1799, to "Explain and Amend the Laws Relative to Colliers in Scotland" that coal workers were released from this bond. Even then they were still bound until they had worked a further 3 to 7 years (depending on their age) for the owner.

The book "Rutherglen Lore" by William Ross Shearer, published in 1922, describes the area.

> *"The south of Rutherglen in early times was the Eldorado of the black diamond hunter, and within half a mile of old Stonelaw colliery (the shaft of which is enclosed within the four- square blocks of buildings facing Stonelaw School, there are upwards of twenty other shafts we could locate, but, in case it might lead to an exodus from the district, or a demand by residenters for a reduction of rent in consequence of the shafts proximity to their bedrooms we shall refrain from describing these too minutely.*
>
> *Nearest to old Stonelaw there were two shafts in what is now Rodger Drive, and one of these was 54 fathoms [99 metres] to the splint coal. The round circle marking the site of these on the grass may still be seen in the springtime. In Overtoun Park, opposite Bankhead Estate, another shaft was discovered many years ago, after it had fallen in.*
>
> *Two pits stood on the north of Albany Drive and one on the south; this is probably what was called Scott's or Crosshill. Balmoral Crescent [now Balmoral Terrace on Stonelaw Drive, opposite Buchanan Drive] covers the site of one of the Stonelaw pits [this shaft collapsed on the 13th February 1991 and was filled in]; within the woods stood another. In the Woodburn policies two shafts were sunk, and one at Eastpark.*
>
> *A pit, 54 fathoms [99 metres] to the Virgin coal, was sunk midway up Buchanan Drive; while the one at the top of the same drive was 64 fathoms [117 metres] to the Splint. Between the Cripple Children's School and the Whorlpit, a pit existed; while the battlemented portion of Stonelaw Tower is actually the engine-room of two pits that formerly stood there. There was also a pit behind the new motor garage at Burnside, and other two in the fields east of Springfield Park. The Honey Pit, opposite Fishescoats Farm on the East Kilbride Road, was so named by its owner because of its prolific output.*

Until within recent years, four other pits, two at Wellshot and two at Eastfield, were in constant operation".

In 1890 Rutherglen Town Council discussed leasing the coal measures at High Crosshill. The minute of this meeting is in Appendix 2 - .



This map shows the division of mining lease areas in Lanarkshire and identifies Low and High Crosshill in area 5, along with Bankhead and Spittal. They are in a separate lease from Stonelaw colliery, to the north, and the Wellshot collieries along Dukes Road (in area 6) (Ref 14).

The map above shows the location of four shafts of the Low Crosshill colliery, along and to the south of Roger Drive. The map also shows, as dotted lines, where the coal seams outcrop at ground surface. (Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018]).

The map above is an extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1859 and shows the location of what was, at that date, an old coal pit near Stonelaw Tower. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

Thomas Richardson map of 1795 showing the engine at Stonelaw Tower. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

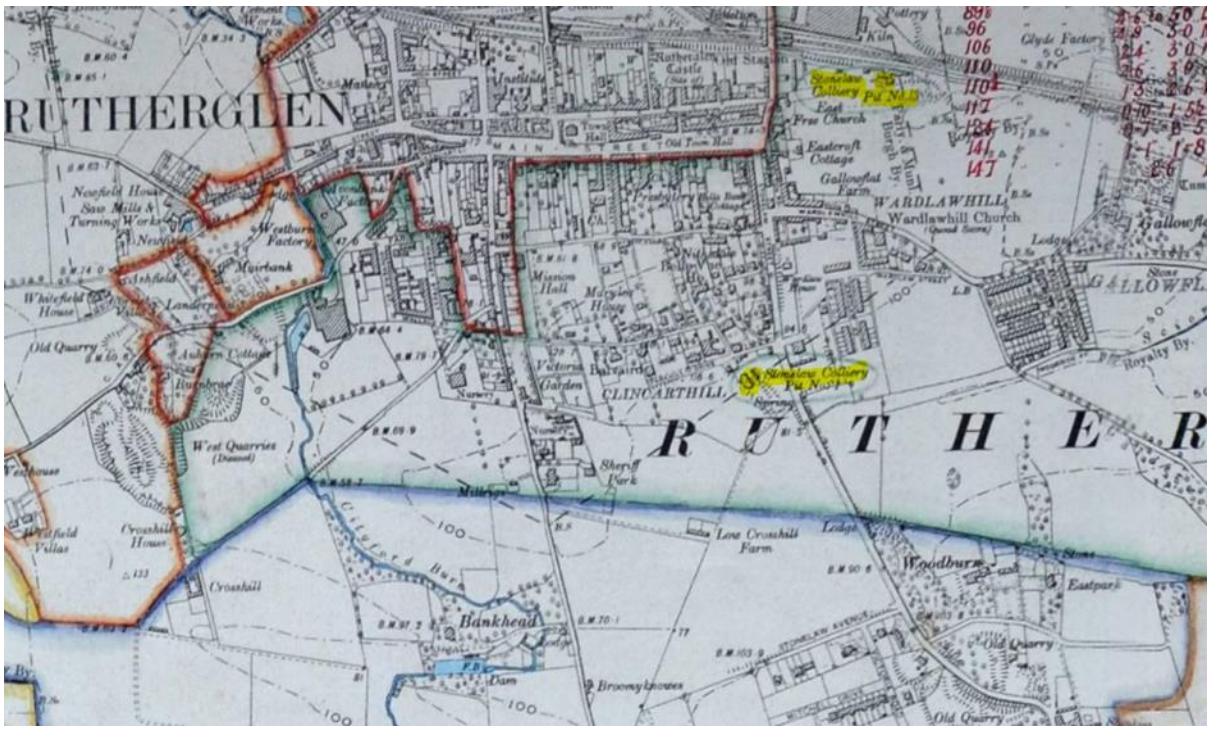
The Lanarkshire OS Name Book, 1858 (Ref 33) describes Stonelaw Tower as – “a superior dwelling of modern structure built on the site of a coal pit. There is a square built tower on the east side between 20 & 30 feet high. There is also, a small round tower on the north side of it, & another at the north east angle. There are several engine houses at coal in this neighbourhood, built in the style of a tower. "Stonelaw Tower" is feued from T. G. Buchanan Esqr. to Mr. Kennedy”.

In 1978, a colleague of one of the authors was involved in a front extension being made to the Safeway supermarket in Burnside. Trial bores were done on the site (what was the front car park) and it was established that the whole site was underlain by a worked-out coal seam about 6 metres below ground level. The workings were "stoop and room" and the void areas considerable. The building owners, who were renting the extension to Safeway, accepted that from a structural integrity point of view, the site had to be grouted up and they approached Safeway, who still owned the original building, to see if they would want to have the voids under the original building also grouted up. Safeway declined as they did not want to spend the money. The owners used a technique of drilling around the perimeter of the site and pouring in loads of small aggregate, to act as a retaining medium and they then grouted up the rest of the site using injected PVA based grout. The lack of co-operation from Safeway is why there is a row of double columns on the line of the old/new parts, to accommodate a flexible joint which would allow for differential settlement. Some time ago, trolleys used to run to the side in the aisle adjacent to the double columns, but this fall was obviously screeded out during the Tesco fit out.

On 13th February 1991, one of the abandoned shafts collapsed in front of a house in Stonelaw Road, between Crosshill Drive and Buchanan Drive. It is understood that the milkman knocked on the door and said there was a hole. The people in the house were decanted temporarily because the hole, which looked like a bell pit, required hundreds of tons of infill.

STONELAW COLLIERY 1774 – 1903

Stonelaw colliery opened in 1774, and comprised three pit shafts. No 1 pit was in Stonelaw Road, opposite Rutherglen Academy. No 2 and 3 pits were located to the east of Rutherglen Main Street beside the railway at Eastcroft.

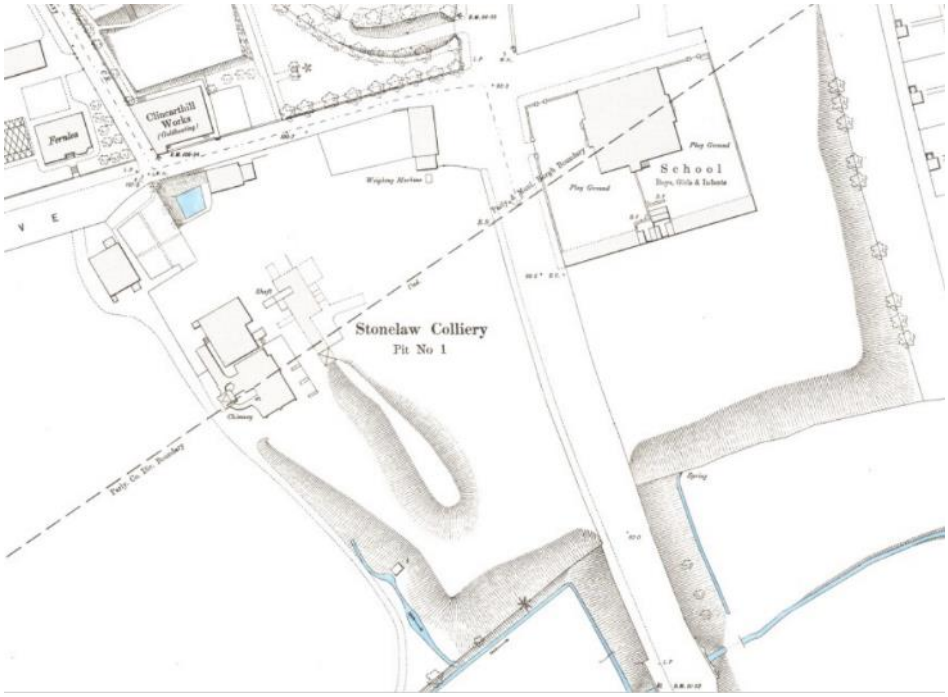


Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the boundary of the area worked by Stonelaw colliery (Ref 14), between Rutherglen Main Street, the railway and Low Crosshill.

NO 1 PIT

No 1 pit was located on Stonelaw Road. The Ordnance Survey Name Book for 1851 (Ref 26) records it as “A coal pit about 80 fathoms deep and about 30 years in use. The underground workings are not sufficiently extensive to show as a colliery. Wrought by the proprietor J R Reid esq, R Hood Manager”.

A mine abandonment plan



Rutherglen Town Plan of 1892, showing Stonelaw Colliery No 1 pit, opposite Rutherglen Academy, on the corner of Stonelaw Road and Parkhill Drive. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

Stonelaw No 1 Pit (copyright South Lanarkshire Council (rg.1984.15.30)).

No 1 pit shaft was 174m deep, the coal seam depths and thicknesses were:

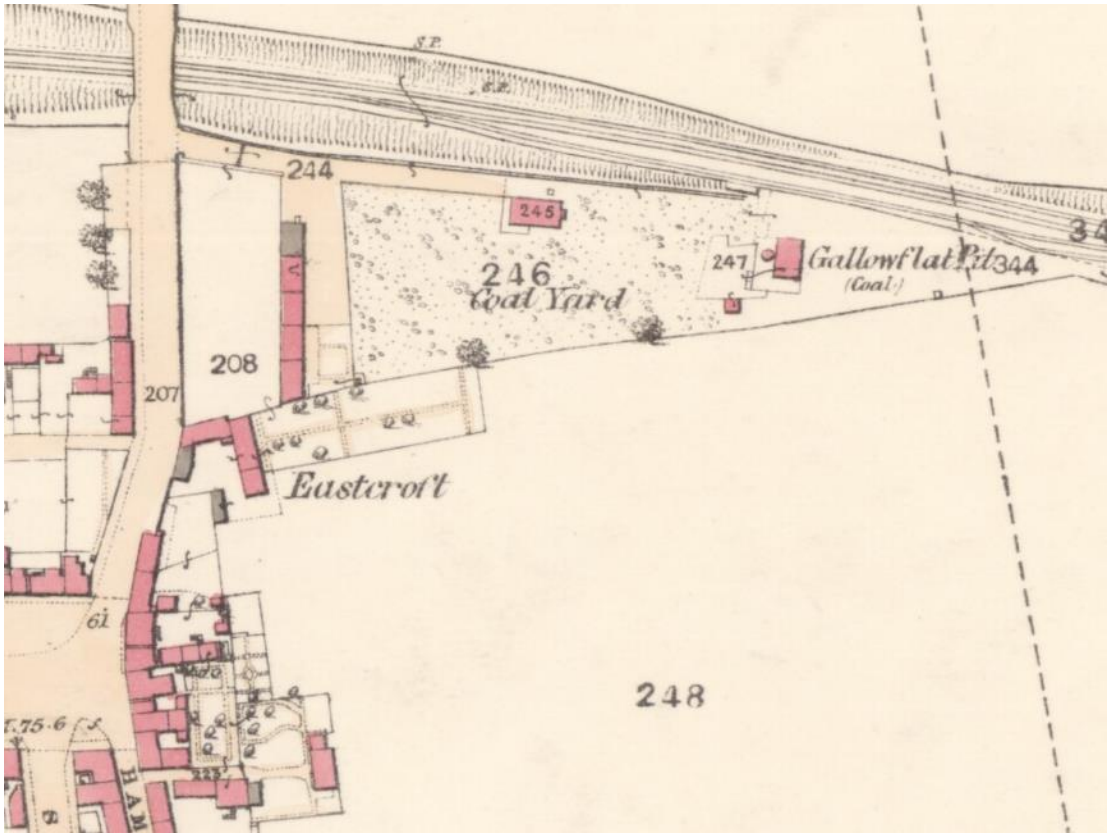
Seam	Depth (m)	Thickness (m)
Upper	124	1.37
Ell	154	
Main	165	1.55
Humph	185	0.81
Splint	192	1.07 + 0.23 fireclay and ironstone
Virgin	192	0.51

In 1901, there were 188 men working underground, with 52 on the surface. The manager was Alexander Anderson and the owner was the Farme Coal Company.

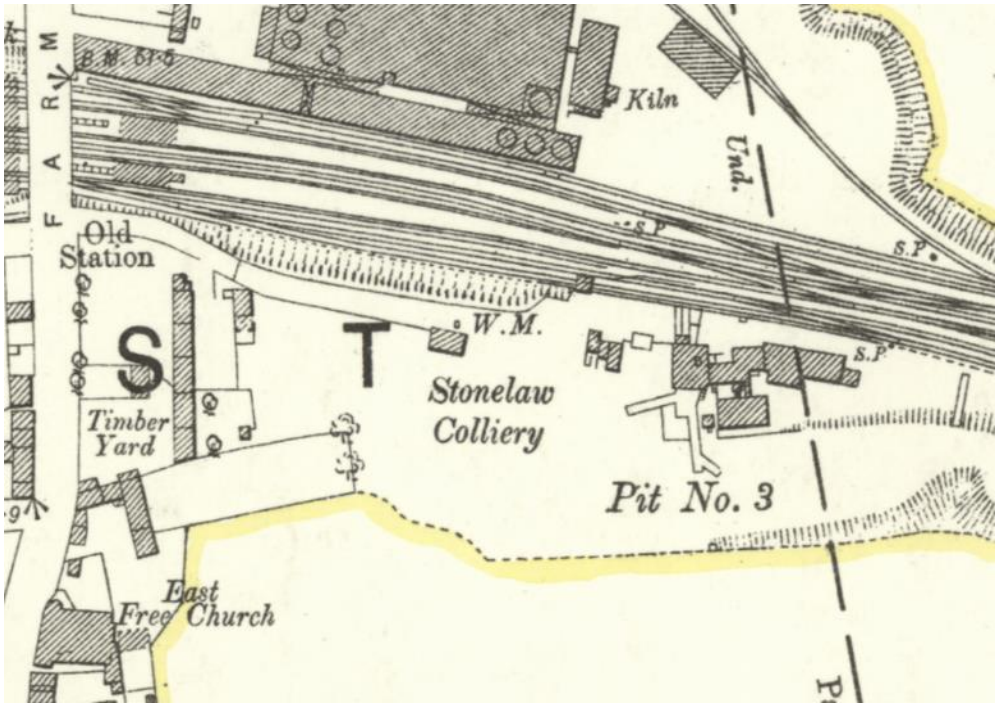
Hamilton Road (previously Wardlawhill Street) was once known by locals as "drossey brae" due to shale from Stonelaw Coal Pit used as a road surfacing (Ref 59).

After the colliery closed in 1903 the area around no 1 pit was developed for housing, but In 1966 the abandoned shaft collapsed, leaving a hole 158 metres deep and requiring three families to be evacuated while homes were demolished and the shaft was re-filled and capped (Ref 58).

NO 2 AND 3 PIT



1858 Ordnance Survey Map - Stonelaw No 3 Pit was also known as Gallowflat Pit. No 2 pit, not shown here, is shown on underground working plans and was about 50 metres to the west of No 3 pit. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).



The 1896 Ordnance Survey Map shows a more developed No3 pit, but does not show No2 pit. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

No 2 & 3 pit shafts were 155m deep with 176 metres to the Splint coal seam.

In 1825 Stonelaw colliery had two pumping engines, of 51, and 35 Horsepower, and three winding engines, each of 14 Horsepower (Ref 19).

In 1880 there were only four coal-washers in operation in Scotland. Although one was erected at the Stonelaw colliery shortly afterwards (Ref 31).

HISTORY OF STONELAW COLLIERY

Stonelaw colliery was opened in 1774 by Major (later General) John Spens of Stonelaw, a local land owner. The name of Spens is constantly to be found in all transactions affecting the Burgh. He was the last of a long line of the Spens family of Stonelaw, and was also known as a great agriculturist; he also worked the coal mines on his land. The Statistical Account of Scotland for Rutherglen, in 1845, shows:

> The agriculture of the parish has been greatly improved of late years. Inclosing, draining, and limeing has now become general in the parish. Ure, in giving great credit to Major Spens of Stonelaw, for his improvements in 1790, mentions, that to improve the soil, besides limeing and dunging, he purchased all the oyster-shells he could get in Glasgow, which he spread in the gin-tracks of his coal-works, where they were broken in pieces by the horses' feet, and reduced to excellent manure.

The Spenses of Stonelaw were related to another old family, the Grays of Dalmarnock. The Grays were one of the oldest coalmasters in the West of Scotland, one of whom, John Gray, Laird of Carntyne, opened up coalfields at Carntyne about 1630, he died in 1687.

In about 1821, John Gray of Scotstoun, a grandson of John Gray of Dalmarnock, inherited General Spens' estate, and upon his death Eastfield, Scotstoun and Stonelaw became the property of his cousin, James Gray

Buchanan. Thomas Gray Buchanan succeeded to the property on the death of his father in 1855, and his son in turn then became the proprietor (Ref 57).

The Statistical Account of Scotland for Rutherglen, in 1845, shows the colliery was worked by Mr Cunningham.

After remaining in the Reid family for over fifty years, latterly owned by Colonel Reid of Gallowflat, the business was taken over by the Farme Coal Company which operated it from 1892 until its closure in 1903.

The Lanarkshire Ordnance Survey Name Book, 1858 (Ref 33) describes Stonelaw colliery as - a coal pit about 80 fathoms (146 metres) deep, and about 30 years in use [an underestimate]. The underground workings are not sufficiently extensive to show as a colliery. Gallowflat [Stonelaw No 3] coal pit is described as - a coal pit 84 fathoms (154 metres) deep, and about 5 years open. Wrought by the proprietor [Colonel] J. Robertson Reid Esqr. The workings in this pit are not sufficiently extensive to show as a colliery. R. Hood, Manager, James Park, Clerk.

Robert Hood was the manager at Stonelaw in 1840. His son, Archibald Hood, formed the Lothian Coal Company in 1890, at which time they sank the Lady Victoria Colliery at Newtongrange, now the site of the Scottish National Mining Museum. Roberts grandson, James Archibald Hood endowed a Chair in Mining at the University of Edinburgh in 1924.

Alex Smart was the manager at Stonelaw in 1875.

In 1893 The Farme Coal Co Limited was established with a capital of £15,000 divided into shares of £10 each to takeover and carry on the Farm, Stonelaw and Eastfield Collieries in Lanarkshire. The following were the signatories to the application: Alexander Farie of Farm, Rutherglen; Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan of Scotstoun, Eastfield, Cambuslang; James Anderson, manager, Farm Colliery; Alexander Anderson, mining engineer, Rutherglen; R Glen, colliery manager, Rutherglen [Ref 76].

The coal trade around Rutherglen is well described in the 1922 book, Rutherglen Lore, by William Ross Shearer.

> "At an inquiry held in 1841, some exceedingly curious and highly interesting facts were ascertained on the subject of the trade and shipping to and from Rutherglen about this time (1770). Witnesses remembered the coal trade of Rutherglen, and boats coming to Rutherglen Quay. Some of the boats would carry 30 carts of coals of 12 cwts. Boats then went up as high as Clyde Iron Works, to a coal pit there called Smylie's Work, close upon the river on the north side. The men on board were Highlanders, and could speak little English. The coal pits of Stonelaw (Gray's), Crosshill (Scott's), and Wellshot (Fairie's) were the three then in operation, and the roads from Rutherglen to Glasgow were very bad and hilly. Sometimes in wet weather the carts sank to the nave, and trespassed on the ploughed land; it was a common thing to see coals carried camel-wise on horseback. In 1783 the price of coals at Stonelaw was 1s. 6d. per cart; but in 1785 the price at Wellshot rose to 5s. 6d. Owing to the Great Strike, £3 per ton was the price in the early part of 1921. The route from and to the pits was via the Main Street and Glasgow Road, the Quay road only being causewayed; part of the Quay still stands, and the old road still exists. It was a fine quay in those days. At a time when there was a fresh on the river, and boats could not be laden, as many as twenty could be seen lying of the Quay, waiting for coals. On ordinary occasions, only two or three boats would be waiting. In those days coals were scarce, and it was a; large pit which could put out sixty carts a day; so that a vessel was obliged to lie sometimes eight days for a cargo. Highland fishing boats with fresh herrings came to the Quay during the summer months; they were smaller than the coal boats. The bellman generally was sent through Rutherglen, announcing their arrival, and the populace flocked to the Quay to purchase them. The

boats which came to Rutherglen were lighters, fishing gabbarts, or long flat-bottomed boats. There were also masted vessels, carrying from twenty to forty tons burden; the masts were so constructed as to admit lowering them when passing through the old Bridge of Glasgow. The boats usually went down the river with the ebb tide, propelled by poles to keep them off the banks. After Rutherglen Bridge was built (1775), the coal boats ceased to ply, but the shipment of herring, timber, sand, slates, iron, etc., continued for some considerable time longer.

Reference to most of the collieries on the west and north of the town, including New Stonelaw, New and Old Farme, Crookston, Bankhead, Spittal, and the six pits of Dixon; but the south of Rutherglen in early times was the Eldorado of the "black diamond" hunter, and within half a mile of old Stonelaw colliery (the shaft of which is enclosed within the four-square blocks of buildings facing Stonelaw School), there are upwards of twenty other shafts we could locate, but, in case it might lead to an exodus from the district, or a demand by residenters for a reduction of rent in consequence of the shafts proximity to their bedrooms, we shall refrain from describing these too minutely. Nearest to old Stonelaw there were two shafts in what is now Rodger Drive, and one of these was 54 fathoms to the splint coal. The round circle marking the site of these on the grass may still be seen in the springtime. In Overtoun Park, opposite Bankhead Estate, another shaft was discovered many years ago, after it had fallen in. Two pits stood on the north of Albany Drive and one on the south; this is probably what was called Scott's or Crosshill. Balmoral Crescent covers the site of one of the Stonelaw pits; within the woods stood another. In the Woodburn policies two shafts were sunk, and one at Eastpark. A pit, 54 fathoms to the virgin coal, was sunk midway up Buchanan Drive; while the one at the top of the same drive was 64 fathoms to the splint. Between the Cripple Children's School and the Whorlpit, a pit existed; while the battlemented portion of Stonelaw Tower is actually the engine-room of two pits that formerly stood there. There was also a pit behind the new motor garage at Burnside, and other two in the fields east of Springfield Park. The Honey Pit, opposite Fishescoats Farm on the East Kilbride Road, was so named by its owner because of its prolific output. Until within recent years, four other pits, two at Wellshot and two at Eastfield, were in constant operation".

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Caledonian Mercury, 5 May 1787 - On Friday last, as a man was going down a coal pit at Rutherglen, he was scorched to death by an explosion of sulphurous fire.

Caledonian Mercury, 30 September 1790 - Friday a man was killed in one of the Rutherglen coal pits, by a piece of the roof falling on his head.

Caledonian Mercury 19 May 1800 - An accident happened on Friday to four men who were at work in a coal pit near Rutherglen; they were all miserably burnt, and one of them is since dead.

Caledonian Mercury, 15 March 1813 - On Tuesday, the 2nd current, a boy, the son of David Dun, collier in Rutherglen, while at his work in one of the coal-pits at Stonelaw, was much bruised by a fall from the roof; he was carried to the Infirmary, and died on Thursday following.

Caledonian Mercury, 2 December 1813 - On Monday morning, while a collier was descending a coal pit at Stonelaw, in the parish of Rutherglen, a new rope which had not been properly fastened to the drum, gave way, and twisted round the body of James Forrest who was standing at the mouth of the pit, into which he was precipitated to the bottom, a depth of 65 fathoms, and killed on the spot. The unfortunate man has left a wife and family.

Caledonian Mercury, 5 & 12 September 1814 - On Thursday morning, an explosion of foul air took place in General Spens's colliery at Rutherglen. Two young men, brothers, were killed; and another man, John Morrison, had his face and arms much burnt, and his body wounded by the pick-axes striking him, and fracturing his shoulder bone. He was taken to Glasgow Royal Infirmary but died on Monday night. He has left a wife and family.

Edinburgh Advertiser, 27 January 1818 - On Thursday, a labourer, of the name of Robert Morton, was killed in a coal-pit belonging to Mr Farie, near Stonelaw, by an explosion of firedamp. He has left a widow and family.

Edinburgh Advertiser, 2 November 1821 - A distressing accident took place at Stonelaw colliery, near Rutherglen, about half past five o'clock on Sunday afternoon. William Fell, manager, had been preparing the steam engine for work, and asked his son John, a young man of 21 years of age, to go to the house for candles, who, in turning, took the wrong side of the pit, and was immediately precipitated to the bottom, and killed on the spot; the body was instantly got out dreadfully bruised.

Glasgow Herald 1 September 1826 - On Tuesday afternoon, about 5 o'clock, when a man employed at one of the pits of the Stonelaw Colliery was ascending the pit, he unfortunately lost his hold and fell to the bottom. When taken up his head was much mangled, and he was quite dead. He was a sober industrious man and has left a wife and two children to lament his death.

Caledonian Mercury 8 January 1827 - We have been favoured by Mr. Nish, manager of Mr. Wrights mill, Barrowfield, with a specimen of a very singular petrification dug from a seam of coal in Stonelaw Colliery, 50 fathoms below the ground. The petrification consists of a thin piece of coal, with the distinct impression of a shoal of small flounders, in the position in which these fish swim, being ranged in separate rows. The eyes are prominent; and the small bones of the back may be easily traced, in all the fish, though they are more distinct in some than in others [this story was also reported in several other UK newspapers].

Major Accident, 15 May 1858 - Explosion of fire damp. Persons Killed: John Angus, sub-oversman, aged 45, James Hughes, roadsman, aged 26, Thomas Malloy, roadsman, aged 26. The colliery had been known for many years to be very free from firedamp, and two days before the accident a slight accumulation had been discovered in the mine. It was then stopped to enable the oversman to overhaul the brattice and lead the air more directly to the face. He and three assistants were in the act of dislodging it, when it is supposed to have come in contact with a naked light in an explosive state. The four men were all more or less burned, and three of them died from the effects of it. The oversman, the only survivor, says they worked with a safety lamp in the air course, but by a mistake of one of them, who had gone away to bring in wood, left an uncovered light in the return air course.

Glasgow Herald 11 August 1864 - About nine o'clock yesterday morning, a collier named Henry Dearie, residing at 155 Main St , Rutherglen, got his left leg broken below the knee while engaged in his work in the Old Stonelaw Colliery. It appears that when propping up the roof of his coal “face” in one of the rooms, a large stone suddenly fell from above striking him on the leg. Two other colliers came to his assistance and he was afterwards attended by Mr James Gorman, surgeon, Rutherglen, who set the leg.

Glasgow Herald 9 November 1874 - Mr. Robert Hood, manager at Stonelaw Colliery died after a few hours illness at his residence, Sheerwood Cottage, Rutherglen, on Saturday morning. Mr. hood had attained the age of 71. He had been 31 years manager to the Messers Reid at Stonelaw Colliery, had been at the works on Friday as usual, and returned home in the evening. After retiring to rest, he was seized with cramp in the stomach, which proved fatal. He was for many years a town councillor in the burgh of Rutherglen, and took a prominent part in all matters for promoting its interest; and he was much respected by the whole community.

Aberdeen Weekly Journal 15 November 1876 - A sad accident happened to a father and son on Friday forenoon in Stonelaw Colliery, Rutherglen, where they were employed as miners. While working at the "face" a fall of stones from the roof killed the son instantaneously, and severely injured the father. The latter was as soon as possible seen by Dr R A M'Kechnie and was afterwards conveyed home. Father and son are named respectively Joseph M'Kee and George M'Kee, the latter being about 16 years of age.

Glasgow Herald 27 January 1880 - At a Summary Court yesterday before Sheriff Spens, three Rutherglen miners - David Reid, Main St; John Edmonston King Street; and William Wastewater, Smith Square - were charged with contravention of the Mines Regulation Act 1872 in so far as on the 19th November last, while at work in No 3 Pit at Stonelaw Colliery they had used, or had in their possession, for blasting, a steel pricker. They pleaded guilty and were fined 10 shillings and 6 pence, with the alternative of two days imprisonment.

Glasgow Herald 26 May 1880 - Yesterday morning while an elderly man named James McCormick, residing in Main Street, was assisting at shunting operations on the lye at Stonelaw Colliery, his arm got caught between the buffers, and was so severely crushed and fractured that it is thought amputation may be necessary. Dr Gorman, who was in attendance, ordered his removal to the Royal Infirmary.

Glasgow Herald 14 December 1880 – At a Rutherglen Town Council meeting, a Letter was read from Mr. R Muir, manager, Stonelaw Colliery, requesting to know if the Council contemplated making the river at Rutherglen Quay suitable for loading coal, as some Greenock customers would prefer to have their coal sent by water.

Glasgow Herald 28 December 1880 – Yesterday forenoon an accident, which proved instantaneously fatal, happened to John Yuille, age 53 years, one of the best-known miners in the town, where he had resided for a long period of years. Deceased was at work with his son Archibald in No 1 Coalpit, Stonelaw Colliery, and having fired a blast was proceeding to prop the roof which the concussion and disturbance had left in an unsafe condition. While digging a hole for the prop, which was rather long, a large massive stone came away suddenly upon him, crushing him to the pavement. His son, who was within a yard of the old man, escaped miraculously without injury. The assistance of a number of men required to be got to remove the stone from Yuille when it was found that his forehead had been smashed in by the stone, and death must have resulted instantaneously. The body was removed to the residence of deceased at 5 Hamilton Road.

Glasgow Herald 25 February 1881 – Yesterday some alarm was caused in Rutherglen by the report that No 3 Coal Pit, Stonelaw Colliery, situated contiguous to the railway station, was on fire. It proved to be the "upcast" shaft used for ventilating purposes, the wood-work of which had by some means caught fire; and attention was first directed to the occurrence by volumes of smoke issuing from the mouth of the shaft. The burgh fire brigade turned out promptly, and going down the ordinary shaft with the hose pipes, had soon two jets of water playing on the fire - a plentiful supply of water being got from the coal workings. It required, however, about six hours' continuous labour before the flames were entirely got under, and the damage must be very considerable.

Glasgow Herald 29 September 1881 – Yesterday forenoon an explosion of firedamp took place in No 1 Pit, Stonelaw Colliery, belonging to Mr. F R Reid, whereby a miner named John Hutchison, 21, residing at Smith Square, Rutherglen, was severely burned about the face and arms. He was employed at the face of the hard coal seam at the time.

Glasgow Herald 12 December 1882 – Last night at the monthly meeting of the Town Council a letter was read from Mr John Park, manager of the Stonelaw Colliery, intimating that a subsidence had taken place on the lands of High Crosshill, and that one or two parties had had a narrow escape. The matter was remitted with powers to the Committee on the lands of High Crosshill.

Glasgow Herald 14 January 1884 – On Saturday morning a brusher named James Bell, residing at Mordaunt Street, Bridgeton, Glasgow, met with a serious accident at No 3 Pit, Stonelaw Colliery. He had placed a shot of gunpowder in the roof of the humph coal seam, the fuse of which apparently had been cut too short, and before he had time to escape a large quantity of the debris fell on him, breaking his right thigh bone, cutting his head, and injuring him about the body. Dr Gorman was early in attendance and ordered his removal to the Royal Infirmary.

Glasgow Herald 29 June 1887 - Yesterday morning, about eight o'clock, a miner name David Hart (40), residing at 230 Main St, Rutherglen, was killed in Old Stonelaw Colliery, belonging to Francis Robertson Reid, Gallowflat. Deceased ,with some others, was working at the splint coal seam repairing the roof in the main road, when a fall from the roof of two stones, weighing each about 5 cwt, took place, striking and killing him instantaneously. Deceased was unmarried and lived along with his sister and two brothers at the above address.

Dundee Courier 1 August 1895 – Fatal Accident Inquiry - The death of Quinton Lawrie, employed as a brusher in Stonelaw Colliery, Rutherlen, which occurred there on the ninth inst. Evidence was led to show that he had overstrained himself in trying to replace a hutch, and the jury brought in a verdict that death was caused to rupture of an internal organ.

EASTFIELD COLLIERY c1758 - 1895

The Lanarkshire OS Name Books, dated 1858 (Ref 33) notes that Eastfield

> "is the most extensive coalfield in the parish and it has been wrought for about a century. There were six pits in it at one time. At present there are about two used. It is expected to last for thirty years. On the side of the Turnpike road, north of No. 4 pit, there is a row of colliers houses without a proper name. The colliery is wrought by the proprietor - T.G. Buchanan Esqr. James Dunn, Manager. Note The Statistical Account of Scotland for Rutherglen, in 1845, shows the colliery was worked by Mr Gray.
>
> At Eastfield - Long rows of dwellings occupied by colliers employed in Messrs: Dunlop & Buchanan's pits. It is considered a village. There is a school for the use of the colliers' children. It is the property of Mr. Buchanan, & Mr. Dunlop. Valuation roll J. Baird, Factor J. Dunn, Factor.
>
> Eastfield School - A school house built by Mr Buchanan for the use of the Colliers' children in the village of Eastfield. The Schoolmaster fee is supported by stoppages made from the Colliers' wages. There is no support whatever from the Parish. Thos. Hamilton, Teacher, James Dunn, Factor Valuation Roll".

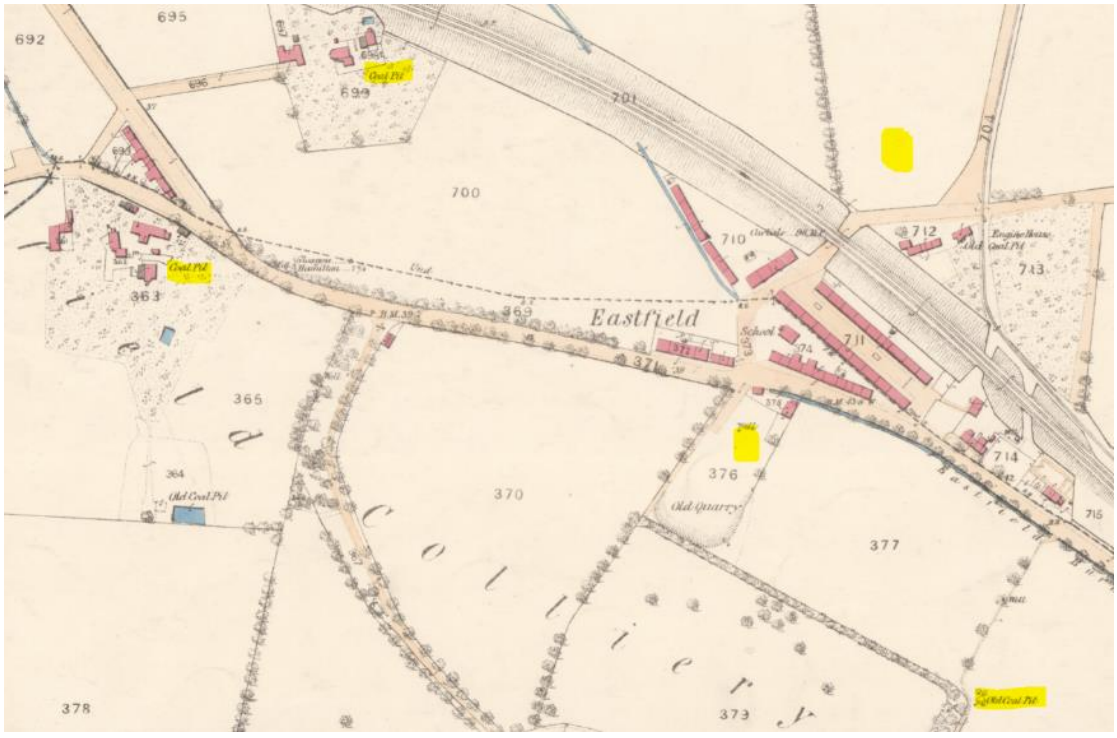
Eastfield Colliery was owned by J G Buchanan from 1854 – 1865, by T G Buchanan from 1868 – 1885, by James R Gray in 1890 and by Farme Coal Co in 1895.

Eastfield colliery latterly operated from two shafts (No 4 and No 5), one located near the Richmond Park Laundry / Lidl supermarket roundabout on the road from Rutherglen to Cambuslang, and the other, to the NE, in the John Hillhouse Industrial estate off Cambuslang Road near the railway line.

Eastfield No 2 shaft and No 5 shaft, beside the railway as shown on the 1864 OS map, were located and grouted in 1981 (Ref 22).

In 1825 Eastfield colliery had two pumping engines, of 72 and 54 Horsepower, and two winding engines, of 23 and 14 Horsepower (Ref 19).

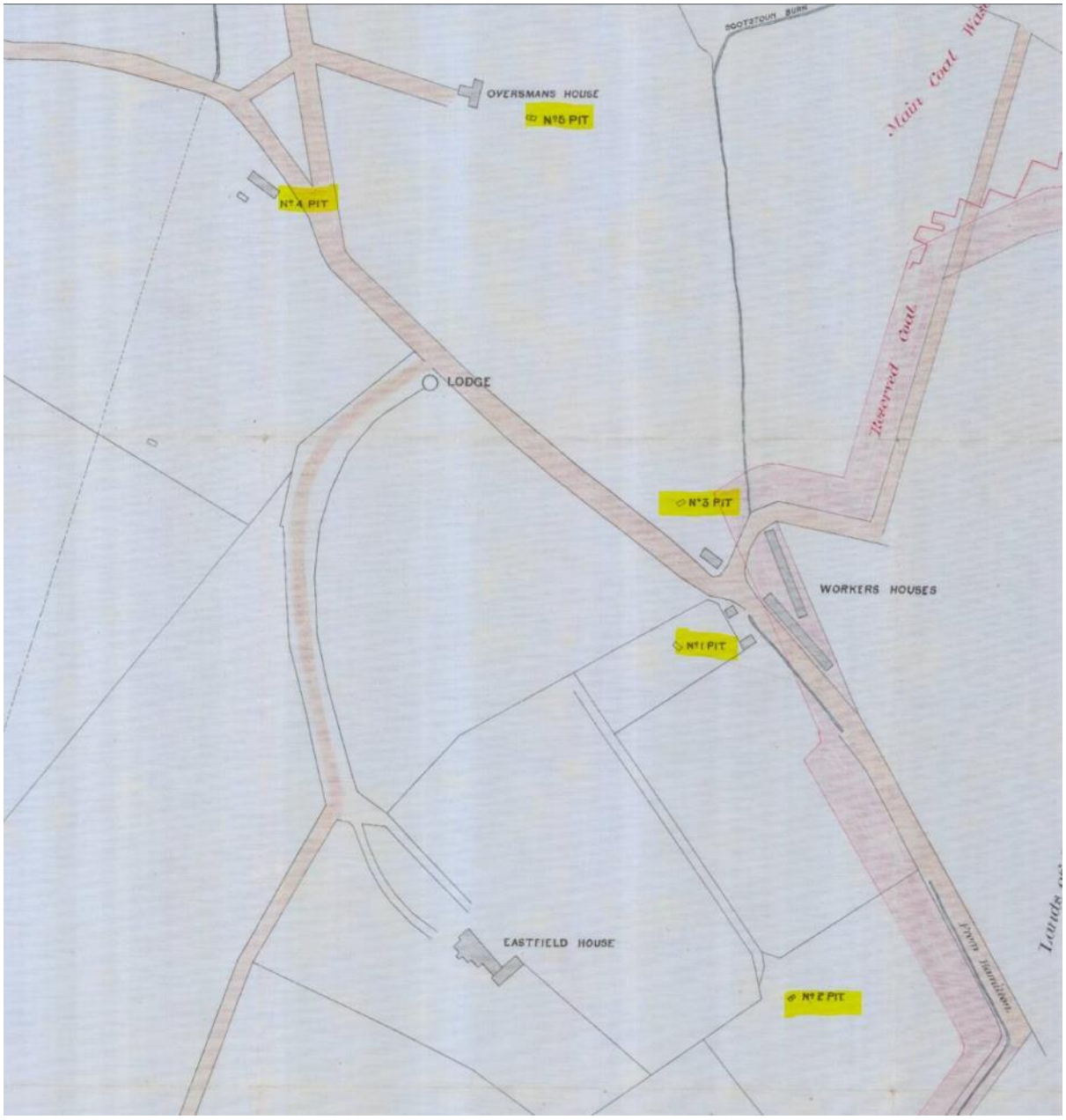
Photograph showing former location of No 4 pit bing, behind the stone wall beyond the roundabout (C Findlay 2017).



1859 OS map showing the location of the five pits of Eastfield colliery. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

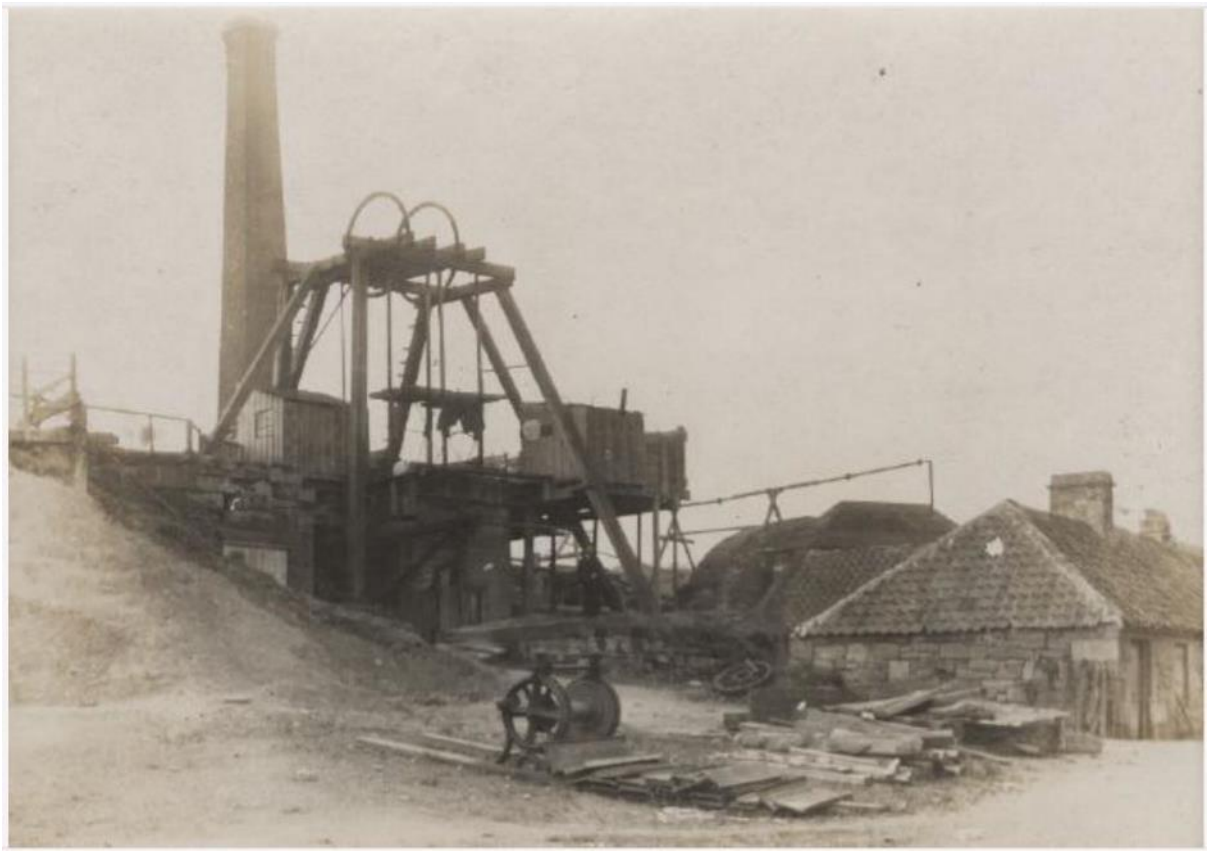
Dandy Rows, looking west on Glasgow Road, at the junction of Main Street and Cambuslang Road, the area later occupied by Richmond Park Laundry roundabout and Lidl supermarket (Photo from Ed Boyle collection).

Eastfield miners' row looking east on Glasgow Road, at the junction with Bogleshole Road (Photo from Ed Boyle collection).



Mine plan showing the location of the five Eastfield pits (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved.)

No 4 shaft was sunk to a depth of 130 metres to the Splint coal, while No 5 shaft, also known as the Haugh Pit, was sunk to a depth of 154 metres again to the Splint coal.



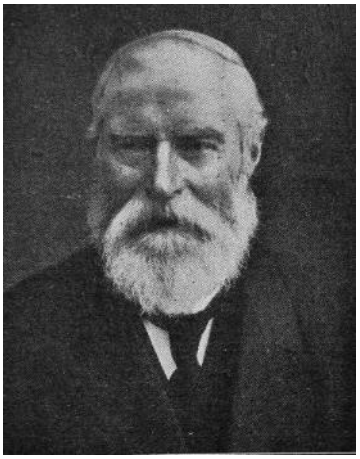
Photograph of Eastfield Colliery No 4 Pit. The bing would be made up of boiler ash from the winding / pumping engine (copyright South Lanarkshire Council).

Eastfield No 2 shaft, as shown on the 1864 OS map, was located and grouted in 1981 (Ref 22).

Co-author Joe Cunningham recalls that there was a spoil heap opposite Richmond Park Laundry at the Cambuslang Road / Hamilton Road junction. This may well have been part of Eastfield Colliery (No 5) as an old abandoned shaft adjacent to the Caledonian Railway is indicated on the 1914 Sheet. The Upper coal is at 38 / 47 Fathoms (69 / 86 metres) in this area and the Splint coal is at 77 / 85 Fathoms (141 / 155 metres).

Three earlier shafts were located around the foot of Bogleshole Road, where many of the miners' cottages were also located.

Leasing Plan, c1896, of the colliery lease area (number 4) showing the extent of the Eastfield workings. This same lease area also covers Farme colliery, to the north, and Stonelaw to the west (Ref 14).



Details, and particularly photographs, of individual coal miners of that time are few but one who worked and progressed from Eastfield was Mr Daniel Stalker. He was born at Greenbar, near Campbeltown, in 1843. His parents moved to Rutherglen and at the age of ten he started work as a trapper (opening and closing ventillation doors to allow passage of men and hutches) in Laigh Pit, Eastfield. He also worked for a short time in Stonelaw and in No 5 Govan colliery. As a young man he moved to Dalzell colliery , Motherwell and briefly to Larkhall. He finally settled down at the Archibald Russell company's Greenfield colliery, Hamilton, retiring as under manager in 1921, aged 78 (Ref 34).

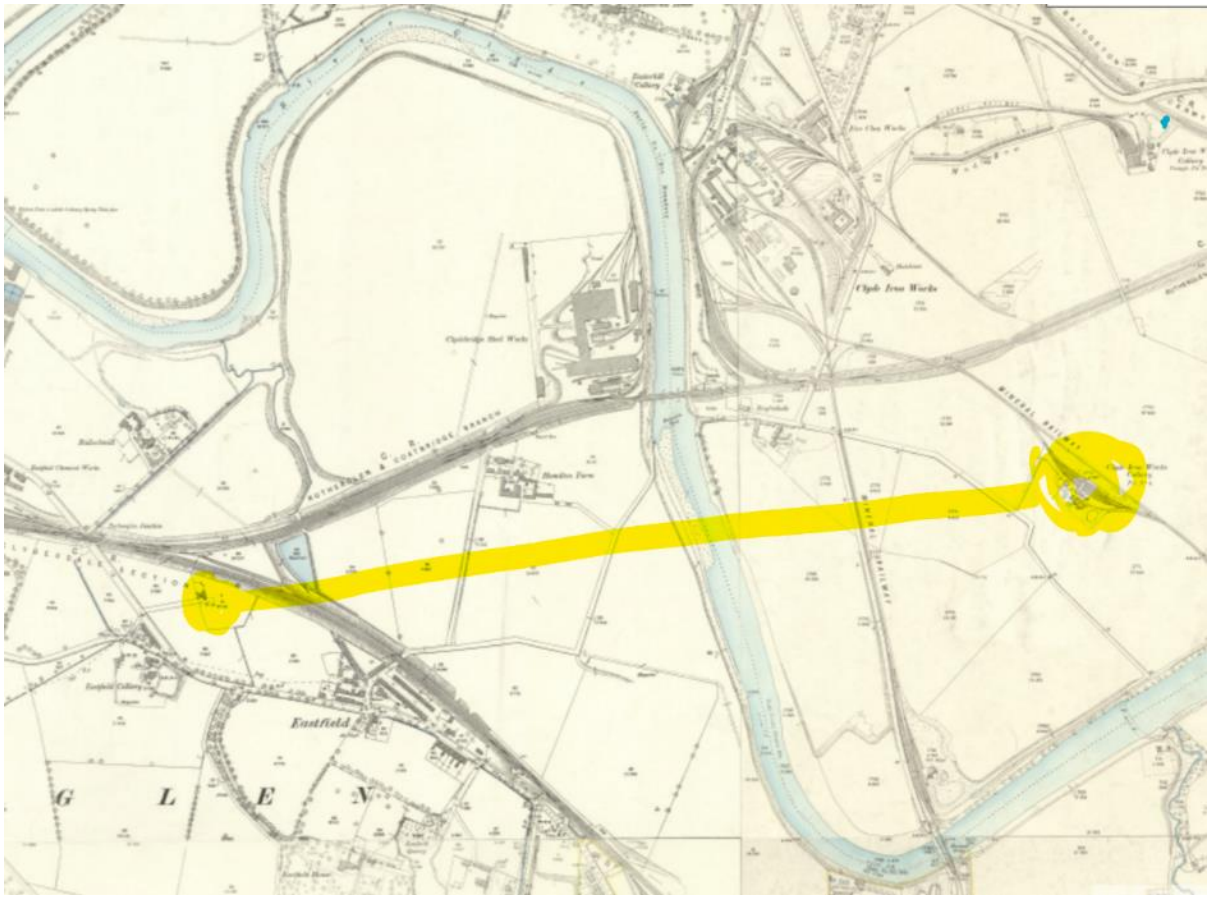
Another, unidentified, miner describes his experience of Eastfield (Ref 35).

> "Born in 1903. I left school and went to work in Bogleshole Pit, also known as the Big Pit and sometimes the Number Four. I started in the blacksmith's shop, where the pit ponies were shod. When I turned nineteen (1922) I went to the Pit Manager and asked for a job underground, as the workers there got more money. He gave me the job of taking the ponies from one pit to another and I started the following Monday.

Going down the shaft for the first time, my stomach was churning with the rapid descent of the cage, but that was nothing compared to crossing the River Clyde, underground with two pit ponies in tow. The nearer we got to the river, the faster the water ran down the tunnel walls and I felt that the roof was ready to burst burying us in a watery grave.

I was so terrified by the time we reached the Eastfield Pit, that I left the ponies with my mate, scrambled up the tunnel walls and walked back to the Bogleshole Pit, via the main road, and handed in my notice. The following Monday I started in the blacksmith's shop, in Dunlop's Steel Works, where I stayed until I retired in 1968".

Note – This story is dated 1922 but we believed Eastfield Colliery closed before this date. However, the Farme Colliery Co had become the owner of Eastfield colliery in 1895 and Farme colliery was operating until 1931. An abandonment plan for the Humph coal seam at Farme Colliery shows that the southern portion of the Humph coal was worked towards Eastfield No 4 and 5 pits. The underground journey would also have gone through the old workings of Hamilton Farme Colliery, which was abandoned in 1854.



Ordnance Survey Map (1896) showing the approximate route, under the River Clyde with the ponies, from the No 4 Big Pit, to Eastfield pit. (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland).

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

15 March 1813, Caledonian Mercury - On Wednesday last, while Andrew Arbucle was at work at Eastfield coal-pit, a large stone fell from the roof on his back, which is said to be broken in several places; he was carried to the Glasgow Infirmary, and little hopes are entertained of his recovery.

Caledonian Mercury February 16, 1815 - Between one and two o'clock on Sunday morning on Rutherglen bridge, as Mr Smith of Eastfield colliery was returning from Glasgow, he was seized at the centre of the bridge by persons whom he neither saw nor heard, and in an instant thrown over the lower parapet wall into the river. Providential he alighted on his feet, and was enabled to make his way to a sand bank adjoining the pier at the Rutherglen side of the mid arch. Here he began to call for help; and in a few minutes his cries were heard by a serjeant of artillery, who was returning to Rutherglen along the Main Street of Bridgeton. The serjeant inquired of a person whom he met dressed in women's cloaths, what the cries where, but he got no answer. He then put the same question to two men, who told him they were the sounds of the watchmen calling the hours in Glasgow. On advancing, however, he soon ascertain the truth, and having roused some of the neighbours, he proceeded he procured a rope, which being lowered to Mr Smith, and tied by him round his body, effected his deliverance. Mr Smith was very much hurt by the fall and remains, we are sorry to learn, much indisposed. As there was no attempt made at robbery, the diabolical crime must have originated wholly in revenge.

Caledonian Mercury 9 July 1818 - On Sunday, a young man, visiting a friend at Eastfield colliery, near Glasgow, was killed by going within range of the flywheel of a steam engine.

Scotsman 26 July 1823 - On Thursday morning, while one man and two boys were descending the shaft of a coal pit between Cambuslang and Rutherglen, the bucket caught upon a projection in the pit and overset, when the three unfortunate individuals were precipitated to the bottom, a depth of 27 fathoms. The man was observed to breath only twice after he was brought up, but the two boys were killed on the spot. The man had been only three weeks married.

Caledonian Mercury 26 July 1823 - On Thursday morning at Eastfield Colliery near Rutherglen, as a married man named Smith, and two boys, Gilmour and Brown, were descending the pit, the bucket came in contact with some boards and precipitated them to the bottom, 30 fathoms, and they were killed on the spot.

Glasgow Herald 18 September 1826 - Saturday forenoon, a man of the name of Hunter, a collier, was killed in one of the coal-pits at Eastfield, near Rutherglen, by the falling of the roof. He has left a wife and three children.

Glasgow Herald 25 June 1847 - Presentation - on Tuesday evening the 22nd instant a deputation from the workmen employed at Eastfield colliery, the property of James Gray Buchanan Esq, waited on William Hynd Esc, mining engineer and manager of these works, at his residence Eastfield House, and in name of the workmen and subscribers presented him with a splendid silver tea service and coffee pot, the latter bearing the following inscription: “Presented with a silver tea service to William Hynd, Esq, mining engineer and manager of Eastfield Colliery, by the underground and other workmen and a few friends as a mark of esteem for his talents and upright conduct - June 22nd 1847.” This was accompanied by the present of a chaste and valuable gold ring to Mrs Hynd.

Scotsman 2 March 1861 - On Wednesday last, while several boys were amusing themselves at the mouth of the second shaft of the Low [Laigh] Pit, Eastfield, one of the lads named John Jackson, 14 years of age, residing in King Street, Rutherglen, accidentally fell down the shaft to the bottom, a depth of 13 fathoms. The poor boy was killed on the spot.

Glasgow Herald 6 March 1861 - The Accident at Eastfield Colliery- To the Editor of the Glasgow Herald - Sir - In reference to the paragraph in Saturday's Herald regarding the death of John Jackson in the low [Laigh] pit, Eastfield Colliery, I beg to inform you that the pit, from the surface is 60 fathoms in depth. The blind pit is 260 fathoms, from the bottom of the above pit, from the surface, and in this blind pit there are traps or ladders for going up or down. At the dinner hour (from 2 to 3pm) on Wednesday last, eight or nine of the boys assembled at the top of this blind pit, and the frolics you speak of were their casting stones and mud at one another till the whole of their lights were put out and two of them, named Jackson and Currie climbed up on top of the pithead frame which is over this blind pit, and, being in the dark, on coming down Jackson fell into the pit, and so was killed. All being in the dark, none of the other eight can say how it happened. May I ask you to insert the above in the Herald. - I am, Sir, your respectfully, James Dunn, Manager, March 5 1861.

Hamilton Advertiser 17 January 1863 - Accident at Eastfield Laigh Coal Pit – On Tuesday morning while the miners were descending to their work, an accident occurred which luckily had no fatal termination. Three men were in the cage, when the cage stuck fast about 6 fathoms from the bottom. A fire lit near the bottom of the pit for ventilating purposes was sending clouds of smoke up the shaft so dense that the three men were in danger of suffocation. One of them managed to get out of the cage and partly falling and partly scrambling to the bottom escaped with a few bruises. The other two named respectively William Watson and James Stewart, were not so fortunate, both falling out of the cage when overcome with the smoke and getting considerably hurt – Watson receiving severe injuries about the legs and Stewart getting his collar bone broken. Both were removed home.

Glasgow Herald 9 July 1864 - Yesterday morning, about five o'clock, a redsman named Thomas Conway, residing at No 3 Thompson’s Lane, Calton, was killed. He was employed in the Laigh Coal Pit, Eastfield Colliery, belonging to T G Buchanan Esq, of Scotstown, and after finishing his labour yesterday morning he was in the act of stepping into the cage at the bottom of the pit for the purpose of being raised to the surface, when he was struck on the head by a stone weighing about 56 pounds, which fell from some part of the shaft. The stone smashed the iron roof of the cage, and the poor man's head was so dreadfully shattered that death was instantaneous. Deceased was 26 years of age, and unmarried. A redsman named Robert M’Dade was standing near deceased when the accident occurred, and he made a narrow escape.

Glasgow Herald 13 October 1869 - Yesterday, a miner named Dominick Finneran (18), residing at 130 Main Street Rutherglen, met with a serious accident in Eastfield High Coal Pit, belonging to Mr Buchanan. It appears that Finneran was requested by John Allardice, underground manager, to proceed towards an old shaft and fetch a hammer. He did so, and immediately on reaching the old shaft an explosion of foul air took place. Finneran, fearing that he would be burned to death, leaped down the shaft, which is 14 feet from the spot on which he stood. He was very severely burned on the face and arms from the effects of the explosion, and his body was severely bruised by the fall. Finneran was attended by Dr Gorman, Rutherglen.

Glasgow Herald 12 November 1873 - Yesterday morning, about half-past five o'clock at No 4 Coal Pit, Eastfield, two colliers, named Allan Maxwell, residing a 43 Mill Street Rutherglen, and James Speirs residing at Eastfield, were deprived of life. Maxwell and Speirs and other two men named John Latta collier, residing at 15 Cathcart Street, Rutherglen, and Michael M'Cue, drawer, residing at 13 Ferrie Street, Rutherglen, went into a cage at the mouth of the pit to be lowered down the shaft to their work. But, when it had descended about 10 fathoms, the rope slipped off the pulley on the platform, and at the same moment the spokes of the pirn broke and the cage dropped down the shaft with a sudden jerk. Maxwell and Speirs were thrown out, and fell to the bottom from a height of about 23 fathoms, Maxwell was killed on the spot, and Speirs died in about two hours afterwards. The cage was thrown out of the slides by the force of the jerk, but fortunately Latta and M'Cue succeeded in holding on, and saved their lives. Latta was slightly injured on the right knee and thigh, but luckily M'Cue escaped scathless. Maxwell and Speirs were each about 18 years of age, and unmarried.

COLLIERIES IN THE CAMBUSLANG AREA

Coal mining in Cambuslang can be traced back to at least 1490 (Ref 8) and there will have been many adits, and bell pits located where coal outcropped to the surface. Some of these were worked in the Borgie Glen, Cambuslang public park, East and West Coats, where there were ingonee mines and stair pits.

John Anderson, in his book Coal, records that “mention is made of the coal heughs at Morriston and Greenlees where coal was wrought to a large extent in the seventeenth century. By this time the working had proceeded to a considerable depth in some of the "ingonees" and the stair pits, one of which I have seen in our own parish, on Greenlees estate, also other two, one in the upper reaches of Borgie Glen and one other in the lower part of the glen Sir Ludovic Stewart of Morriston coal heughs”.

This photograph shows a cutting in the rock at the side of the Kirk Burn in Cambuslang Park. We believe that this is probably the entrance to an ingonee mine (C Findlay, 2017).

An article in the Cambuslang Advertiser in 1922 (Ref 61), describes the park and the Tod’s Hole mine.

> "Ever since I can remember the glen from the bridge over which the coal whirlies at one time ran up to the bridge in Greenlees Road was called the Kirkburn Glen.
>
> That was long before quarrying had begun in the place. The feature of the glen at that time was the Tod’s Hole, Samson’s Stone and the Riven Rocks which overhung the place. There was also a great profusion of hazel bushes and wild flowers. Samson’s Stone was a huge boulder which lay in the burn half way up the glen and was always a treat for the children to see, but it has long since been removed from its place. The Tod’s Hole was a mine, which the fox had run into during a hunt at some remote period. It was a large hole and it was common enough for some of the miners who wrought in

the Cairns Pit to come out by it when going home from work. I can remember hearing of some boys nearly getting lost in it, and that caused it to be closed. The glen was at one time a favourite resort for chaps from Kirkhill who wanted to have a quiet spell, a picnic or, as it was styled by some folk, a jollification. The owl had its home in the Riven Rocks, and when a fire was kindled by those on picnic it got smoked out and had to take flight. By and by quarrying was begun in the place and that soon gave the glen a very different look from what it had had."

William Forrest Map of 1816 Showing Coal Pits to the south of Brownside Road and at Burnside. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

With the rapid increase in demand for coal to fuel the industrial revolution larger and deeper collieries were developed and the Lanarkshire coalfield was divided into leasehold areas by the land owners. The first Ordnance Survey maps, in the 1850s, show Lanarkshire in great detail for the first time and record the location of the above ground workings at these collieries.

Below ground, it was not until 1850 that The Inspection of Coal Mines Act required “a coal mine owner to maintain maps and plans showing details of all workings of the mine and the inspector can demand that maps and plans be made.” In 1872 the Coal Mines Regulation Act and Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act made it a statutory requirement for plans of abandoned mines to be deposited with the Secretary of State unless there had been less than 12 men employed below ground.

The Act only required plans showing the boundaries of the mine workings at the time of abandonment. They did not have to show the surface position relative to the workings, or the depth or cross sections of workings.

These deposited plans are now held by the Coal Authority, in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire. However, the many workings abandoned before this time are unrecorded and, probably, lost forever.

The Cambuslang collieries, for which some records exist, are:

	Opened	Closed
Cambuslang Village Pit		1800
Cambuslang Tansyknoll No 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1820	1879
Hamilton Farm-No 1, 2, 3, 4, Corner, Haugh, Rosebank	C1800	c1862
Fishescoates – No 1, 2	Pre 1880	c1910
Coats Park	1925	1958
Wellshot	1700s	1907
Silverbank (or Fairies Pit)	Pre 1852	1897
Orion Pit		
Greenlees	1947	1957
East Greenlees	C1885	1918
Kirkhill (Toll Pit)	1875	1904
Gateside – No 1, 2, Westburn	1890	1946
Gilbertfield – No 1, 2, East Greenlees No 3	1885	1918
Flemington – No 1, 2	1870s	
Dechmont No 1, 2, 3, 4, Letterick	1890	1931
Loanend, Dechmont No 3 Pit		
Westburn – No 1, 2	1873	1922
Hallside - Newton No 1, 2	1873	1922
Bardykes	1874	1949 / 1962
Newton	1850s	1964
Kenmuirhill - Newton No 4	Pre 1893	Pre 1934
Blantyreferme 1&2	1894	1962
Blantyreferme No 3	1850	1964
Blantyre 1 & 2 (And 5) (Dixons)	1865	1957

The Statistical Account of Lanarkshire, published in 1851, records that in 1790 about 62 men, young and old, were employed in these collieries; in 1851 100 were employed. In 1851 there were 7 collieries, in which 3,426 person were employed. The total number of houses in the parish was 4,611, while the number occupied by miners was 1,593 - that is 35% of the total.

In 1778 the output of coal from Cambuslang was 6000 carts/year. By 1790 the output had increased to 25,000 carts/year (Ref 24). By the 1800s, however, the newer pits, with the advantage of steam power for winding and pumping could reach an average record of 1,000 tons daily.

By the early 1900s Wellshot (on Dukes Road), Dechmont, Loanend, Gilberlfield and the Toll Pit, with Newton and Westburn had all closed. With them and earlier in the 1860s went the "Colliers' Acres", granted to the colliers by the Duchess of Hamilton in 1688 for their “but and ben houses and kailyards” in East and West Coats mining villages. They were replaced by the villas of the present Brownside Road.

In 1951 Bardykes, Blantyeferme No.3 at Newton and Greenlees Mine (opened c. 1948) were still operating, but all closed in the 1950s and 60s.

With the technological advances in steelmaking, manufacturing and production around the middle of the 19th century there was a great expansion throughout the Cambuslang Coalfield with nine collieries in 1896 employing a total manpower of around 2930 persons.

Such expansion had been required to meet the demands of local industry such as the Clyde Iron Works, Clydebridge steelworks, Newton steelworks, dye houses, railways and increased numbers of households.

Similarly, this expansion was mirrored throughout the country and Cambuslang was surrounded with similar mining growth in areas such as Blantyre, Broomhouse, Carmyle, Mount Vernon, Tollcross, Rutherglen and Uddingston.

This expansion continued unabated until 1913 just prior to the First World War, when the recorded annual production for Lanarkshire was in excess of 21 million tons.

In the minutes of a meeting held by the Institution of Mining Engineers near the start of the 20th century it was stated that at the present levels of production within the Clyde Valley Coalfield, the working reserves would be exhausted by 1965, unless the Lower Coal Measures were made available and in turn exploited. Unfortunately, in the Cambuslang area the Lower Coal Measures were too thin for this to take place, a fact later borne out by several geological boreholes drilled in the area, which were financed by the Coal Owners Association.

However, the advent of the war, with both the subsequent associated loss of labour and export markets, production fell, closures occurred, and things were never quite the same again. The subsequent abandonment of collieries, many of which were shallow and previously developed to satisfy the production levels required prior to the war, would lead to many future problems in the latter years of coal production in the area, principally from flooded abandoned workings.

The management styles adopted by these Coal Companies in 1918, signalled a period of volatile industrial relations within the mining industry in general, but more specifically in response to the existing conditions of employment and this ultimately culminated in the Great Strikes of 1921 and 1926. These strikes produced great and longstanding changes to the mines in the Cambuslang area.

For many of its latter years the Cambuslang coalfield was extremely successful, with ten workable seams. However, the contraction of the Lanarkshire Coalfield imposed an excessively large financial burden on the remaining collieries. One of major burdens was the removal of water from the underground workings. At Bothwell Castle's No 3 and 4 pits, 50 tonnes of water had to be pumped out for every ton of coal raised to the surface. The major pumping stations were at:

Gateside colliery	16,000 litres of water per minute
Bothwell Castle No's 3 & 4 Pits	16,000 litres of water per minute
Blantyre Colliery	7,000 litres of water per minute

This is equivalent to filling an Olympic swimming pool every hour of every day.

Co-author Joe Cunningham worked as a mine surveyor in this area and recalls the water problems.

When Bothwell Park and Viewpark Collieries, both situated in the Uddingston / Bellshill area, were abandoned during the 1930's and early 1940's, a series of underground Dams were constructed to prevent potential future water ingress into the workings of Bothwell Castle No.1 and No.2 Colliery, in Bothwell, and Bothwell Castle No.3 and 4 Colliery, in Blantyre.

However, during April 1951, a failure within this water barrier occurred. This was highlighted by the measured water level dropping in the abandoned Viewpark Colliery shaft, and ultimately caused Bothwell Castle Colliery No.1, 2, 3 & 4 Pits to become flooded below Humph coal level.

Subsequently, No.1 and No.2 Pits were closed and a new modern Pumping Station was constructed, at Bothwell Castle No.3 and 4 Colliery, to contain the ingress of water by pumping 16,000 litres of water per minute out of the mine. This not only allowed the colliery to continue to work the Humph coal (600mm thick) until its closure in 1959, but also protected and preserved the remaining Cambuslang collieries.

Gateside Colliery pumped 16,000 litres of water per minute from the Carmyle area, while failure of reservoirs at closed collieries in the Viewpark / Bothwellpark areas in 1951 meant that Bothwell Castle No's 3 & 4 Collieries were redeveloped as a main pumping station to protect the Cambuslang collieries from water logged mines in the Bellhill / Coatbridge area.

Whilst fatalities were a regular feature in the coal mines in the area, major incidents were rare (Udston and Blantyre excepted) and conditions were reasonable and the majority of fatalities would be due to roof falls and haulage incidents, although stranger accidents to mainly young people are recorded in early days.

Welfare improvements were rare, although baths were installed at Gateside and Newton Collieries in 1943, with canteens at Gateside and Bardykes Collieries. Miners Institutes were built in the Halfway and Newton areas in the 1920's but neither now exist.

Predictions on the Lanarkshire Coalfield made about 1889 suggested abandonment by 1965. In fact, the Clyde Valley coalfield ceased to produce deep mined coal in 1964. The average coal thickness in the Clyde Valley was 36ft (11 metres) or thereabouts and the maximum output of 21.5 million tons production was achieved in 1913.

CAMBUSLANG VILLAGE PIT - CLOSED 1800

The village pit was located at the corner of Greenlees Road and the Main Street.

In 1791 the pits in Cambuslang were all the property of the Duke of Hamilton, but rented by James Farie, of Farme. Before 1787, they were kept clear of water by a level, which conducted the accumulated water of the workings down hill into the Clyde. But, as it was found impossible to work the coal beneath that level, a steam engine was erected in 1787, for the double purpose of drawing up the coal, and keeping the pits dry (Ref 13). At Cambuslang, the pits were about 39½ fathoms (72 metres) deep (Ref 36).

The 'going' coal of Cambuslang was set in tack to John Farme for 38 years in 1784, and the duty was to be £200 sterling, or a proportion of the produce at different depths (Ref 38).

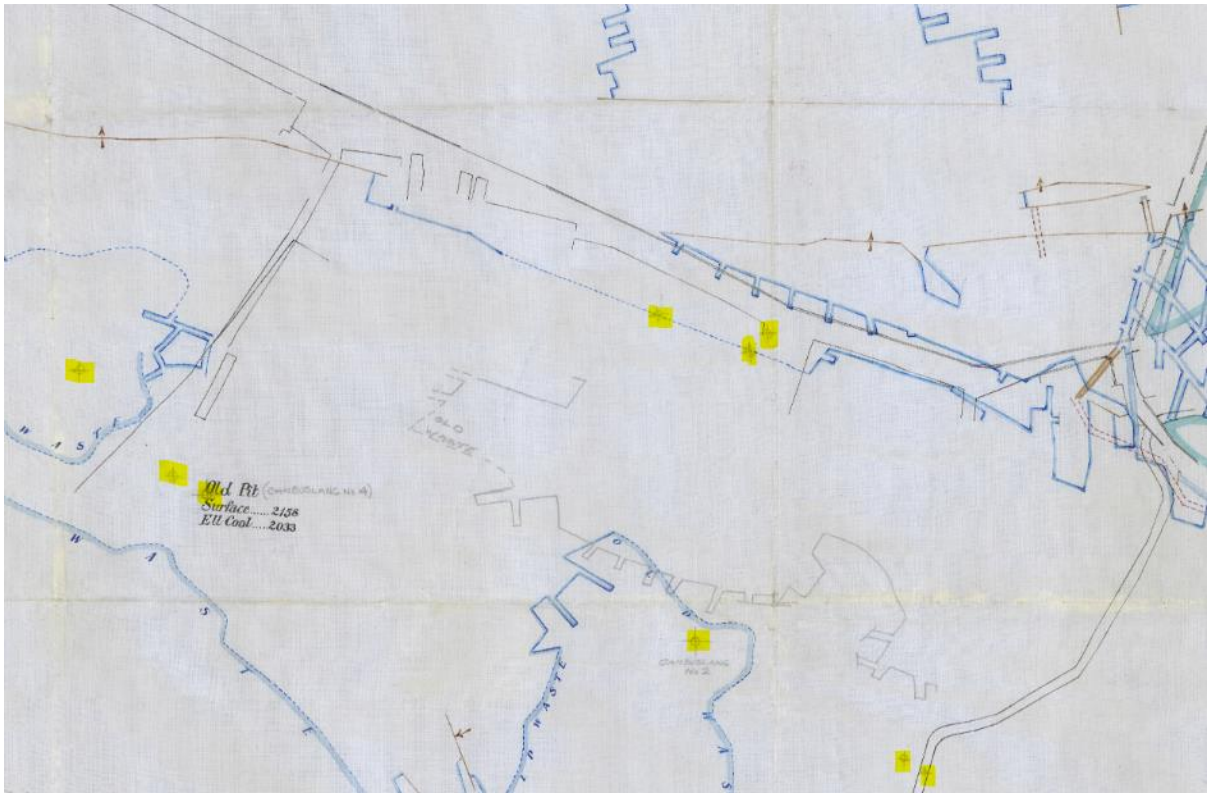
John Anderson's book "Coal" describes the village pit at the foot of Greenlees Road.

> "There was a village pit at Cambuslang Cross at that time, and it was the first pit to have a steam engine for drawing the coals up the shaft. This engine was a duplicate of the one that saw over 100 years' service at Farme Colliery, near Dalmarnock Bridge. About twelve years ago the Dalmarnock engine was gifted to the Corporation of Glasgow, after having drawn approximately some 3 million tons of coal. It may be seen at Kelvinside [It is now at Summerlee Museum]. It was an atmospheric Newcomen engine, and its work was the means of augmenting the mining population of Cambuslang. One day the Cambuslang engine saw a tragedy. The foreman, or the man who, in mining phraseology, is known as the oversman, descended the pit one morning, his son, who was the engineman, lowering

the cage containing his father, who intended to examine the pit shaft before the men went to work. He was lowered into the water which had flooded the workings and a part of the pit shaft overnight. The oversman was drowned, and as the pit could not be pumped clear of water it was filled up about the year 1800, and property built on the site, which is now known as The Cellar, or Mr. William Eadie's public house, at Cambuslang Cross [in 2018 known as the “Clock”].

John Anderson, in 1893, whilst working in Kirkhill Colliery, known as the Old Toll Pit, had occasion while travelling below ground to pass near the bottom of the old pit at Cambuslang Cross, which had been pumped dry by the more modern pump at the Toll Pit, and saw many of those small stoops already mentioned, and working further afield, came across many narrow drifts, about six to eight feet wide, shorn or cut with picks on both sides from roof to pavement. On the sides there was a small hole stamped at regular intervals, which one can assume measured the daily task of the miner of a bygone day. Wooden picks and shovels with iron tips on each of them were found and the remains of a creel or coal basket. We understand that these tools of a bygone day were given up to Mr. Robert Adams, the coal master”.

The likely area mined by the village pit lies, in a North/South direction between Cambuslang Main Street and Central Avenue / Hamilton Drive, and in an East/West direction from Buchanan Drive to the Toll Pit. Although the colliery was abandoned after flooding in 1800, the workings were later pumped dry by larger pumps at the Toll pit. The Upper, Ell, Splint and Virgin coal seams in this area were then worked with only partial extraction, by stoop and room, from the Kirkhill colliery Toll Pit, between 1875 and 1904 (as shown on colliery abandonment plans for the land of Rosebank).



The map above is a 1924 Kirkhill Colliery Water Enquiry map (Ref 42, © The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved). This shows surface features of West Coats Road on the left, the Borgie Glen on the right and the Main Street along the top. The middle of the map shows the location of 3 pit shafts at the corner of Greenlees

Road and the Main Street. The map also shows the location of the pits of the later Cambuslang Colliery, along Hamilton Drive, and two pit shafts to the south east, by the Borgie Burn.

The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791 (Ref 13) records that – "the colliery in Cambuslang gives employment to 62 men, young and old. Of these 42 are employed below ground, and 20 above [note: the population of Cambuslang at that time was 1288, comprising 280 families]. They are furnished with a house and coal for fuel. About 600 carts of coals are put out weekly; and consequently above 30,000 yearly". The account also records that the price of coal doubled between 1750 and 1791.

CAMBUSLANG COLLIERY 1820 - 1878

Cambuslang Colliery comprised five pits, No 1 at Tanzieknowe, No 2 at the east end of Hamilton Drive, No 3 in Brownside Road, No 4 at the west end of Hamilton Drive and No 5 at the west end of Mansfield Avenue. The colliery area, as shown on the 1878 abandonment plans, covered in a North/South direction, between Central Avenue / Hamilton Drive and Brownside Road, and in an East/West direction between Buchanan Drive and Kirkhill / Tanzieknowe. The coal seams mined include the Upper, Main, Humph, Ell and Splint.

James Wilson, born about 1859, describes Cambuslang as follows (Ref 62). "Rows of Houses with thatch or red-tiled roofs, with gardens and open green spaces and all the accompaniments of humble life, have given place to modern villas. The coal-pit on the south side of the west end of what we now call Hamilton Drive, and the coal-pit on the north side of the east end of Hamilton Drive, and many others, are almost forgotten, and so also are the "Colliers Acres." These were allocated to the colliers [as garden allotments] and were situated above West Coats School."

Photograph, By J F King c1900, showing old houses at the corner of Brownside Road and Greenlees Road (present location of St Cuthbert Church).

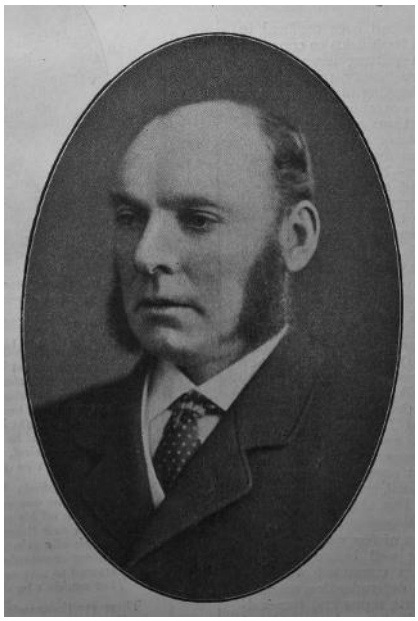
1895 map showing the location of known pits (as dots) and coal outcrops at the ground surface (as dotted lines). Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018].

Cambuslang Colliery, begun in 1820, was subsequently operated by Archibald Russell and Co. Ltd., which was founded by Mr. Archibald Russell, Senior, in Cambuslang in 1843.


Mr. Archibald Russell, Sen.

The colliery itself was originally sunk in the early 1800's and abandoned in 1875. However, coal mining had been carried out in the Cambuslang area for centuries before that time.

Archibald Russell's business gradually extended until he was owner of half a dozen collieries, and was very largely developed by his son, also named Archibald Russell, born in 1830 at Govanhill. He was for many years one of the most prominent and influential figures in the coal industry of Scotland.



At the age of 24, Archibald Russell, the second, married Miss Mary Jackson, niece of the Rev Peter Brown, parish minister of Rutherglen. Shortly afterwards he took over Flemington Farm, near Cambuslang, where for the duration of a 19 years lease, he lived and worked the farm successfully. Through the death of his father, in 1872, he took over the colliery business. Devoting himself to the commercial side of the business at the firms Glasgow office he became one of the most successful salesmen in the trade. To extend the business, in 1873 he sank collieries at Barncluith and Silverton in Hamilton and became the largest individual coal owner in Great Britain.

He was a large shareholder in the City of Glasgow Bank at the time of its disastrous failure in 1878 and lost a considerable amount of his capital but survived to further expand. When the Wishaw collieries were exhausted by 1882, he acquired and expanded the Hamilton Coal Co. Greenfield Colliery.

Archibald Russell was one of the earliest owners and users of private railways and owned nearly 4,000 railway wagons (Ref 43).

In 1904 the business was converted into a limited liability company, its leading members being four grandsons of the founder. The head office was in 68 Great Clyde St, Glasgow. On 1st January, 1917, David Colville & Sons Ltd acquired it for £650k, a combination of interests which was to the benefit of both concerns. By 1920 Messrs. Archibald Russell Ltd., owned twenty-four Pits - nineteen in Lanarkshire and five in Stirlingshire and employed over 6,000 men. In 1922, the head office was in 195 West George St, Glasgow.

Archibald Russell sunk several shafts in Cambuslang including, No4 on Hamilton Drive, No2 shaft at the junction of Hamilton Drive and Greenlees Road, and No5 on Mansfield Avenue near Whitefield Avenue. The former two shafts were sunk to depths of 88 and 102 metres to the access Splint coal, while the shaft on Mansfield Avenue was sunk in the proximity of the Ell coal outcrop.

The dip of the strata in this area is around 15° (1 in 4) to north/north east, although further to the East Kilbride Road the dip approaches 25° (1 in 2.5).

These shafts were abandoned in 1875, and at that time the manner of abandonment was to close board the shaft around 10 metres from the surface and coat the boards with a material impervious to water. The shaft was then filled to the surface using boiler ash or pit dirt.

No 1 Pit Tanzieknowe

Tanzieknowe pit, on Cairns Road, was sunk to a depth of 74 to 112 metres in 1820. John Anderson (Ref 12) tells that when Tanzieknowe Pit was sunk there was little change in the system of mining. The only improvement was the Newcombe engine. The pit was ventilated by a furnace placed at the up-cast side of the shaft, or possibly connected with a pit [No 5 pit] sunk half a mile away. The hutches for the drawing of the loads to the pit bottom were hand driven, carrying only about four and a half hundredweights. They were emptied into a corf, which was suspended by four chains to a hemp tow and drawn up to the coal hill there.

Tanzieknowe pit was the first in the West of Scotland to have a shaft with wooden sides, this being done by a Glasgow firm, Whyte and Grant, in about 1850.

Tanzieknowe had a hutch road, for conveying the coal by horse, running down to No2 pit in Greenlees Road, then west to No 4 Pit to be screened before being taken away by railway wagons to the Glasgow terminus. This pit was sunk like the older pits, with hand hauled hutches underground, but had a Newcomen engine to haul the coals up the shaft.

John Anderson tells that the village was never behind-hand in experimenting, and a few years later an Englishman tried out a patent which he had worked out, intended to keep the cage stationary in the event of the rope breaking while the cage was in motion.

A larger crowd came to see this experiment. The patentee was chockful of confidence and tried to get the manager to let him be in the cage when the rope was cut. But the manager would not allow him. Instead, a hutch of stones was wheeled on to the cage, lowered to half shank, the rope cut, and, so much for the patentee's confidence, cage and hutch were hurled to the bottom of the shaft. Just as well for the Englishman that the manager had a little more sense, but of course a similar idea has had more success since. The happening does show that interest in improvements was keen even in those days.

No.1 pit (Tanzieknowe) was situated at the Kinloch Drive / Cairns Road area of Kirkhill. This would possibly be a shallow pit in the beginning since the Upper coal outcrop follows the burn through the Park to the Borgie Glen and no doubt audit mining (in-gonees) would be carried out in this area over the centuries. Co-author Joe Cunningham recalls an audit or drift into Gateside Colliery from the area above the Burn near the site of Tanzieknowe Colliery. An upthrow fault to the South running SW from East Greenlees to Hamilton Drive brought the outcrops of the Upper coal down to the Splint coal below all the Avenues of the Coats area which attracted early mining.

The adit was used by Gateside Miners as an access for shallow thick coal workings under Kirkhill Church, worked by Stoop and Room methods during World War II. This adit was still noticeable until the 1960s and was

located just below Cairns Road level, about 100-150 metres from the Cairns Road Gate, on the banking above the burn.

Several mining outcrop coal workings were adited in the Public Park and co-author Joe Cunningham remembers Mr. James McHenry telling him about these in 1945. This was done during the 1921 Strike and some other limited working also took place in the Quoiting Green near Branchoch mine (Castlechimmins) at the same time.

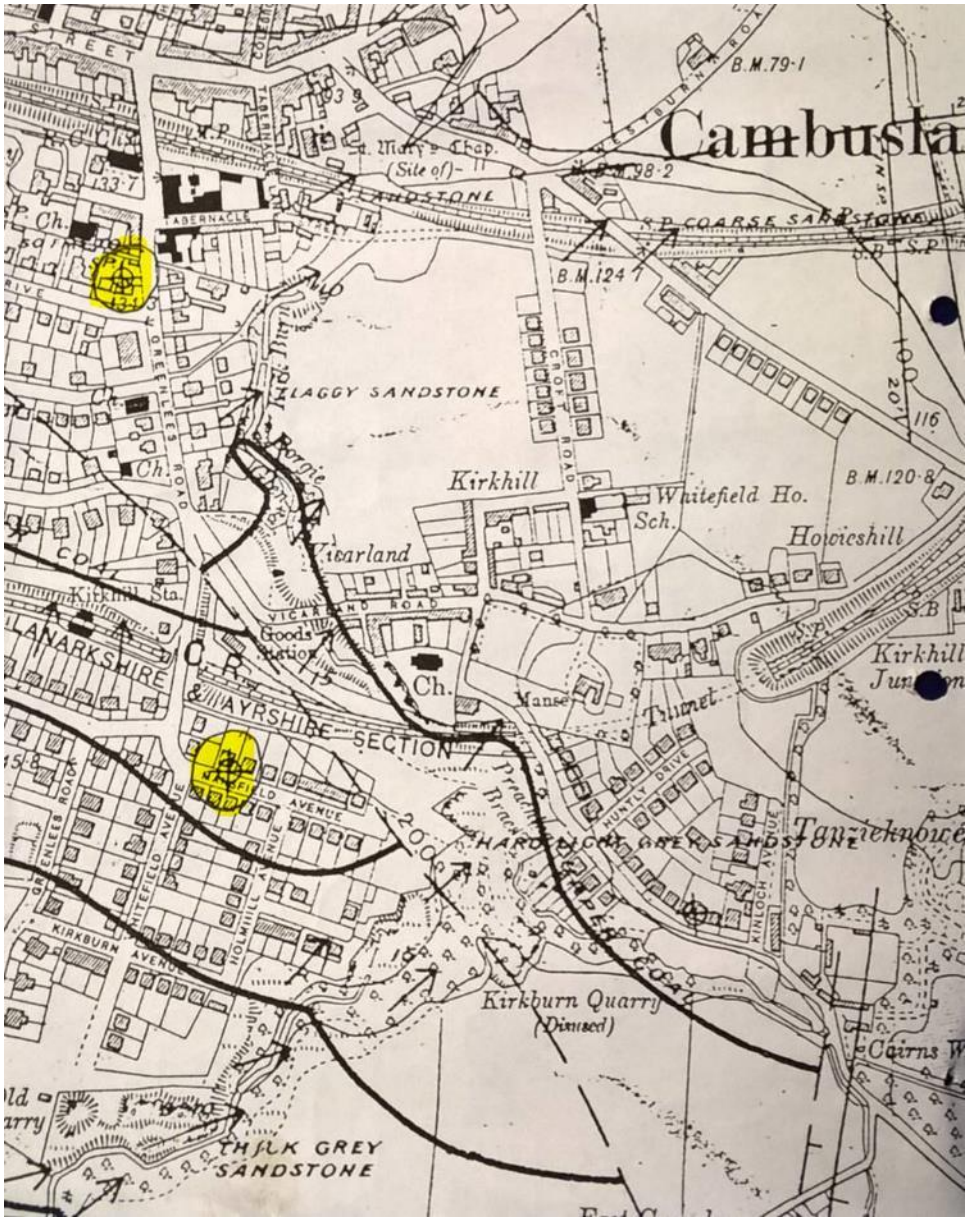
No 2 Pit

No.2 Shaft was sunk, in 1840, at the corner of Greenlees Road and Hamilton Drive and is given as 50 fathoms (91 metres) to the Splint coal. It is shown on the 1859 OS map, just north of where the Institute is between Bushyhill and the east end of Hamilton Drive, opposite the present Police Station. A Newcomen engine at this pit was used to pump the water out of Cambuslang Colliery.

On 22 August 1876 there was a boiler explosion at No 2 pit which killed a man named Primrose and blew to bits the end of the gable of an old thatched house that stood where Cambuslang Public School later stood.

Co-author Joe Cunningham was involved in investigating a shaft collapse at No 2 pit when the sleepers used to close the shaft failed. Between 1954 – 1959, Joe was employed as an apprentice and latterly qualified as a Surveyor in the Lanarkshire Coalfield with responsibilities for collieries in the Cambuslang area and latterly for the new sinking at Cardowan Colliery, at Stepps. Joe then went on to study Mining Engineering at Strathclyde University.

From memory, Joe Cunningham recalls that the shaft collapse at the corner of Hamilton Drive / Greenlees Road occurred during the Spring / Summer of 1965 and became apparent when the old lady, who lived in the house affected, came out of the back door to hang out her washing and noticed a big hole in the back garden. Soon after this discovery Dr. Bill Burnett, a Senior Lecturer in the Mining Department was asked to visit the site and locate the exact position of another shaft (No 4 pit) believed to be at the other end of Hamilton Drive. The two shafts in question were part of Cambuslang Collieries, which were abandoned in 1875, and a third shaft (No 5 pit) was located in Mansfield Avenue. The No 2 pit shaft was fully examined by engineers, from both the National Coal Board and Strathclyde University, and it was found to be in perfect condition and about 100 metres deep. Co-author Joe Cunningham was involved in this exercise after which the shaft was completely filled using debris from Gateside Colliery.



1896 map showing location of Cambuslang No 2 and No 5 pits (Joe Cunningham).

In past times when a shaft was abandoned it was commonplace to blank it off using railway sleepers about 10 metres from the surface and protect them from water using clays, manure, or the like. The sleepers in the shaft had failed but floodlights supplied by the NCB indicated the shaft to be in good condition throughout. Joe recalls that the shaft was of the order of 100 metres deep, and was filled immediately after the subsidence took place.

No 3 Pit

No.3 pit was sunk about 1843 where a later house named Chestnuthill was built on Coats Road [subsequently renamed Brownside Road]. The shaft was located and infilled in 1975 (Ref 22).

No.4 Pit

No.4 Shaft was sunk at the opposite end of Hamilton Drive near the junction with West Coats Road and is given at 48 fathoms (88 metres) to the Splint coal. The pit bing of refuse stood opposite Cambuslang Bowling Green.

John Anderson records that at the back of the Newcomen engine at No4 pit the workmen came upon an old shaft which had been sunk at some time much earlier and beyond the memory of anyone living at the time.

A railway siding was put into No. 4 pit, coming in from Cambuslang Station on the South side of Bushyhill Estate, where a retaining wall was built to the height of about sixty feet right up to the pit near the middle of West Coats Road. This railway connection gave a decided impetus to the coal trade.

1864 Ordnance Survey map showing location of No 4 pit and the railway siding at Cambuslang Station. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland. The photograph shows the route of the siding from the main line in 2017 (C Findlay).

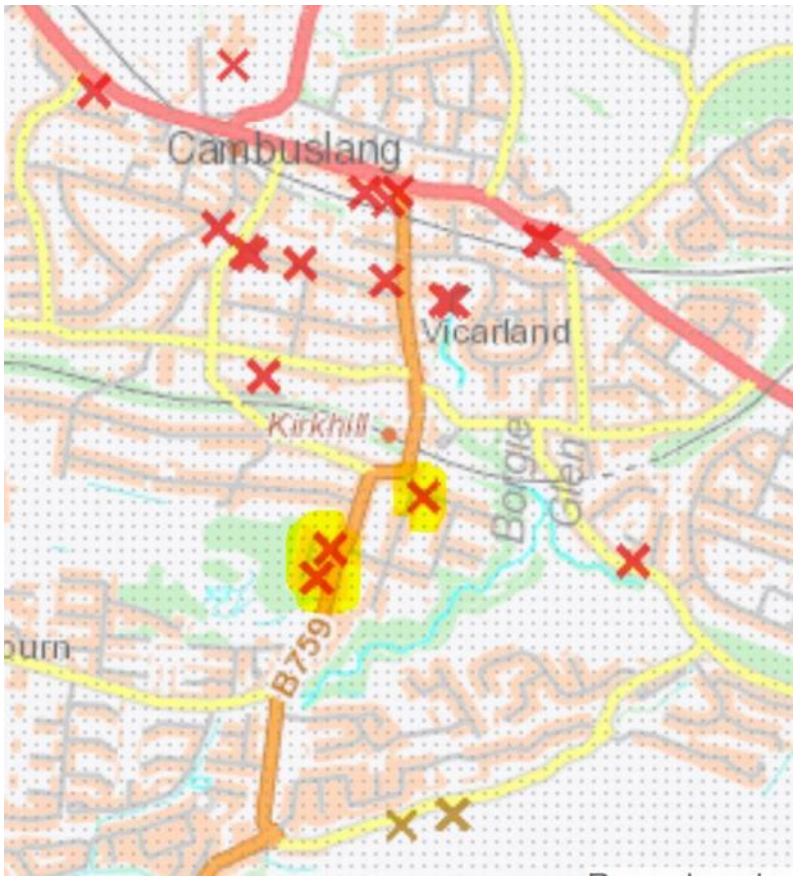
A hutch road was made from Tanzieknowe Pit to convey the coal by horse down the hutch road through what is now the Public Park, over two bridges and right on to No. 2 Pit, which stood just north of where the Institute is, down to No. 4 to be screened and loaded in wagons for Glasgow. No.4 Colliery was thus probably used to process all production from Cambuslang Colliery for transportation by rail.

No 4 shaft, and another adjacent old shaft, was infilled in 1975 (Ref 22).

No.5 Pit

No.5 Pit, known as Thimblehall, was sunk at the south west corner of the entrance to the Public Park on Mansfield Avenue between Whitefield Avenue and Holmhill Avenue at Greenlees Road. This shaft would be originally sunk into the Ell coal near the outcrop. It was often idle as a result of miners' damp, despite the colliery using furnaces at the pits to draw air up the shaft for ventilation.

This shaft was located due to collapse and was treated in 1974 (Ref 22).



Coal Authority Interactive Viewer map showing the known location of Cambuslang pit shafts. (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved.)

SHOCKING MURDER AT CAMBUSLANG No 5 PIT

Glasgow Herald 22 April 1875 - The inhabitants of the quiet rural village of Cambuslang were thrown into a state of intense excitement yesterday forenoon by the discovery that a murder had been committed in one of the coal mines in the neighbourhood, under circumstances of extreme brutality, and that the perpetrator of the crime had been allowed to escape.

The victim was Peter Campbell, a man about 50 years of age, who resided at East Coates, Cambuslang, and the murderer is named John Middleby or Tierney, also between 40 and 50, who lived at West Coates, in the same neighbourhood.

The scene of the dreadful occurrence was No 5 Pit, Bushyhill, belonging to Mr Archibald Russell. it is situated about 300 yards to the south of Cambuslang, and within a stone-throw of the houses where the men dwelt. About 40 or 50 men are employed in the pit, and they descended to their work yesterday morning at the usual time. The men, it may be explained, work in couples, each couple occupying what is known as a “place." Campbell and Tierney were comrades, and their working - one of the lowest in the mine—was situated at some distance from the bottom of the shaft.

Nothing unusual was observed in the demeanour of either of the men before they began work, and they pursued their solitary labour all the forenoon, no one, so far as we have learned, having had any intercourse

with them. The nearest working place, which is some 35 or 40 feet apart from that in which they were employed, was occupied by a man named William Kyle and his two sons John and Peter Kyle, the latter the draw boy. During the meal hour between eleven and twelve o'clock, Tierney came up to this working, and asked for a light for his lamp, which he said had gone out. The men noticed at the time that he was somewhat excited, and they now say that he had a frightened and furtive look, but on their asking if anything was wrong, he replied in the negative, and returned to his own "place." He had not been gone long when the Kyles heard a dull, dead sound, as of something falling, followed by heavy moaning. The father remarked that there was surely something wrong with Campbell, and the son, John Kyle, at once ran down the road towards the "place" where he was working. On approaching the spot, he met Tierney climbing over the coal-hutch, which was lying at some distance from the "face ;" and, stepping beck, he allowed him to pass, which he did in great haste, running rapidly towards the " bottom." Kyle then went forward to the "face" and found Campbell lying on his side, bleeding profusely, and quite insensible. A stone rested upon his head, and supposing that the injuries were the result of accident, Kyle summoned his father and some of the men in the neighbouring workings to render to Campbell what assistance they could. They endeavoured to staunch his wounds, but without success, and afterwards had him taken up the shaft and home to his own house.

Dr Mungo Turnbull, who had been summoned so soon as the occurrence became known, was by this time in attendance, and the most cursory examination revealed the dreadful fact that the hapless man had been wilfully and fatally injured. On the top of the head and near the right temple were no fewer than five punctured wounds, each one of which had fractured the skull, and would have been sufficient to have caused death, while the right side of the head had been beaten almost to a jelly. The punctured wounds had evidently been inflicted by some sharp-pointed instrument, and those on the side of the head by a blunt surface, probably by a stone. Dr Turnbull found that he could do nothing for the poor man, and death soon put an end to his sufferings. He only lived for about an hour and a half after he was discovered lying insensible in the working, and never regained consciousness.

In the meantime, as we have stated, Kierney had been allowed to effect his escape. After passing the younger Kyle, he made his way to the bottom of the shaft and asked the "bottomer" to "bell two," otherwise to give the signal to take him up the shaft. This the bottomer declined to do, and he sat down on some loose stones which lay near. While he remained here the "oversman" came forward and asked him why he sat there at that hour, if there was anything wrong. He replied that he was going up the shaft, as he had to go from home. He was then asked where he was going, and replied, "A bit from home." Being further. questioned he said that he was going to Glasgow, and that has wife was going with him. He then asked the oversman to give the signal to the enginemen to raise the cage, but this the oversman. refused to do, as the engineman was engaged at the time. The oversman afterwards asked Tierney whether he was satisfied with his "place," and, as he said he was not, he assigned him another to which he might go next day. During the whole of this interview the oversman observed nothing unusual about the culprit except that he was restless and exceedingly anxious to leave the pit; and the oversman, after the lapse of some time, having occasion to go to the surface the two men ascended the shaft together.

Tierney, it has been ascertained, thereafter proceeded to the house of a Mrs. Flannigan, and saying to her that he had "Done for old Campbell now," requested her to hide him. This the woman refused to do, whereupon he went home, changed his clothes, left the village, and was gone nearly an hour before any suspicions as to the true nature of the occurrence had been aroused. Once this was discovered the tragic story soon became widely known, and the greatest excitement prevailed throughout the district. A diligent search was instituted for the fugitive. The woods and plantations in the neighbourhood were scoured during the afternoon by some of the constables in the district, and in the evening Tierney was captured on the banks of the Clyde near to Rutherglen Green by Constable Simpson, who has charge of the station at Cambuslang. Simpson happened to be from home yesterday, but hearing of the occurrence, he proceeded to Rutherglen, believing that Tierney

would make his way to some acquaintances he had there, and about six o'clock he came suddenly upon him walking slowly along the banks of the river towards the city. He went with his head bent down towards the ground, and when apprehended by Simpson he started violently. He soon regained his composure, however, and was taken to Rutherglen, and afterwards conveyed to the station-house at Cambuslang, which was reached about seven o'clock, the machine in which he was driven being followed through the streets by almost the entire populace.

Mr Dykes, the Procurator- Fiscal, arrived afterwards for the purpose of making preliminary inquiries, and the murderer was conveyed to Hamilton last night in the custody of Superintendent Millar, and lodged in the prison there. He will be examined before Sheriff Spens on a charge of murder today, and detained pending further investigations.

From an examination of the place where the men were employed, it appears that the assault which has terminated so lamentably must have been committed while Campbell was seated at his midday meal, and that the wounds which have resulted in his death must have been inflicted with the pick Tierney had been using at his work. One of these wounds is on the top of the head, three on the right temple, and another on the side of the head. The contused wound on the aide of the heed is supposed to have been dealt with the side of the pick or with a stone, and the stone found resting on the head is surmised to have been placed there by the murderer to lead the other men to think it had fallen from the roof, and thus avert suspicion. A pick bearing marks of blood was found lying at the "face" where Campbell was discovered, and a piece of the bread which it is supposed he had been eating -was picked up out of the pool of blood collected where he had lain. It is impossible to say from an examination of the wounds in what manner the blows had been dealt, but the probability is that Tierney had approached his victim unawares from behind.

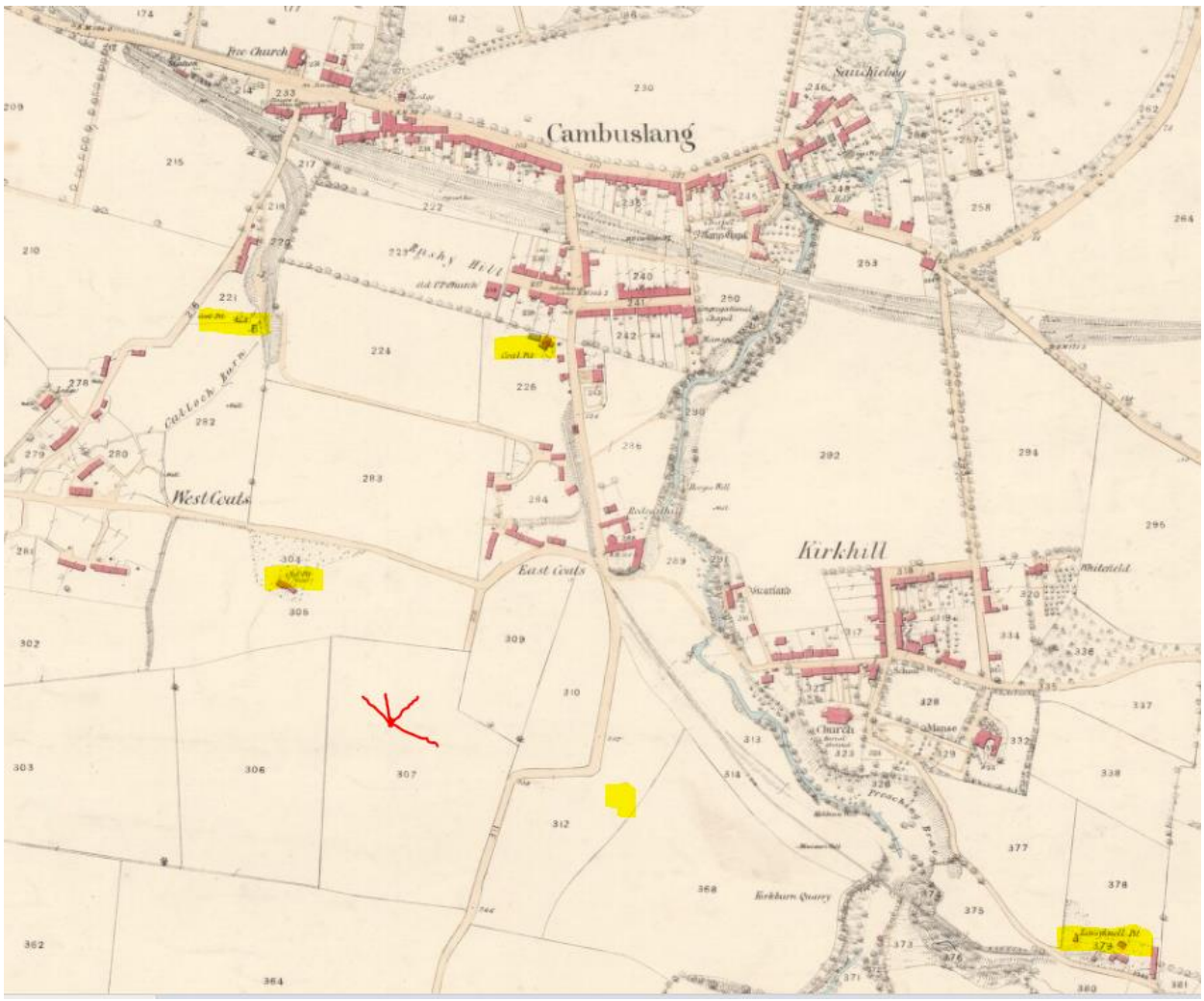
Campbell, as we have stated, was about 50 years of age, and he had resided for 12 or 15 years in the district. He was married and leaves a widow and grown-up family. Tierney is also married, and has three young children, and he has lived in Cambuslang for about seven years. He is an Irishman and a Roman Catholic, and Campbell was a Protestant, and it is thought by some that a party quarrel may have been the origin of the crime. It is said, on the other hand, that neither of the men were given to party strife, and this theory does not obtain general support. It is known, however, that they had had words some months ago about their work; but they were both quiet, well-behaved men, and no overt act of violence is known to have taken place on the part of either. Tierney, it is said, had been heard threatening Campbell and his wife during the week; and several of his neighbours assert that his mind has been for some time partially affected. It is further reported that he was under treatment for insanity, and that he has never really recovered, but this rumour has not been traced to any reliable source.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD PITS - A BLACK-DAMP ADVENTURE 1889.

The story that follows is from a newspaper clipping, dated 1889 (Ref 69).

About thirteen years ago [in 1876] I stood, a stranger on the brow of the Holm Hill, looking towards the village of Cambuslang. The village proper I could not see, because the beeches, knoll, and houses of Bushyhill intervened. The other day l stood on the same hill, looking in the same direction, and what I saw seemed little less than the work of enchantment, so greatly had the aspect of the valley been changed. A little way beneath me, then a great heap of blaes, and a rough enclosure of boards and old railway sleepers told where a pit [No 3 Pit Brownside road] had been. A little to the left another one [No 4 pit, east end of Hamilton Drive] in working order was visible. To the right still another [No 2 Pit west end of Hamilton Drive] could be seen. This was the "pumping" pit, where there was machinery on a large scale. From about the square stone engine-house and other necessary building, smoke and steam rose continuously, and the clank of the pumping gear came with

the northern breeze to where I stood. Away to the east, cresting the knoll beyond the kirk, the manse, and the famous Preaching Braes, another pit [No 1 Pit Tanzieknowe], with its accompanying hill of blaes, gave varieth to the scene, while eastward on the ridge on which I stood was No 5 Pit [now Mansfield Avenue], also with the customary black accompaniment. Here and there on the slope beneath me were patches of queer old houses, pigsties, and potato gardens, forming a somewhat unlovely but not inharmonious picture, seeing that it was old coal pits and older houses that were under my eye.



1864 Ordnance Survey map of Cambuslang, showing where the author of the 1889 article would have been standing. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Now the dirt heaps are gone, and of the engine-house, stalks, and pithead gear not a vestige remains. The huts and old houses, with one solitary exception, have disappeared. One lot of bare walls and gables show where others once were; but the potato plots have, as such, ceased to exist, and a suitable resting-place has been found elsewhere for the pigs. Handsome villas, with neatly kept, gardens, railed or walled, have taken the place of the pits and their surroundings. One villa seems to be exactly over the mouth of No 2. New villas with garden plots skirt the Borgie Glen. There is a new and an easier way to the Kirkhill and the kirk. Not having seen how gradually this transformation has come, I may be pardoned the thought that Aladdin had been here and had got the work well done.

Thirteen years ago I had just come to a scene of fresh labour. I was to have charge of the pit I have referred to as soon as the necessary arrangements were completed, and now I could not help recalling the appearance of the surface as it was then. To pass, in imagination, from the surface to the underground workings was an easy transition. Filled with water the roads and faces no doubt are, but the lamp of memory easily penetrates earth and water, and I see them as they were then.

I have some vivid recollections of things experienced by me when I first took charge. At four of the five pits there were engines in working order, but only at two of them was there any output of coal, while at one only [No 2 Pit] was water brought to the surface. The pits were all connected underground, and one of my first duties - self-imposed to some extent, but necessary — was to see for myself the state of the communication roads, both in and out of use. Apart from the utility of such explorations there are often things to be seen which awake wonder and pleasure. Far from the nearest working-place, I saw the ubiquitous underground mouse, hurrying away from light and the human presence; even a frog startled me, as it disappeared with frantic leaps into the wayside gloom. Frequently I passed through a cloud of small, dark-coloured flies, which the lamplight had startled into unwanted activity. Spiders were there in abundance, and a glance at their snares showed how plentifully they feasted. Then the way was frequently adorned with beautiful fungus forms, all as white as snow. Generally they were of a roundish figure and were covered with moisture which sparkled in the lamp-light like clusters of small diamonds. Sometimes a web-like mass covered the roof, and from it little shoots in fern form seemed to be feeling a way forward. I found them hanging from the roof in long, waving white threads, as fine as the finest silk, where a strip of decaying wood stretched across the road. A wave of my hand made them move about as easily as if it had been dust in a Sunbeam. It was, therefore, with a feeling akin to regret that I passed through it, causing the destruction of the beautiful fabric. It clung to my clothes, where it speedily melted away, leaving but a very faint trace of its previous existence in the form of minute sparkling moisture. As denizens of underground darkness, these fungus forms are probably unnamed and, it may be, unknown. If they are named and classified, I have to confess that I cannot tell the reader to what division of the family of the fungi they belong. As Burns says of fungi, *nearly*

> Such lovely forms I've often seen,
>
> But yet I canna name them.

And there was that which would have charmed a geologist. I do not refer to "slips," "dykes," or "wants" – these are commonplace things. In several places where a stream of water ran along the road finding a path to the pumping pit, I observed that the way was crusted over with a hard substance of a brownish colour which, when broken and looked at, seemed to be lime. Beneath it was mud saturated with moisture, through which the little stream found a way. In one place I found a small pool a few inches in diameter and depth, and falling into it was the tiniest of waterfalls – the descent being about four inches, and the crag over which it fell having an incrustation of lime on a wooden sleeper. At first there seemed nothing very odd about it beyond the glittering poollet and the sparkling linn, but when I held my lamp close to the water I observed little round forms, of the size of peas or "marbles," rolling restlessly about under the waterfall. I took out a handful, and having, not very neatly, made a bag out of a leaf of my note book, I put them into it. When the pool was again clear I saw much smaller things still rolling about, and of these I took some also. The oversman who was with me expressed surprise at my noting such things. I do not think I gave him any reason for my doing so, but at home I found some of the largest pieces were of almost exact spherical shape. Some were as small as turnip seed, but all were composed of lime. A grain of sand had probably formed the nucleus of each, and a very few years must have sufficed for their growth; for it is not likely they would be there when men were going the road daily. Thus beautiful was the water in the little underground stream. Above ground it was an annoyance because of the fearful way in which it encrusted the boilers; nor could it be said to have made amends for that by the fine fossile linn it had created among the grass on the high bank of the Borgie Burn, into which it ultimately fell.

Into any detail that might show the nature of my new charge I need not here enter. Few collieries are without something that gives special annoyance to those in charge, and in this case the special annoyance was “black-damp.” It was a fearful and dangerous pest. The old workings seemed to be full of it, and it came out often when there seemed to be no atmospherical reason why it should do so. There was a ventilating furnace in each of the two working pits, and a good current of air was kept going, but in every quiet nook the “damp” was sure to gather. Any day, even close to the furnaces, where there was a strong rush of what seemed good air was constantly “souching,” you had but to lower your lamp, and near the pavement, perhaps a foot from it, the light would go out like a snuffed candle. But the oversman was very careful, and no fatal accidents took place.

[Note: Blackdamp is an asphyxiant, reducing the available oxygen content of air to a level incapable of sustaining life. It is not a single gas but a mixture of unbreathable gases left after oxygen is removed from the air and typically consists of nitrogen, carbon dioxide and water vapour.]

There were narrow escapes, however, as the following will show:-

One of the pits, No 1, had been standing idle, and there arose an urgent question as to whether it should be set going directly, or have the ground cleared off. The works above ground were fast going to ruin. Every boy that passed seemed to think it incumbent on him to aid in the work of destruction. With every Sabbath day there came a crowd of half-grown roughs from the suburbs of Glasgow, Rutherglen, and nearer places, who thought it no harm to pull down boardings, break windows, or lift scaffolding. It was to them a positive delight to pull out, or dig out, bricks from any of the walls, or lift a rail from a tramway, and drop either through the hole in the covering of the pit mouth which they had just made. Their joy seemed to culminate in the plashing noise that came up from the trouble waters, when brick, rail, or block of wood reached its surface after falling the necessary score or so of fathoms. Any useless stone that was lying about would have made a noise as great, but it was only when the plash was caused by useful things that the sound was pleasant. There was no regular watchman, and so the work of demolition went on very rapidly, and forced the question to this form of conclusion:- “ Get; the steam up and make an exploration ;” and I set about that at once.

The reader must pardon close details here. It so happened that the man who had charge of No. 1 under the former lessee was now employed in the neighbouring colliery. It belonged to my masters, and I had charge of it. It was soon arranged that he and I should make the exploration. I knew there was a door close to the bottom of No 5 which separated it from No1. I know also that generally “black damp" flowed through the chinks about that door towards No 5; therefore, I, with my chief servants, concluded the pest was abundant in No. 1, and that care was therefore necessary. When proper arrangements had been made, that door was opened, and a strong and deadly current flowed towards No 5 where, however it could do no harm, as the men were all out, and other arrangements had been made by which it went straight to the surface. When we were informed as to the direction of the air flow, my companion and I descended No 1. We did not mean to go far on that day, but merely to see how matters were about the pit bottom; to see the course of the air, determine the quantity that was flowing, and go with it a short distance. All seemed to go well, and promising ourselves no difficulty in getting round to No 5 when we would try to go, we came to the surface. I arranged that we should make our next trial on Saturday – two days later. On that Saturday afternoon, two hours after the door referred to had been opened, we set about making the proposed journey. We thought we had well considered, and, indeed, we had been assisted in considering, every likely contingency. Former experience elsewhere had made me aware of the insidiousness of the enemy we might meet with, but I had, like my companion, concluded that the risk we were about incur was so small as, practically, to be no risk at all. As to unexpected contingencies, we were both experienced miners and would do nothing rashly.

We had gone about a third of the distance between the two shafts, and still three hundred yards at least to go, when we agreed to rest and talk. We had just passed through a “drift” where there was barely creeping room – not room enough to permit going on hands and knees, but the lights had been burning clearly, and we were though warm, not a little pleased with our progress. The place where we rested was where an old haulage road – the one that had been last used in in that part of the mine – led almost directly to No 5. The “plan” had shown me that there were roads leading to abandoned working faces all along the right-hand side of the road we were about to enter. These faces, my companion assured me, were all in good working order when they were abandoned. To make sure of their condition now might be the object of our next visit, but just then we would not go into the side roads at all.

We rested till we had cooled a little, and then with our lamps carefully trimmed we resumed our journey. We had passed two, or perhaps three, of the roads on the right when, after looking with my lamp, I said to my leader, “Willie,” look and seeing, as I had already observed, the bluish-black space (of course it is only apparent space) between the wick and the flame, which indicated on such lamps, the presence of black-damp – “Ay,” he said, “it’s geylies mixed; but, oh ! there’s nae fears wi’ a breeze like that blawin’.”

The danger before us was double – triple, indeed – for if we sheltered our lights with the side front of a waistcoat the “damp” seemed to sweep into the place of refuge, and by that we lost a light. If we carried them in the current sheltered by the hand only, the danger seemed slightly lessened, but by that means we also lost a light. Of course, when a light went out we immediately stopped to repair our loss. I may say that we contented ourselves with thinking on these occasions, and kept our thoughts each to himself. Another danger was soon apparent. We got among falls of the roof, and then the lights could not be held nor sheltered in any hand, because the hands were required for creeping. The lamps had, therefore, to be hung by the hook to some part of the breast clothing, sheltered as we best might. We had matches, but were well aware that in such an atmosphere and such a current they were quite useless.

We had with more than ordinary difficulty got over one of those falls, and by mutual but silent consent sat down and held a brief consultation.

“Well, Willie, what’s your thoughts?”

“Things dinna look weel; but we’re no’ beat yet. We canna be far frae the bottom.”

“We’ll never get back the road we have come.”

“I doot no. I didna expeck this. I dinna un’erstaun’t.” This was after a few moments of silence.

“The strong current of air, “ I said, “is just sweeping the damp out of the side roads we have passed, and it has overtaken us – that’s all.”

There was silence again for a short time, when – “But sitting here won’t help us. Don’t you begin to feel that ?” I said.

“Ay,” he said, “I fin’ that. Weel, we canna be far frae the bottom. If ye wait here, I’ll gang forrit and see if I can get a thra to the richt that I think’s here aboot. Ye’ll keep your licht if ye can; but licht or no licht, I maun get that turn.”

He spoke resolutely, and rose to leave me.

“Don’t go far, then,” I said, “for we must keep together.”

I sat and took care of my light, while he, hurrying forward, was soon in darkness. I sat what I thought to be a very long time, and had made up my mind to follow him at all risk, when I heard his voice “hullo’ing” faintly in the distance. I answered him, and hurried to him – reaching him without a light, however.

“Keep close to me,” he said, whisperingly. “The bottom’s close at haun’. But it’s a narrow road, an’ the air’s unco thick.”

I knew what he meant by that, but if there was safety at all it lay that way. So close together we hurried on, and soon saw the faintly-reflected sunshine on the wet pit bottom.

“Feel for the door,” I said, “and see if you can shut it.”

“A guid thocht,” he said, and immediately added, “I’ve shut it.”

Crossing the bottom, we signalled for the cage, and passed through the door which separated the return air-course and the furnace from the shaft. We re-lighted our lamps and sat silent, both. At length, saying – “The downcast maun be clear; we’ll get doon the cage,” I rose and went to the bottom. The cage was there already, and we were soon at the surface. We both felt a little giddy, and sat down on the first sitting places that presented themselves. After a few minutes —

“Well, Willie,” I said, “is not the surface of the earth very beautiful ?”

“Ay. But at ae time this afternoon, ” he said, rousing himself, “I was dootful’ if I would ever see't again. Hoosever, we're a’ richt noo. "

“Ay,” I said; “but don’t you think that considering our long experience as colliers, we have fared better than we deserved ?"

“God knows," he said gravely. “Let us be thankfu’."

To this day I am unable to say where folly in the adventure began, but it is clear that there was a want of foresight somewhere.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 6 October 1854 – Wanted, a Horizontal Engine from four to six horsepower, new or second-hand, without boiler. Apply at Cambuslang Colliery Office, 33 Union Street.

Glasgow Herald 23 December 1859 – Hamilton Sherriff Court – John Allan pleaded guilty to stealing from the engine-houses of No 3 and 4 coal pits, Cambuslang Colliery, a brass cover of the lying shaft, the eccentric rod, five brass valves, and a brass bush, the property of Mr Archd Russell, sen, coalmaster. Sentenced to four months imprisonment, with hard labour.

Glasgow Herald 1 June 1859 – Wanted, a Colliery Manager, of experience. Apply by letter (confidential), to Arch. Russell, Cambuslang Colliery Office, 69 Great Clyde Street, Glasgow.

The Bradford Observer 24 April 1875 – Tierney, the man accused of murdering a fellow workmen in a colliery near Cambuslang was examined before Sheriff Spens at Hamilton on Thursday, and committed for trial on the capital charge. A medical examination has revealed the fact that there are five wounds on the head of the murdered man Campbell, each of which had fractured skull and was sufficient to cause death.

Dundee Courier 17 September 1875 - Another man sentence to death in Glasgow. At Glasgow Circuit Court yesterday - before Lord Ardmillan - John Middleby or Tierney, from the prison of Hamilton was charged with the crime of murder in so far as on the 21st day of April last, at number 5 pit Cambuslang Colliery, situated in the parish of Cambuslang, then occupied by Archibald Russell coalmaster, and at a place in the soft coal seam of said coal pit, near the place where the said John Middleby or Tierney then worked, assaulted the now deceased Peter or Patrick Campbell, miner, and did with a miners pick or other pointed instrument, to the prosecutor unknown, strike him several blows on the head, whereby it was punctured in several places and one or more bones were broken and the brains lacerated; and did also, with a heavy hammer or heavy stone or some other instrument to the prosecutor unknown, strike him one are more violent blows on the face, whereby several bones thereof were fractured; by reason of all which, or part thereof the said Peter or Patrick Campbell was mortally injured and immediately or soon thereafter died and was thus murdered by the said John Middleby or Tierney.

The prisoner who is a man of about 45 years of age pleaded not guilty. He was defended by Messrs Lang and Maitland

Mr. Lang pleaded on behalf of the prisoner generally that he was not guilty, and that at the date of the crime he was insane.

Mr. Lang asked that the medical gentlemen be allowed to remain in court to hear the evidence, which the court agreed to.

After a long trial the prisoner was condemned to death. The murderer had thrown stones over the body of the victim to lead to the belief that his death was accidental. The jury accompanied the verdict with a recommendation to mercy, on the grounds that Tierney had been formally insane.

The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent 22 August 1876 – A row of houses were much damaged and a man injured by the explosion of a boiler at a colliery at Cambuslang yesterday.

Glasgow Herald 22 August 1876 – The village of Cambuslang was yesterday morning startled by the report of a boiler explosion at No 2 Pit. The explosion was a most violent one; the body of the boiler was thrown a distance of about 500 yards, knocking down, in its course, part of a greengrocer's house, while one of the ends completely demolished an outbuilding connected with Bushill Cottage. Fortunately no lives were lost, but a blacksmith, named John Primrose, was severely injured.

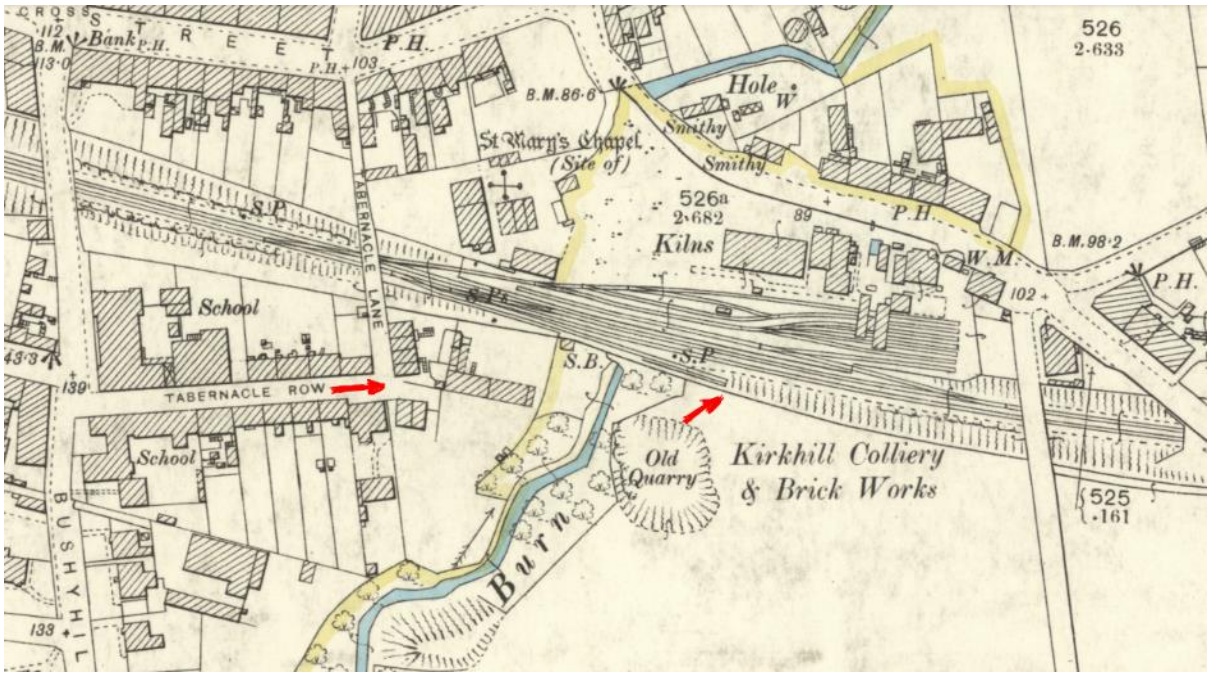
KIRKHILL (TOLL PIT) COLLIERY 1875 - 1904

The Kirkhill Pit, known locally as the "Toll Pit", was sunk in 1875 at the top end of Westburn Road near the tram terminus, on Hamilton Road and Croft Road adjacent to the railway.

View of Hamilton road looking east, with the Kirkhill Colliery on the right. The Cambuslang Mining Memorial was built on this site in 2005.

Photograph of Cambuslang Mining Monument, during construction, 12 May 2005 (C Findlay).

Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (8) worked by Kirkhill colliery (Ref 14).



1896 Ordnance Survey Map showing Kirkhill Colliery. The arrows show the location and direction where the following two photographs were taken , by J F King, about the end of the 19th Century. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Photograph of Kirkhill Colliery by J F King, c1900.

Photograph of Kirkhill Colliery from Tabernacle Row by J F King, c1900.

Kirkhill Colliery No.1 and No.2, which was owned by the Kirkhill Colliery Company, was sunk to a depth of 119 metres in 1875 and by 1896 employed a total of 90 men. This colliery produced coal for domestic and steam markets, and also fireclay for its associated brick works.

The large pumps at Kirkhill Colliery also removed water from the abandoned Cambuslang Village Pit, which had flooded in 1800. The Upper, Ell, Splint and Virgin coal seams in this area were then worked with only partial extraction, by stoop and room, from the Kirkhill colliery Toll Pit, between 1875 and 1904 (as shown on colliery abandonment plans for the land of Rosebank).

Kirkhill Colliery closed in 1904 and was annexed into Gateside Colliery, as was Westburn Colliery which had also closed around the same time. No 1 shaft was located and capped in 1988 (Ref 22).

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

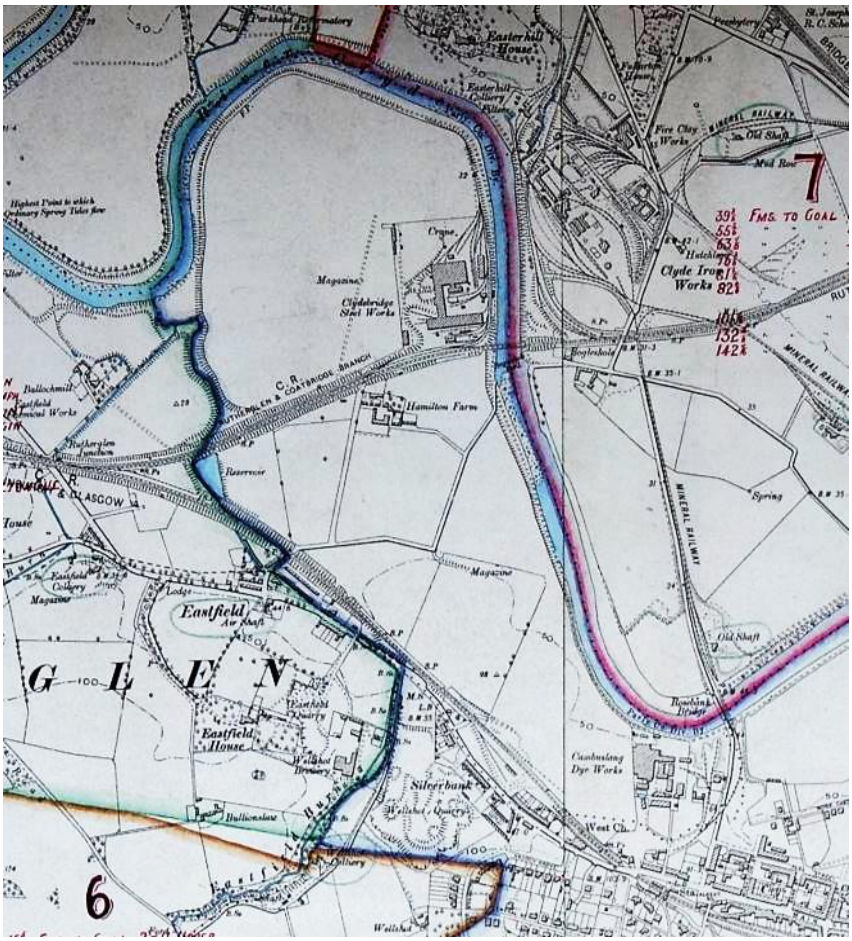
Glasgow Herald 11 September 1900 - Yesterday a miner named Robert McKenzie was accidentally killed while at work in Kirkhill Colliery, Cambuslang. McKenzie at appears was engaged at the humph coal when material weighing about 2 tons came away on the top of him ere he had time to get out of the way, and buried him completely. When extricated it was found that beyond some compression of the chest, the body had sustained little or no injuries. Dr Mackay, Cambuslang, was summoned and certified death to be due to suffocation. Deceased, who resided at Colebrook Street, Cambuslang, was about 60 years of age.

Scotsman 11 September 1900 – Yesterday a miner, Robert Mackenzie, about 70 years of age, when working in Kirkhill Colliery, Cambuslang, was buried in a fall of material from the roof. When extricated he was dead.

HAMILTON FARM COLLIERY c1800 – c1860s

Hamilton Farm Colliery was operated by Colin Dunlop & Co, and later, from about 1860, by James Dunlop & Co, possibly from the Clyde Iron Works collieries on the north side of the river Clyde. It is likely that, in the later stages, the Bogleshole No 4 pit, locally known as the Big Pit, connected through Hamilton Farm colliery to Eastfield colliery. A story about pit ponies being taken through this route in 1922 is recounted under the Eastfield Colliery heading.

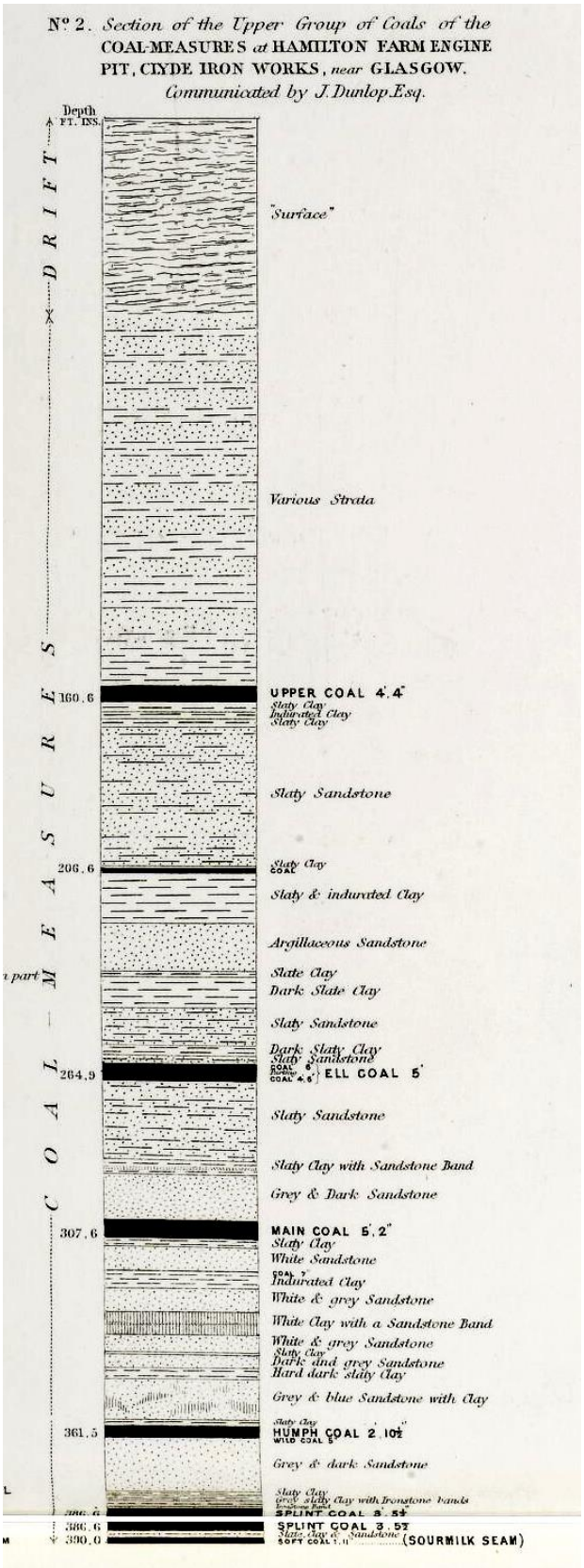
The colliery worked the coal under the whole of the loop in the river Clyde under Clydebridge Steelworks down to the Caledonian Railway and across the main road between Cambuslang and Rutherglen including the quarry at the end of Dukes Road, and towards Rosebank.



Mineral Leasing Map, about 1896, showing the coal working boundary of Hamilton Farme Colliery (Ref 14). The underground workings shown on the Hamilton Farme Colliery mine abandonment plan of 1854 (Ref 44) match this area.

Upper, Ell and Main coal seams were worked at depths of 49m, 81, and 94m respectively, between 1812 and 1854. The splint coal was worked at depths of 119 and 137 metres.

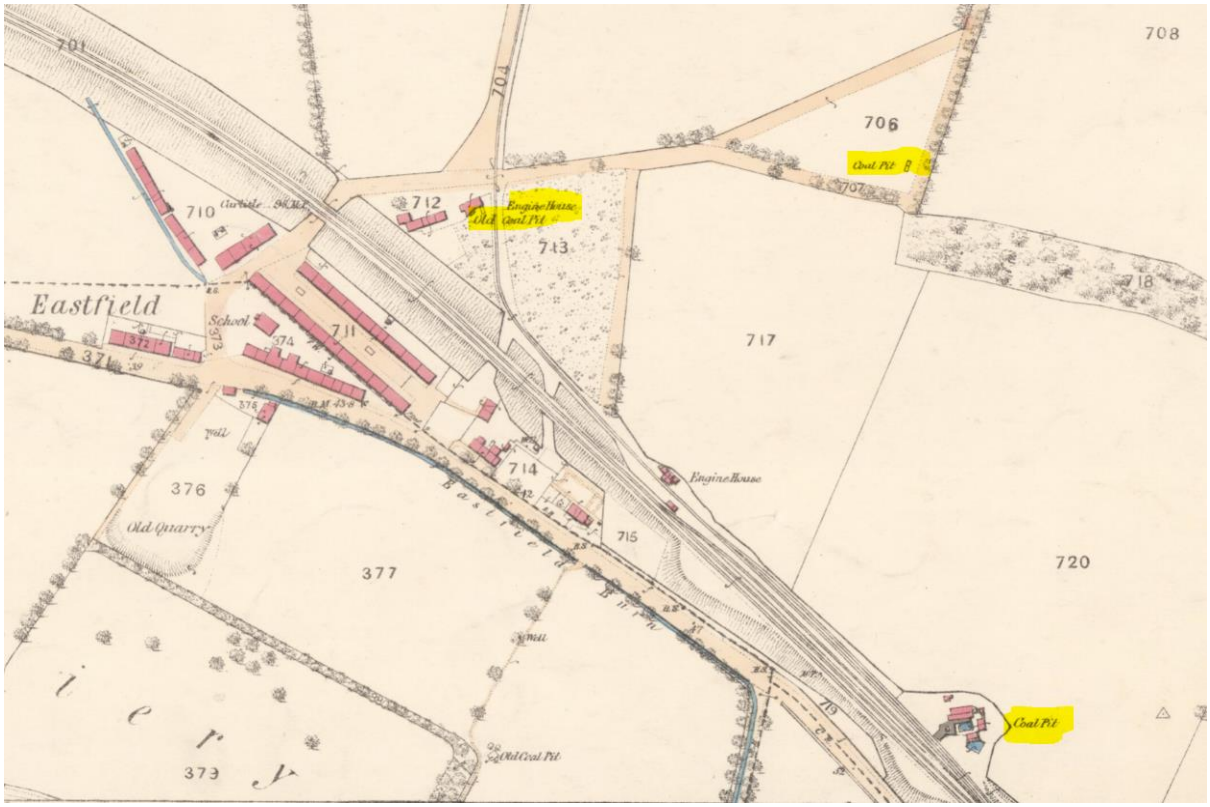
In 1825 Clyde colliery (at Clyde Iron Works on the opposite side of the River Clyde) had three pumping engines, of 64, 54 and 16 Horsepower, and six winding engines, two of 18 and four of 11 Horsepower. This power included Hamilton Farm colliery (Ref 19).



Coal Measures at Hamilton Farme Colliery Engine Pit, from Memoirs of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom. Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018].

Co-author Joe Cunningham's family came to Hamilton Farm around 1830 to work at the colliery. They came from Dysart, Fife, where his Great Great Grandfather was born in 1796. His Great Grandfather (Joseph Cunningham) was born in 1841 at Hamilton Farm as were four other children up to around 1870. His grandfather was the youngest of the five children and was born in 1879, which may have been in Newton (Cambuslang). His father and five sons were all miners and the 1881 Census suggests that they were living in Newton by this time. Joe Cunningham's Great Grandfather was married in 1864 in Hamilton Farm Church of Scotland to his cousin, who also lived at Hamilton Farm which suggests that they lived in colliery houses.

Hamilton Farm Engine Shaft, another old shaft, and No 4 shaft, as shown on the 1864 OS map, were located and grouted in 1981 (Ref 22).



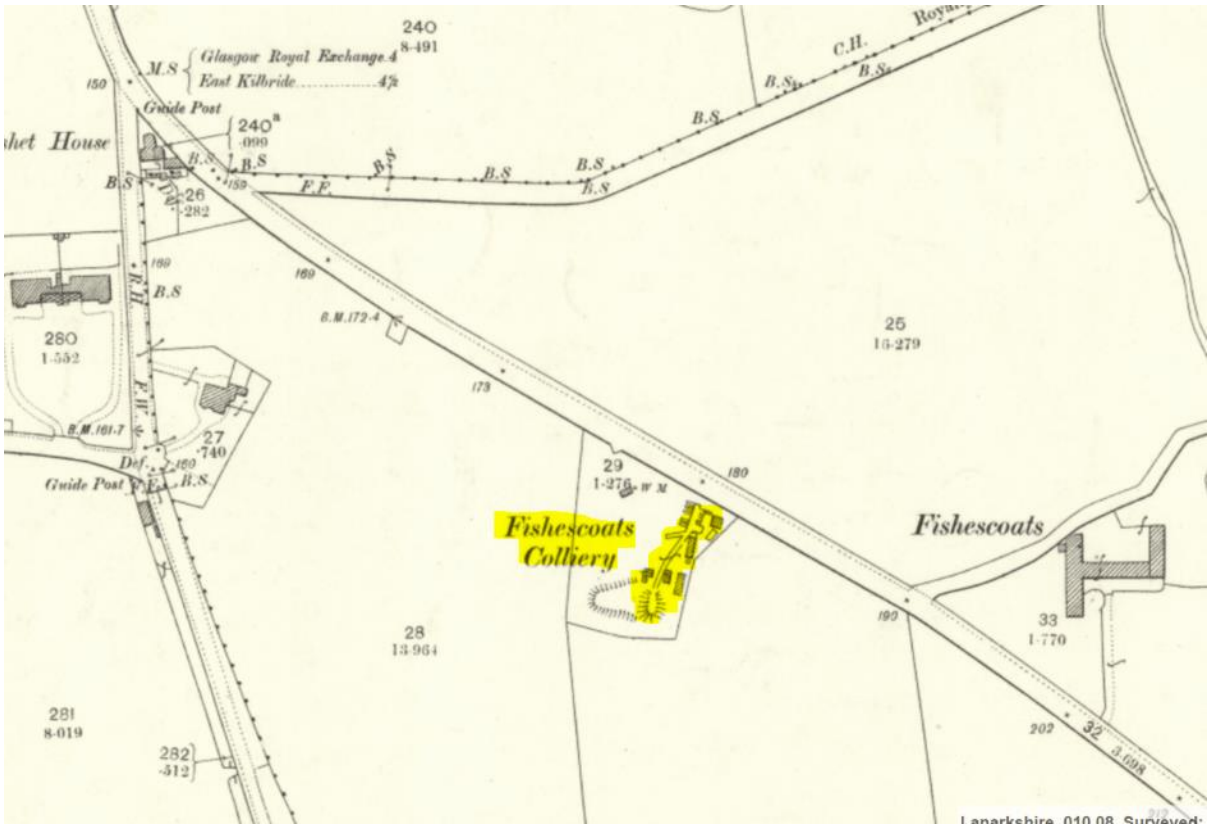
Ordnance Survey Map 1864, showing three of the Hamilton Farme pits and the miners rows at the foot of Bogleshole Road. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 4 May 1846 – The workmen of Clyde and Hamilton Farm, to mark the respect they have for Mr. Archbald Baird, smith, Clyde Iron Works, for the valuable services he yields them in taking fire off their eyes, met in the House of Mr James Patterson, Fullerton, on Saturday 25th april and presented him with a gold watch guard, seal and key, and a silver snuff box. Mr Hill manager of Hamilton Farm Colliery occupied the chair and Mr. Buchanan, manager of Fullarton Colliery, acted as croupier. Mr Hill in a few remarks stated the purpose of the meeting, and Mr. Buchannan, in a neat and appropriate speech presented the articles to Mr. Baird who returned thanks in a very feeling manner. The greatest hilarity prevailed throughout the evening and the company were enlivened with songs etc, until about 11 o'clock. Both gard and box had suitable inscriptions .

FISHESCOATS COLLIERY NO 1, 2 (Pre 1880 – C 1910)

The Honey Pit, opposite Fishescoats Farm on the East Kilbride Road, was so named by its owner because of its prolific output (Ref 37).



1896 Ordnance Survey Map, showing the location of the Fishescoats Colliery shaft. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

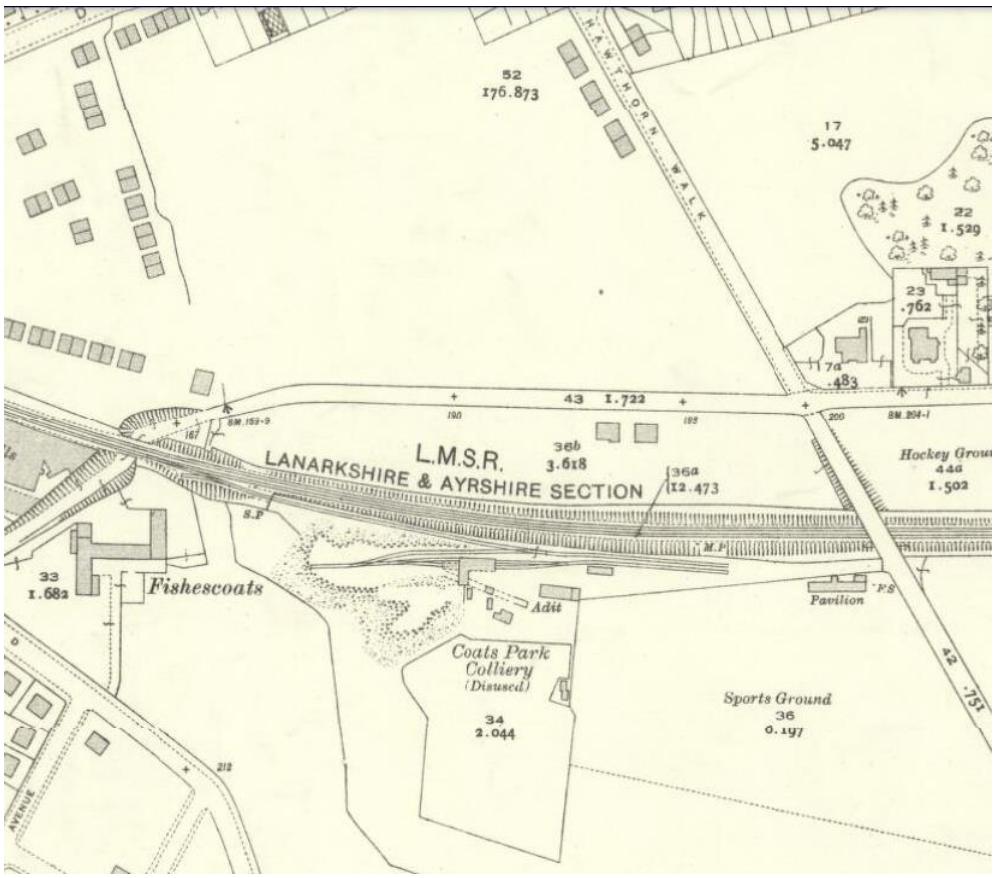
Map showing coal outcrops at surface (as dotted lines) and location of Fishescoates No 1 & 2 pits (reference 8 & 9 on the map). Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018].

Mine Plan showing underground workings at Fishescoats Colliery (Reproduced by permission of the National Records of Scotland (Ref 65).

COATES PARK COLLIERY 1925 - 1958

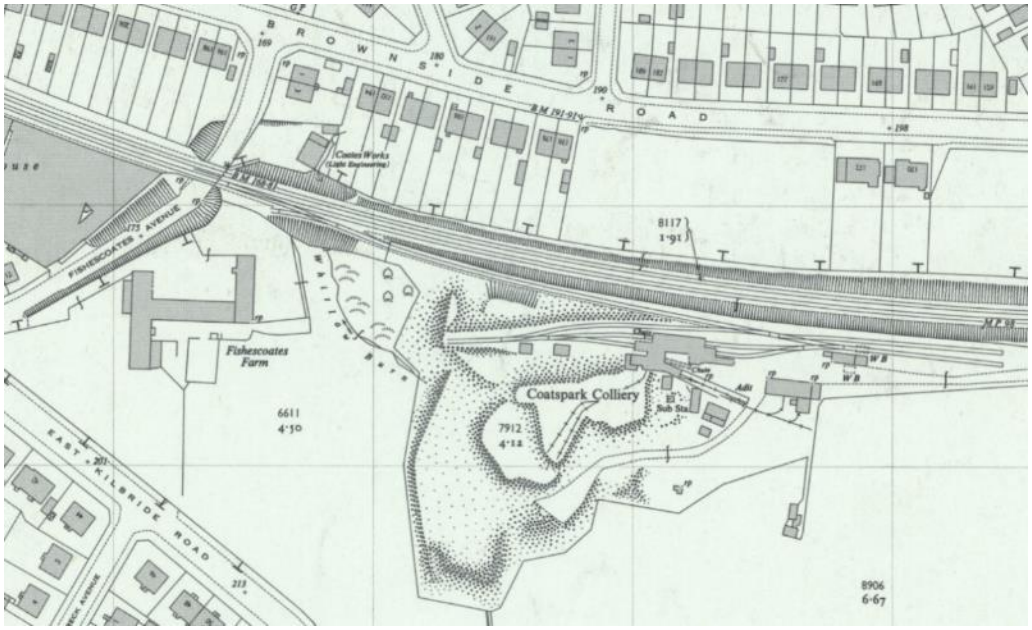
Coats Colliery opened in Coats Park as an "ingaunee" or daylight mine about 1925 by Messrs Dunn & Stephen.

The 25 inch to the mile OS map, of 1935, shows the colliery as disused. No colliery is shown on the 1910 OS map. The 1933 Colliery Yearbook and Coal Trades Directory shows it temporarily idle and the manager as James Dalgeish.



1935 OS map showing Coats Park Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

It was re-opened by the Flemington Coal Co. Ltd. in 1937, before being nationalised into the NCB in 1947. Its peak output was reached in 1948 and it closed in May 1958.



1954 OS map showing Coats Park Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

National Coal Board Vesting Day at Rutherglen's only remaining colliery, Coatspark (Rutherglen Reformer 10 January 1947).

In 1940 the manager was T. J. McCoustra, and by 1947 the manager was A. Howden. Flemington Coal Company employed 130 men in 1945. In 1948 the output was 110 tons per day, 26,000 tons per annum, using longwall working, with 112 employees. There was a single picking plate table but no coal washer. There were no baths, canteen or medical facilities. All electricity was from the public supply. The colliery ceased production in April 1958.

The colliery was located near the railway at the west end of the sports ground on Langlea Road, near Fishescoates Avenue. It was a steep inclined surface mine 305m long, vertical depth 82m, return shaft 12m deep. It was sunk by Dunn and Company around 1937 into the position of the Humph coal outcrop and return air exited the mine by a shallow shaft to the Humph coal.

During the lifetime of the mine it worked:

- Blackband coal, which was totally extracted up to the outcrop near the junction of East Kilbride Road,
- Kiltongue coal to near the junction of Greenlees Road and Kirkhill Golf Club, and
- Lower Drumgray seams in an area between Westcoats Road, East Kilbride Road, and Greenlees Road.

Coal, in each seam, was worked up to the same approximate position.

The coals in question were 24", 22", and 22" in thickness respectively and were worked using traditional hand drawing methods. Co-author Joe Cunningham surveyed the colliery in its latter years before abandonment, and recalls that in the latter days of the operation of Coatspark Mine, six haulages were required to move coal from an area under Kirkhill Golf Course to the surface in Burnside. The coal undercutting method of mining was still used at Coatspark Mine until its closure in 1958 except that latterly the coal was undercut by machine to make its removal easier. In thin seams each Collier would be expected to move around twelve tons during a shift

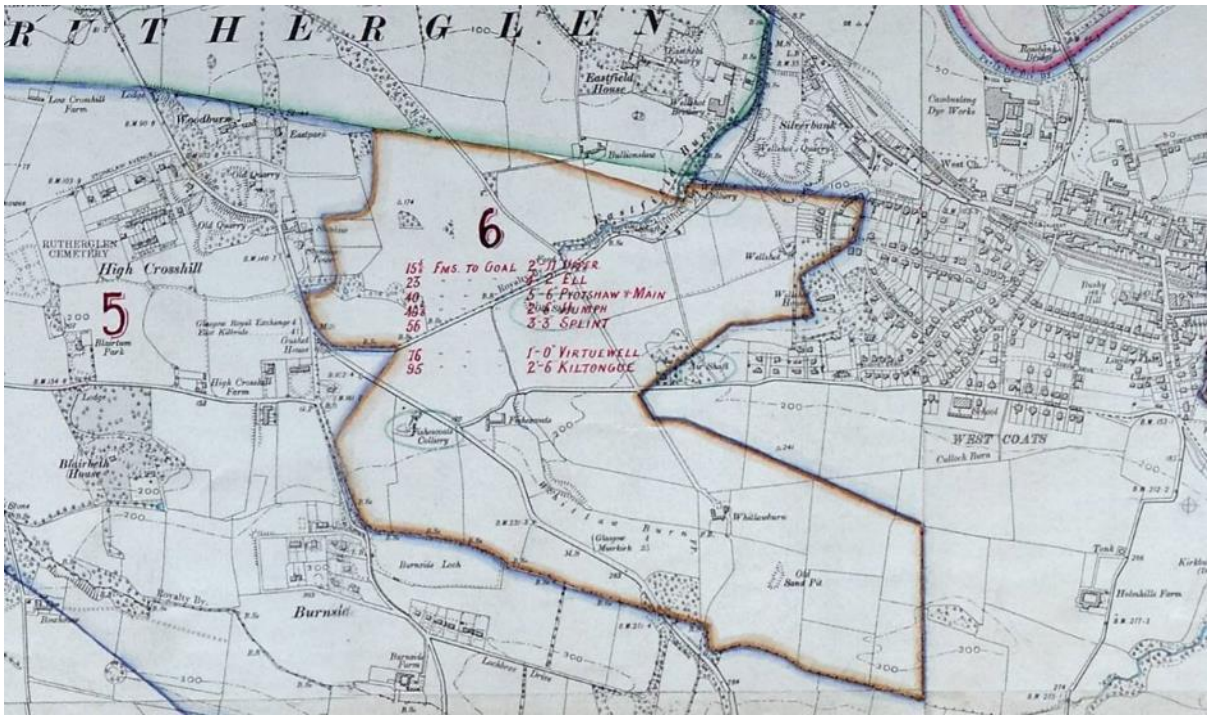
John Anderson, in his book ‘Coal’ published in 1943 says of it – “a new coal mine has been opened up in the Coats Park, Cambuslang, by Messrs. Dunn and Stephen, Coalmasters, who have leased the rich coal field which lies in and about the farms of Fisheston, Whittleburn and Holmhill. Boring operations have proved that there are rich seams in the district. The firm, to start with, are resuscitating the primitive method of getting coal that of opening up an “ingaunee " or daylight mine, similar to the old pit at Wellshot, with an addition of a shaft or pit for communication purposes. The mine is opened at the west end of the West Coats recreation park, on the south side of the railway near Fisheston farm, and in a short time will be able to employ a considerable number of men. Old Cambuslang people will be reminded of the old coal hills of West Coats, Wellshot, and the Honey pit, opposite what is now known as Burnside Police Station”.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Scotsman 29 June 1937 – Four miners were injured when an explosion of fire damp occurred yesterday in the Kiltongue section of the pit, when there was a sudden flash, followed by a loud report. The injured, who were burnt about the face and arms, and removed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary were: Thomas Murray (25) Park Street; Hugh McCafferty, Silverbanks; Andrew Mair, 29 Colebrook Street; John Thomson, Bothwell Street. The mine manager, Mr Andrew Burnett and the fireman, Alexander Paton, hurried to the area and made an inspection. About 100 miners are employed at the colliery, which is owned by the Flemington Coal Company Ltd. The mine is a surface one, which means that it is worked by electric haulage by a sloping descent of 1000 feet, while the actual depth of the mine is about 340 feet.

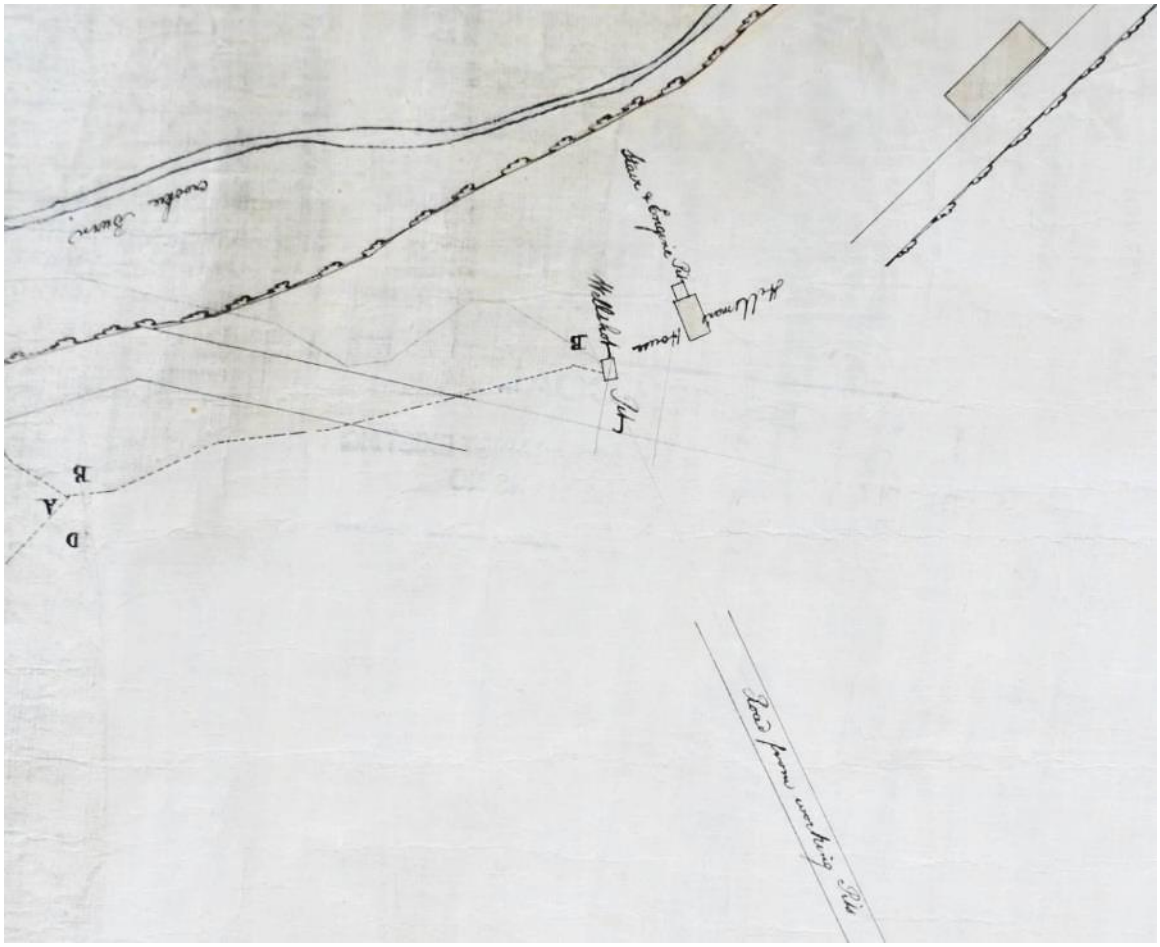
WELLSHOT COLLIERY 1700s - 1907

Wellshot Colliery was in Dukes Road. Its leasing area extended from Wellshot House in the east towards Burnside and Fishescoats in the west and Hawthorn Walk/Brownside Road to the south.



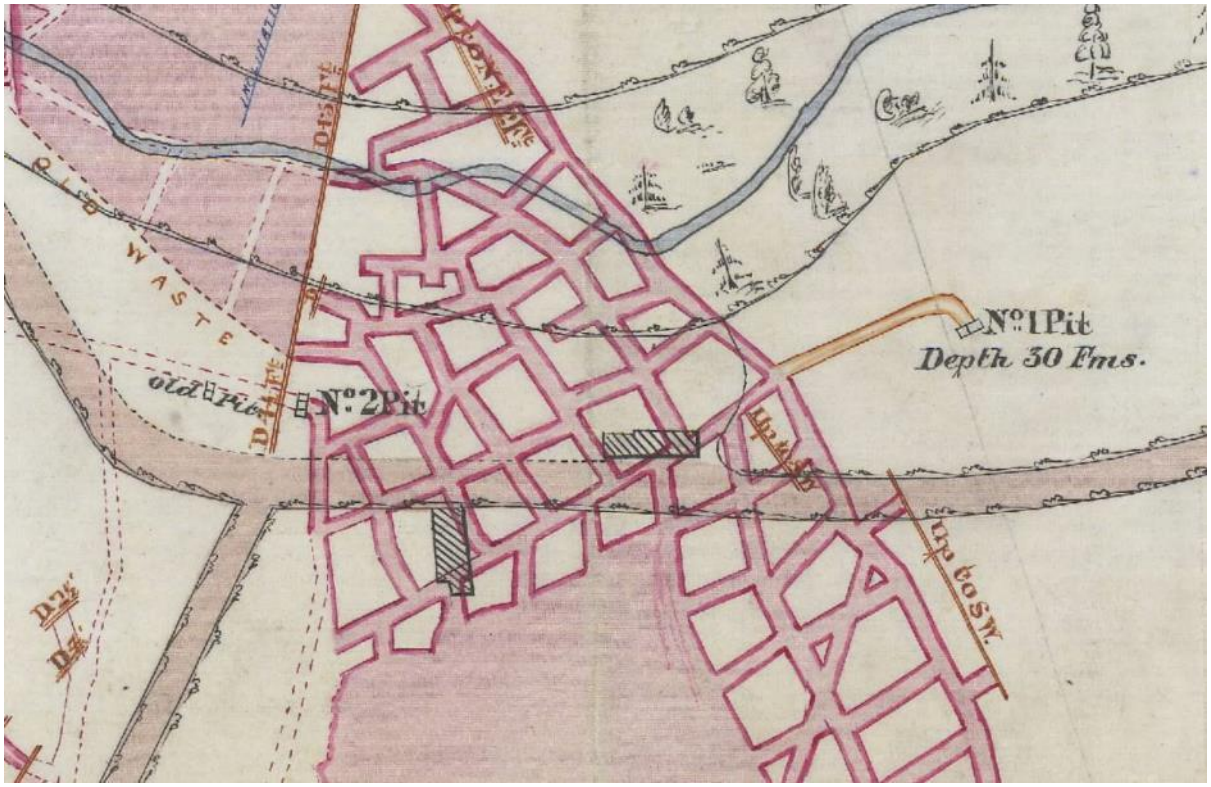
Leasing Plan, about 1896 showing the boundary, area No 6, of Wellshot Colliery (Ref 14).

1895 Ordnance Survey Map showing Wellshot Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.



1818 Colliery Surveyor Map, Reproduced by permission of the National Records of Scotland (Ref 66) showing the Stair and Engine Pit (No 2 Pit) at the foot of what is now Eastfield Avenue (shown here as “Road from Working Pits”). Dukes Road to the east is shown as “cart road leading up to pits”. Eastfield Burn to the north is shown here as “Crookie Burn”. This map also identifies that the coal at Wellshot was wrought by James Fairie of Farme at this time.

Photograph showing where No 2 Pit was located, opposite the corner of Dukes Road and Eastfield Avenue (C Findlay 2017).



1878 Mine Abandonment Plan showing Wellshot No 1 and 2 Pits. (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved.)

Photograph showing where No 1 Pit was located on Dukes Road to the west of Cathkin Place (C Findlay 2017).

The map above shows housing development in 1939. It also shows the location of the former shafts of Wellshot colliery. The dotted lines show where the coal seams outcrop at the surface. Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey [2018].

The collieries situated at Wellshot are said to have been the oldest in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, and the following extract from "The Statistical Account of Lanarkshire" published in 1851, describes their working:

"In 1790 about 62 men, young and old, were employed in these collieries; at present 100 are employed. An ordinary collier can easily dig 40 cwts, for which he then received 2s 2d per day, and if he wrought hard, 13s per week. At present a collier can make 3s 6d or 4s a day, or at the rate of £1 to £1 4s a week. The wages of colliers and other incidental expenses were then estimated at £2000 per annum; they may be now estimated at £2500. In 1790 about 600 carts, or 360 tons, were put out per week, and 18,000 tons per annum. At present the output is nearly 550 per week or 30,000 per annum. In 1750 a cart of coals of 9cwt cost 9d on the coal hill; in 1790 they cost 2s; and at present 2s 11d. A cart of coals from Wellshot, weighing 20 cwts, is now laid down at the village of Kirkhill for 7s 4d. The driving is 1s. 6d., toll 3d., and cost at the hill 5s 7d."

In 1803 the colliery manager at Wellshot was James Dunn. He then became the owner and was succeeded by his son David Gardner Dunn (1830-1909). Both father and son lived at Ashfield House, Cambuslang, as did the latter's two sisters, Mary Elizabeth Dunn and Annie Laurie Dunn. The Dunns were followed as coalmasters at Wellshot by Hugh Glen, who was born, in 1848, in a miner's cottage at West Coats (Ref 49).

The Wellshot Colliery, leased from the Duke of Hamilton, by Dunn & Glenn Limited (or Dunn Brothers), was sunk in the 1870's and was probably linked with the original Silverbank Colliery workings. The pit shafts were located near the bottom of Wellshot Road and Glenburn Avenue. Dunn Brothers abandoned the colliery in 1878 but it was then leased to United Collieries Ltd. The Virgin workings were abandoned in 1894, the Ell workings in 1897 and the Splint workings in 1906. The Ell seam worked from No 1 pit (which was 30 fathoms, or 55 metres, deep), comprised 38cm Blaes, 28cm Craw coal and 1.27m free coal

The area of Bullionslaw was worked from No 1 Pit near the east end of Dukes Road, the area mined was along the north of the Wellshot lease area owned by Colonel J. R.G. Buchannan in 1886. An abandonment plan for No1 Pit is dated August 1878.

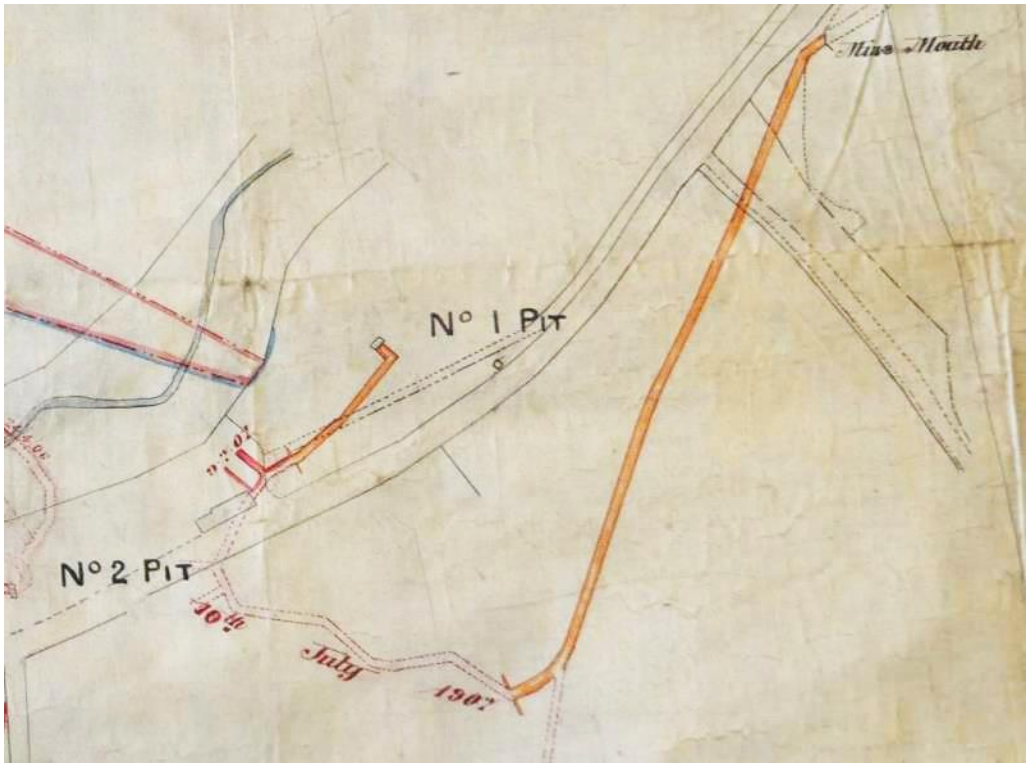
In 1896, 127 persons were employed, by 1902 Wellshot colliery employed 137 miners and 39 surface workers and was part of the United Collieries Group. Wellshot colliery was finally abandoned on 6th July 1907.

Extract from the Cambuslang Advertiser summer 1896

> Saturday's excursions – Wellshot Colliery employees rendezvous was Ayr, that town which has of late years become so popular with holiday-makers from the locality. Accompanied by a pipe band the miners and their friends arrived in Ayr early in the forenoon, where a pleasant day was filled in with sightseeing and the usual sports.

Extract from the Rutherglen Reformer 20 August 1965

> I lived in Kirkhill when the outcrop was worked at the Kirkburn and remember the times very well. The miners there even had smiddy fires going to heat and sharpen their "graith". I remember the coal which was worked below the rocks in Silverbanks quarry. I howked many a hundredweight of coal there myself during the 1926 strike. There was also an old road which led back into the workings of the old Wellshot pit. After the strike the council sent workmen to dig the ground above the rocks and throw it into the quarry in order to seal up these workings as there was a danger of the rocks collapsing and wrecking the houses on top. Yours, etc., James Mitchell 49 Hamilton Crescent Cambuslang.



Coal Authority Abandonment Plan for Wellshot Colliery showing the location of No 1 and No 2 pit and the mine entry in Silverbank quarry leading underground towards No 1 and 2 pits. (© The Coal Authority [2017]. All rights reserved.)

Wellshot colliery brick, appropriately used at a house built above the south east extent of Wellshot colliery underground workings (C Findlay 2017).

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 2 February 1822 - Yesterday in Mr. Dunn's colliery, Wellshot, a man named John Morrison, a roadsman, residing at Bridgeton, lost his life. He had been employed clearing the ways at the pit bottom along with another man when a stone from the roof fell upon him, crushing his skull in a shocking manner. He was killed almost instantaneously. The poor fellow had been working only part of the day for the first time in the mine and was but recently married.

Glasgow Herald 30 November 1822 - on Monday at Wellshot Colliery, a miner named William Craig, residing at 68 Main St, Rutherglen, sustained severe injuries about the lower part of the body and legs. Mr. M'Pearson, of Cambuslang, had the injured man conveyed home and the winds dressed. Craig had been employed in the face of the workings when a fall took place.

Glasgow Herald 4 January 1879 - Hamilton Jury Trials - yesterday before Sheriff Birnie and a jury - William Ross, joiner, Larkhall with charged with culpable homicide, the libel setting forth that on the ninth day of November at the pit head of the coal pit called No 1 Pit Wellshot Colliery, parish of Cambuslang, occupied by James Dunn, coalmaster, Ashfield House, Cambuslang, while David Robertson, foreman engineer, Glasgow; John M'Ewan, engineer, Glasgow; James Brown, engineer, Glasgow, were in the act, by means of winding it upon the drum on a double-powered crane at said pithead, of raising a heavy rope then hanging in the shaft, accused did wilfully raise from its place on the handle shaft of said crane, the latch or guard keeping the pinion wheels connected in the double power, and so keeping the crane in gearing, and thus caused the pinion wheels immediately to become disconnected and the crane immediately to come out of gearing, and Robertson, McEwen and Brown to lose all power and control over the crane and rope; and the weight of the portion of rope suspended from said crane being so freed did cause a part thereof wound upon the drum of the crane to be unwound, and the whole of the rope to fall with great velocity to the bottom of the shaft, and the rope, in so falling, or some substance unknown, caused by the rope, to fall along with it, did come into violent contact with Lawson Crichton, fireman and roadsman, Parkhill, Rutherglen, now deceased, who was at the time employed in the shaft 5 fathoms from the bottom, and did throw him down to the bottom into a quantity of water there accumulated to a depth of 6 feet; by all which they said Lawson Crichton was mortally injured, and immediately or soon thereafter died, and was thus culpably bereaved of life by the said William Ross. Accused pleaded not guilty, and was defended by Mr. Charles J Guthrie, advocate, Edinburgh, instructed Mr. J C Kay, writer, Hamilton. After a lengthy trial the jury found prisoner not guilty, and he was dismissed from the bar.

Glasgow Herald 13 March 1884 - Hamilton Mines Resolution Case - Before Sheriff Birnie yesterday, Donald M'Killup, foreman, No 1 Pit Wellshot Colliery, Cambuslang, was charged with contravening the mines regulation act by having on 23rd January failed to cause the withdrawal of 3 miners from a place rendered dangerous from the presence of fire-damp and to fit up bratticing. The evidence showed that above the working place where 3 brothers, named Drury, worked, there was a hole caused by the brushing, in which gas accumulated. On the morning libelled, two slight explosions occurred similar to what took place the day before and eight or nine days previous. M'Killup being sent for wafted the gas out with one of the men's coats, and persuaded them not to go home as they proposed. After remaining with them three quarters of an hour he left behind a safety lamp with which to test the hole as to the presence of gas, and instructed them to waft it out as it accumulated. In doing this one of the Drurys brought down the gas on his naked light, causing an explosion by which he was so severely burned that he was off work six weeks. One of his brothers was also burned and was off work three weeks. It was further proved that bad air, of which there was abundant in the roadway, been brought in by means of bratticing, the gas could not have accumulated. After evidence that M'killup was a careful, steady man, of good judgement, Sheriff convicted but as there had not been carelessness on respondents part, limited the sentence to a fine of £1, or 7 days' imprisonment.

Mine Inspectors Report 18 January 1887 – Maitland Kelly (13) of Rutherglen was killed by a roof fall at the coal face.

Glasgow Herald 30 October 1888 – Hamilton – Cruelty to Animals - Before the justices yesterday, James Bryce, coal dealer, Stobcross Street, Glasgow, pleaded guilty to a charge of having on 24th with cruelly ill-treating a horse at Wellshot Colliery Depot, Cambuslang, by working it when it was suffering from two sores on the back. He was fined £2 pounds with 15 shillings of expenses, or 30 days imprisonment.

Scotsman 22 August 1890 – A man named Richard Brown, residing at Stonelaw Street, Rutherglen, while working in the Wellshot Colliery yesterday, was killed by the fall of a quantity of stones from the roof.

Scotsman, and Glasgow Herald, 7 December 1894 - Yesterday afternoon an accident occurred at Messrs Dunn Brothers' Wellshot Colliery, Cambuslang, whereby Mr George Canning, manager, was killed. The engineman states that the fly wheel shaft in the engine house broke, and the loaded cage began to descend the shaft with a fearful velocity, the cage containing the empty hutch being drawn up at a corresponding rate of speed. The manager, who was in the engine house at the moment, escaped by a side door to the rear, and the engineman by the door leading to the front. The cage came up at great speed, and was carried over the pit frame by the force of the descending cage, and fell to the rear of the engine house. A moment later the engineman went round, when Mr Canning was found lying dead.

Glasgow Herald 9 August 1897 –following the passing of a new Sale of Goods Act, Dun & Glen sued a Wallsall supplier of a second hand steam engine and boilers, to be installed at Wellshot Colliery, as the items delivered were not as agreed.

Cambuslang Advertiser 3 December 1898 - Last Friday afternoon, Thomas Kane (19), miner, residing with his parents at Buchanan Square, Cambuslang, met his death in one of the coal seams at Wellshot Colliery. Kane was engaged boring in the splint seam of No 1 colliery when a fall of coal from the face came down on him. The man was taken home, and Dr Macpherson found that he was suffering from a comminuted thigh bone. He was removed to the Royal Infirmary, where he expired at half-past nine o'clock the same evening.

Glasgow Herald 29 December 1899 – Hugh Kane v United Collieries Ltd - On 25 November 1898 Hugh Kane and his son, miners, residing at Buchanan Square, Silverbanks, Cambuslang were working in No 1 Pit Wellshot Colliery when a large fall took place from the side of a travelling road. It fell on the son and inflicted injuries of which he died the same day in the Glasgow Royal Infirmary. It was maintained that the mine was in a

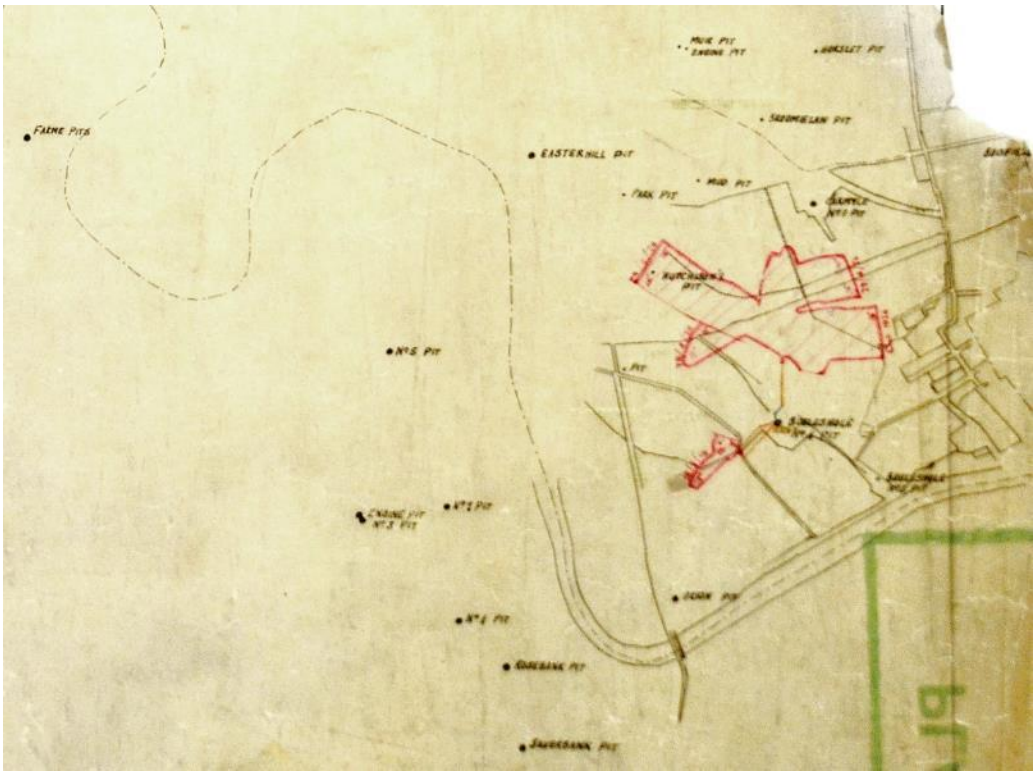
dangerous condition. The defenders were working out the stoops and were doing the work in a dangerous manner. The jury awarded the pursuer the verdict and damages at £300.

Glasgow Herald 22 May 1900 - Yesterday an accident occurred at Wellshot Colliery, Cambuslang, to a fireman named James Cherry, residing at Cambuslang. Cherry was crossing the pit bottom when the cage came down on top of him, crushing him. He was considerably bruised, besides sustaining internal injuries.

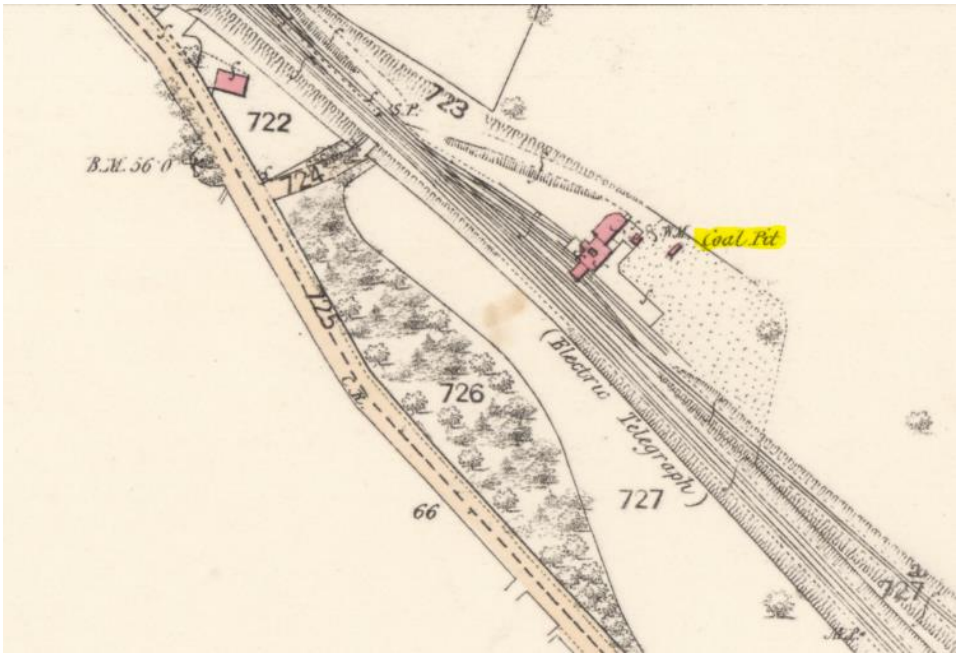
ROSEBANK COLLIERY c1800 -1862

Rosebank Pit was part of Hamilton Farm Colliery, operated by Colin Dunlop & Co and later, from about 1860, by James Dunlop & Co and is shown on the 1854 mine abandonment plan of Hamilton Farme Colliery. It was located on the edge of the Hoover site (now a new housing estate), just to the north side of the railway line at Silverbanks.

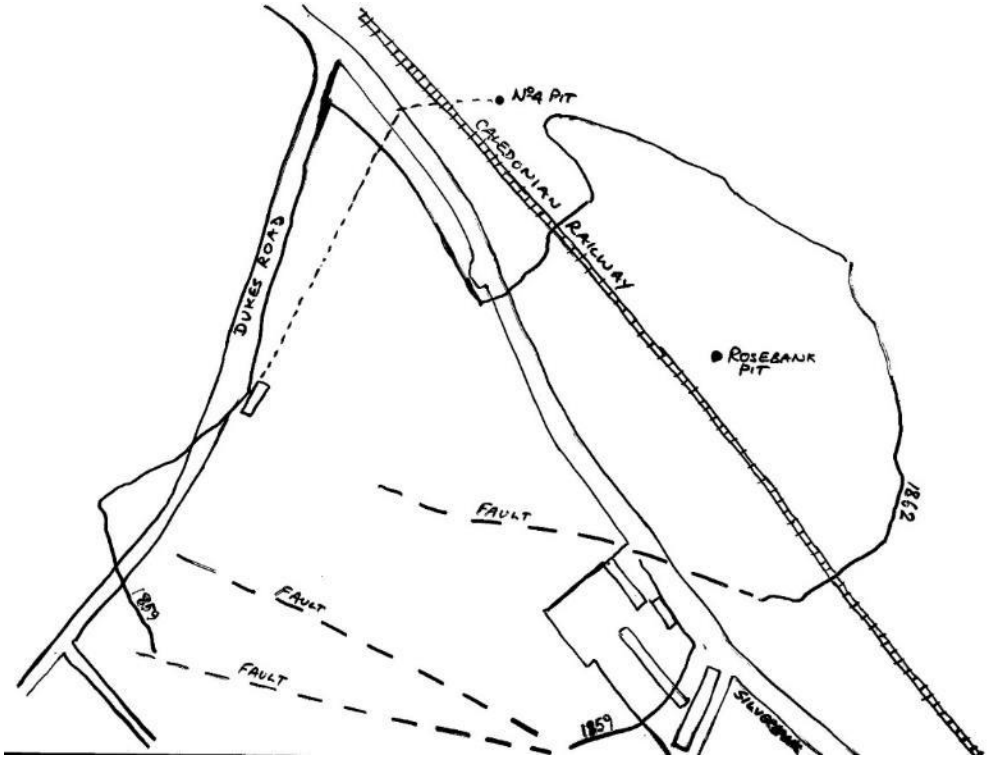
Rosebank pit did not work the coal under the Rosebank estate. That coal was worked from the Silverbanks pit



Map showing the location of Rosebank Pit, second up from the bottom of the map (Reproduced by permission of the National Records of Scotland, Ref 67). This shaft was located and grouted in 1981 (Ref 22).



1864 Ordnance Survey Map showing the Rosebank Pit. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.



The figure above shows Rosebank pit, and the area mined, when the Ell coal was exhausted about 1862, and the pit abandoned. Rosebank pit had been part of Hamilton Farm Colliery, however, the Hamilton Farm Colliery abandonment Plan is dated 1854. This figure identifies Rosebank pit as associated with Wellshot colliery at this time, rather than Hamilton Farm Colliery.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 26 January 1846 - On Monday, the 12th, at Rosebank Colliery, Cambuslang, a collier, of the name of Hector Stewart, and his son, a boy about 15 years of age, lost their lives in descending the pit about four o'clock a.m. It is supposed that their lamps had caught the fire damp, and a tremendous explosion took place, hurling these unfortunate individuals to a distance of 36 yards from the place of explosion. They were mangled in a dreadful state, and both died in four hours after the accident. The father has left a widow and three children, unable to provide for themselves.

Accident - 16 January 1856 at James Farie's Rosebank Colliery Near Glasgow, Thomas Edmond, bottomer, fell down shaft in consequence of the engine being suddenly moved while he was going off at a mid working.

Fatal Accident, 2 August 1856 - Robert Burns, with three others, had gone on the cage (in the morning) to be lowered to their work, when the engineman through inattention, or by mistake, raised the cage instead of lowering it, consequently it was drawn over the pit-head pulley, and the deceased fell to the bottom of the shaft, a distance of fifty-two fathoms. In this case, the engineman was tried for neglect of duty by Sheriff Steele and a jury, found guilty, and sentenced to thirty days' confinement in Bridewell or pay a fine of fifteen pounds sterling.

Glasgow herald 27 May 1861 - On Thursday evening about six o'clock, a joiner named James Stephen, 37 years of age, residing in Hamilton Road, Rutherglen, committed suicide in a most determined manner. The unfortunate man, who is said to have been intemperate in his habits for some time past, watched the approach of a mineral train on the private railway leading from Rosebank Colliery to Clyde iron works and when the engine was within a few yards of the spot on which he was standing, he lay down and deliberately placed his neck across the rail. The engine driver observed him but it was utterly impossible to stop the train, which was on a decline at the time. The engine was brought to a standstill as soon as possible, however, and the driver and others repaired to the place where Steven had been seen. It was found that the poor man's head was severed from his body, to which it was attached by a piece of skin only. The deceased was last seen setting up on the trunk of an old tree near the railway embankment between four and six o'clock same day. A horse and cart were procured by the county police, and the body was conveyed home to Rutherglen.

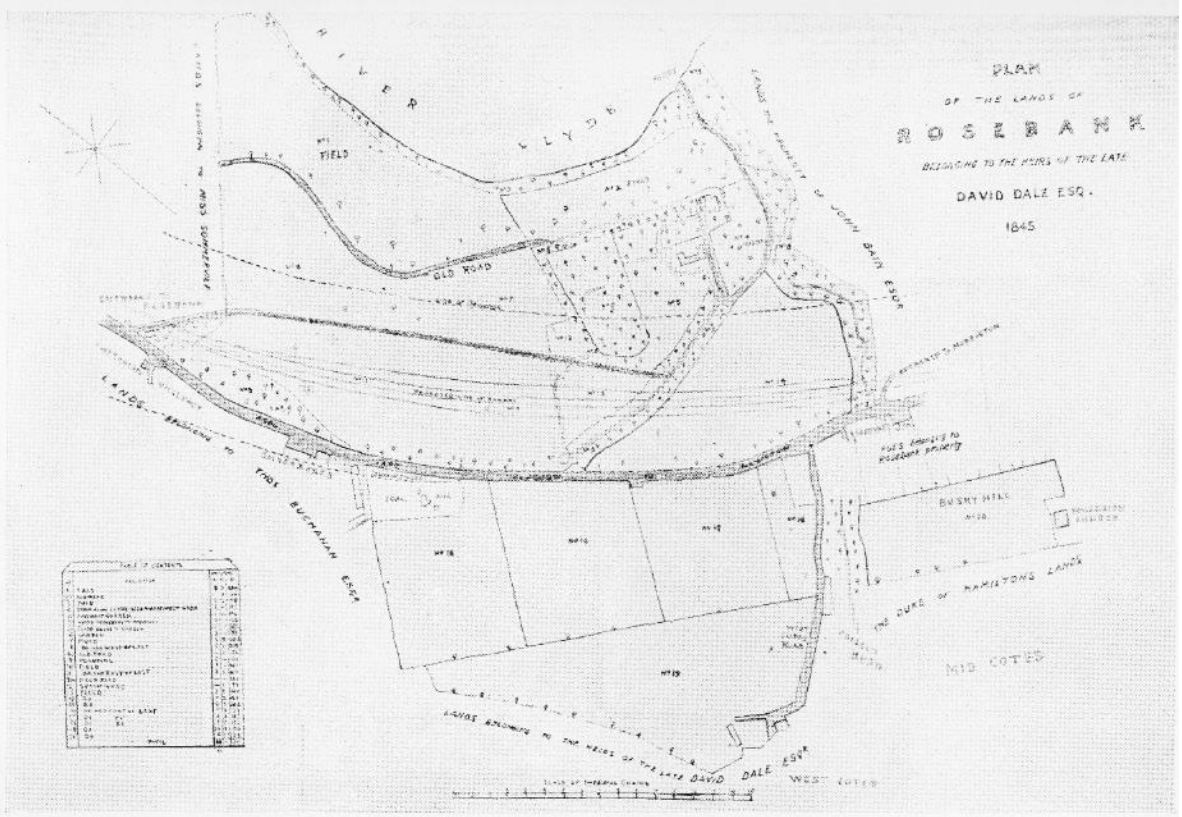
SILVERBANKS COLLIERY c1852 - c1869

Mr Farie's pit, or Silverbanks Pit, was located at the corner of the Main Street and Buchanan Drive. It is shown on an 1852 plan as Mr Farie's Coal pit. Silverbanks colliery worked the coal towards the north east and the Rosebank area. The Rosebank Pit was a separate pit, near the former Hoover factory site, which was part of Hamilton Farm Colliery.

A newspaper article about Farme Colliery, also owned by Mr Farie, reports that the Farie family had been continuously engaged in coal mining in the parishes of Cambuslang and Rutherglen since the days of Charles II (1630 –1685). Perhaps because of the long family historical connection with the area this may explain the many variations in the spelling of Fairrie, Ferrie, Fairie, Farie, etc.(Ref 45).

When the Rosebank estate was sold to the Provisional Committee of the Caledonian Railway, in 1845, the railway reserved the land required for its final route and a sale of the remaining lands of Rosebank was advertised in the Glasgow Herald on 11 June 1852. The sale included, as Lot III, the coal seams under the land, but identified that those above the Humph coal seam, belonging to another proprietor, had already been all nearly wrought out.

The plan below, dated 1845, shows the land of Rosebank, which would have been involved in the sale.



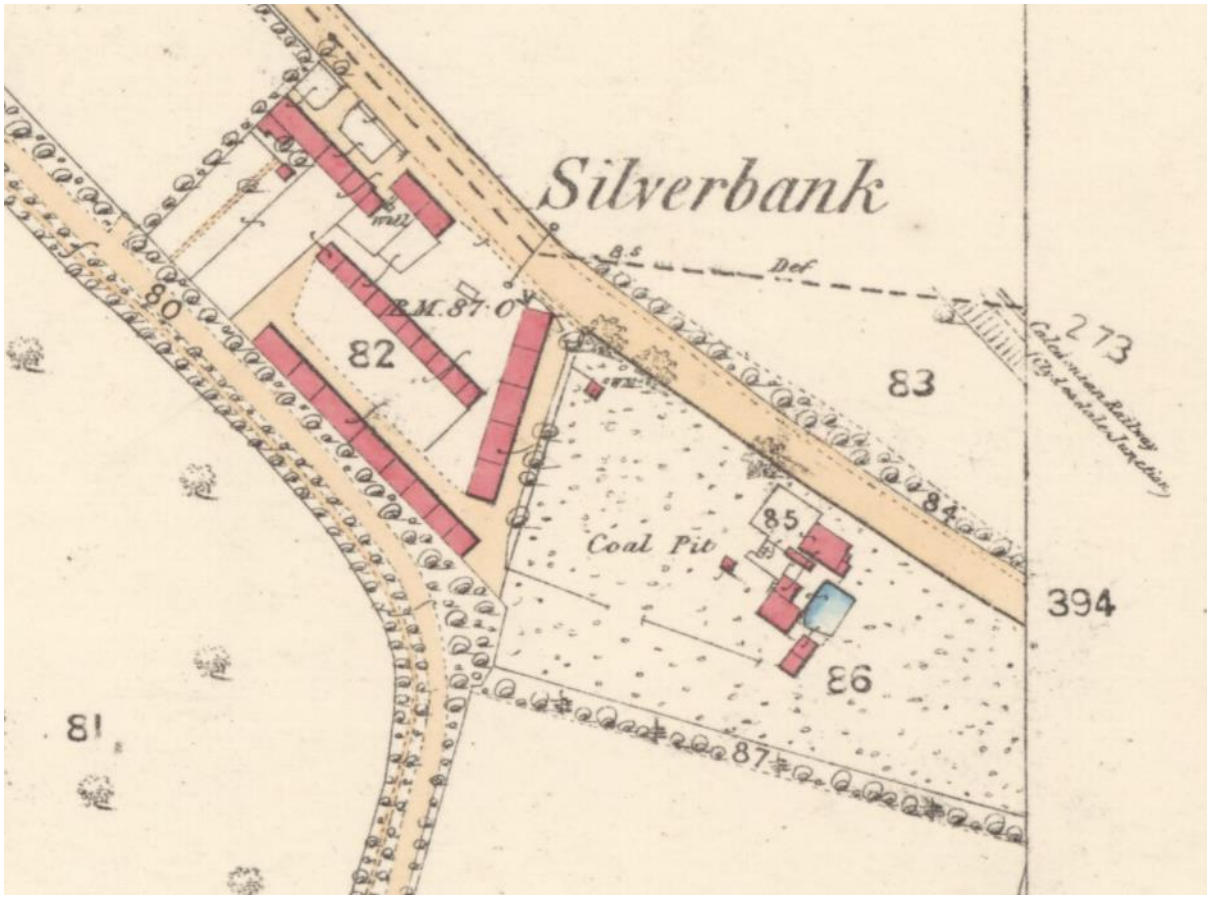
PLAN OF THE LANDS OF ROSEBANK, 1845

It is interesting to note that in this 1845 plan (Ref 62) the proposed line of the railway is shown to the north of Cambuslang Main Street, through the Rosebank, Morriston and Westburn estates. This was disputed by the owners of these estates. The alternative, as finally adopted, was to make a cutting through the lands of the feuars on the south side of the Main Street. As the old road crossed the site of the present railway station a new section of road was made a short distance further north.

A later plan, dated 1852, is held at the Mitchell Library and shows the final route of the road and railway. This later plan names the pit at Silverbanks as Mr Farie's. Mr Farie operated the colliery from 1854 to 1869.

From Lanarkshire Ordnance Survey Name Books, 1858 (Ref 46).

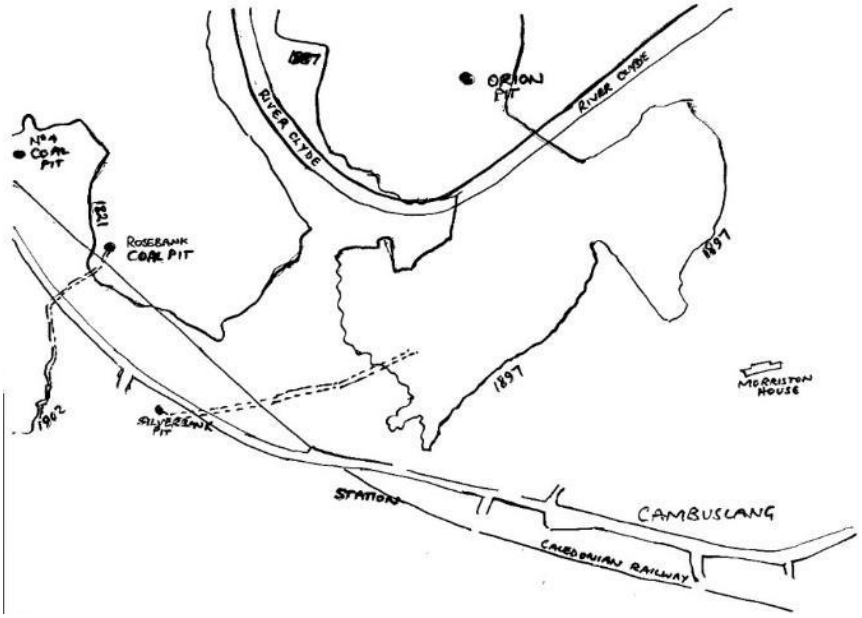
> Silverbank - A small colliery village on the side of the Glasgow and Hamilton Turnpike Road. The name is taken from the coal pit near it but is now so generally applied to both coal pit & houses that it may be said to have more reference now to the houses than the pit. Lessee J. Fairie Esqr. The property of the Duke of Hamilton. Valuation Roll Estate map D. Gardiner, Factor.



The 1864 Ordnance Survey map also shows the Silverbanks pit (Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland). Tenements were subsequently built over the pit but demolished in the middle of the 20th century. The present location is now a grassy area adjacent to the car park at the corner of Buchanan Drive and Main Street, Cambuslang.

A further plan, held at the Mitchell Library, shows Rosebank Hard coal workings in 1858. This shows the Hard (Splint) coal underground workings, which were developed towards the north east, under the Rosebank estate, towards Bridge Street. The plan also shows:

- a drainage engine and two other pumps (presumably steam engine pumps);
- ventilation door locations and a “horse road” for pit ponies;
- an area of coal to be preserved to protect the Caledonian Railway route.



The figure above shows the extent of the workings under the Rosebank estate in 1897. The Silverbanks pit may have closed in 1869 with the minerals then being worked from the Orion pit. The seams worked in this plan are not identified, although the underground roadways from the pit at Silverbank connect between the Ell and Upper coal seams.

When the Dunlops got possession of the northern part of Rosebank (following a sale by the Caledonian Railway in 1852) they sunk a pit known as Cockmalayne, on the north side of the railway, opposite Silverbanks. They also built the Orion Bridge and made a railway to transport the coal to their furnaces. The name was understood to have been borrowed from the unfortunate ship Orion, Lost in 1850 off Portpatrick (Ref 62).

The plan of coal workings above is based on the 1864 Ordnance Survey map and shows Silverbank pit (Reproduced by permission of the National Records of Scotland, Ref 67). However, by the time of the 1896

Ordnance Survey map Silverbank pit is no longer shown. Nevertheless, the coal was still being worked in 1897 (as marked on the plan) but now from the Orion pit, which was located across the River Clyde to the north.

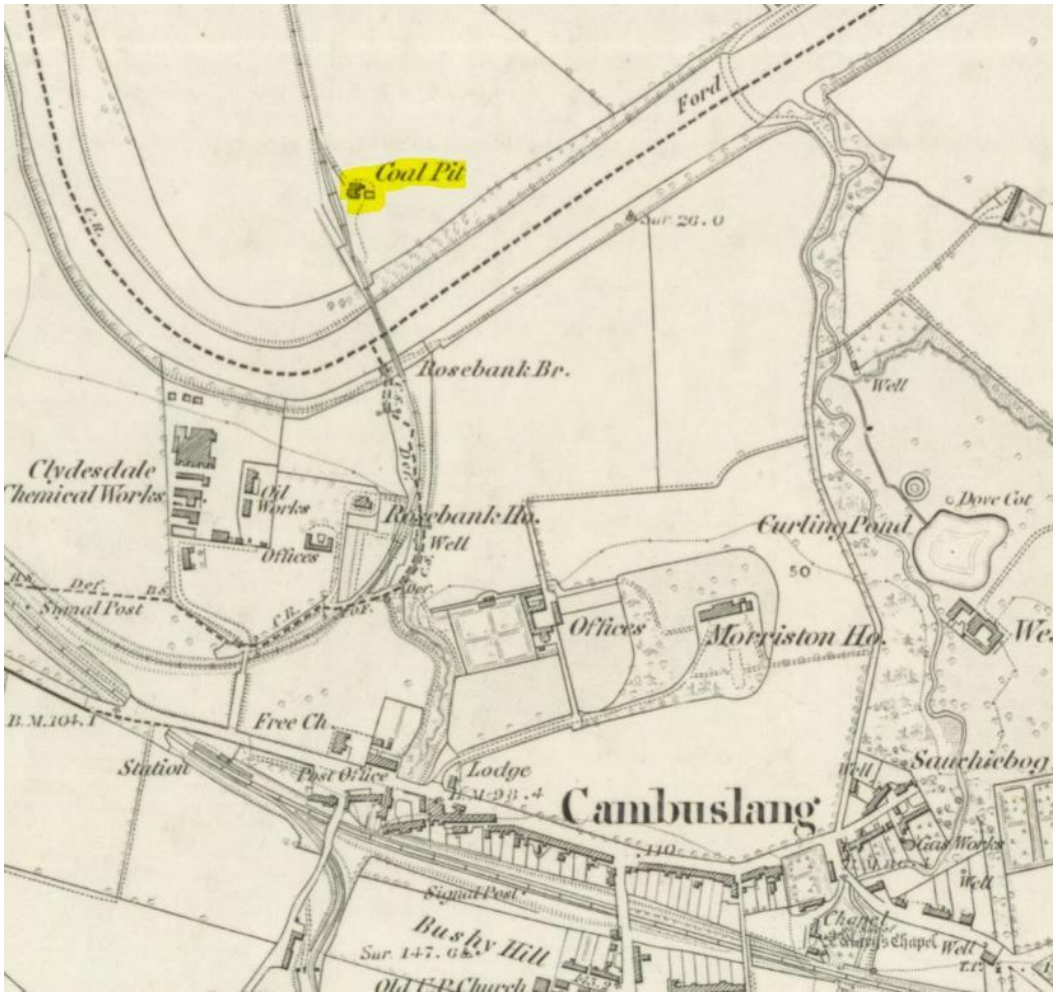
Accidents

From the Caledonian Mercury newspaper, 15 June 1771 - Last week, as three boys were diverting themselves about Mr. Fairie's coal-pit, near Rutherglen, *[this may be one of Mr Farie's other pits]* one of them attempted to slide down the rope, which firing in his hand, he let go his hold, and unfortunately lost his life by this foolish exploit.

ORION PIT

The Orion Pit was situated at the north side of Rosebank Bridge.

The shaft was sunk 44 metres to the Upper coal and 200 metres to the Kiltongue coal. Around the start of the last century the Rosebank Bridge was used as a mineral railway bridge to serve the James Dunlop Company's Clyde Iron Works. The existing, but now disused, road bridge was built alongside.



1864 Ordnance Survey Map Showing the location of the Orion Pit. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Co-author, Bob McDonald at site of Orion Pit, 2016 (C Findlay).

GREENLEES COLLIERY 1947 - 1957

Under the management of the National Coal Board, and the advent of nationalisation on the 1st January 1947, several factors took place which further hastened the demise of the Cambuslang coalfield. Although in 1947, only Bardykes Colliery, Blantyreferme Colliery, and Coatspark Mill Colliery remained in production in the area, a new Surface Drift called Greenlees Mine was planned near East Greenlees Farm and the Golf Course, and this commenced production in 1948.

Greenlees colliery was located on the south of East Greenlees Road, opposite Mackintosh Street. It was sunk during a programme of Small Mine sinkings by the NCB in 1947, to meet market demands until larger modern deep collieries could be opened. Greenlees colliery closed in February 1957.

Co-author Joe Cunningham was a National Coal Board surveyor at this time and surveyed this mine in its latter years. Much of the information about Greenlees colliery is from his personal records and recollections.

Greenlees colliery was a drift mine (with two drifts) located near Kirkhill Golf Course and originally worked Splint and Virgin coal near the outcrop where the coal seam reached the surface.

Coal reserves were worked from steep workings (25°) between the burn alongside Cairns Road and the shatter area created by the large upthrow fault near the position of Dechmont Mill. Retarder Chain Conveyors were used at the face with Main and Tail or Direct Rope Haulages utilised to move the coal.

Splint and Virgin Coal seam, in an overall section of 6' 6" (1980mm) coal with a 1' 3" (380mm) dirt parting, was first worked by a stoop and room system. As a result of the workings being so close to the surface this ended with a hole appearing from the surface, which, made stoop removal an unlikely option on safety and legal grounds after the Knockshinnoch inrush in 1950, and sterilisation of this area of reserves. An extensive area of Splint coal (4' 6", 1372mm, thick) under and around the Public Park was being extracted in 1956 towards Tanzieknowe from Greenlees Colliery. However, this proved to have been worked from Tanzieknowe (Cambuslang Colliery No 1 pit) prior to the requirement to produce accurate working plans, which did not come into force until the middle part of the nineteenth century, and 90% of the expected reserves had already been extracted. As a result, attempts to work the 22" (559mm) Virgin coal proved difficult due to the close proximity of Splint coal waste above the Virgin coal.

The Splint and Virgin seams were worked with a complement of around 130 men until 1956, when Blackband workings previously abandoned by the closure of Gateside No.1 Colliery were re-entered near the Cairns Housing Estate.

Blackband Coal seam (26 inches, 650mm, thick) The Blackband coal was completely extracted (from the Main Mine Access to the seam) and eventually connected with Gateside Colliery blackband workings, which had been abandoned in April 1946. These flooded workings were pumped dry using a large Evans Pulsometer Pump, brought from Gateside, to extract the remaining Gateside coal reserves of this seam. These abandoned Gateside roadway and longwall working face were surveyed by Joe Cunningham. A deteriorating commercial situation in 1957, and housing developments on Cairns Estate, prevented further developments in the Blackband Seam in the Cairns / Gilbertfield Farm Area.

Lower Drumgray seam. The latter months of the colliery's life were marked by endeavours to produce Lower Drumgray coal from a stone mine driven from the Gateside Main coal roadway. However, bad roof conditions (the presence of water after 1946 may have affected the Shales over the Drumgray, since the nearby Coatspark workings although heavily faulted had excellent roof conditions), together with the inefficient need to utilise five long haulages to access the reserves resulted in poor results.

In 1949 the colliery output was 30 tons per day, 8,500 tons per annum (planned 25,000 tons) and there were 45 employees. It had no screening equipment for grading coal by size, no washer, and no canteen, baths or medical services.

The extent of the colliery take was restricted by the proposed construction of the Cairns Housing Estate and with five lengthy haulages, poor roof, and poor trade all led to abandonment in February 1957.

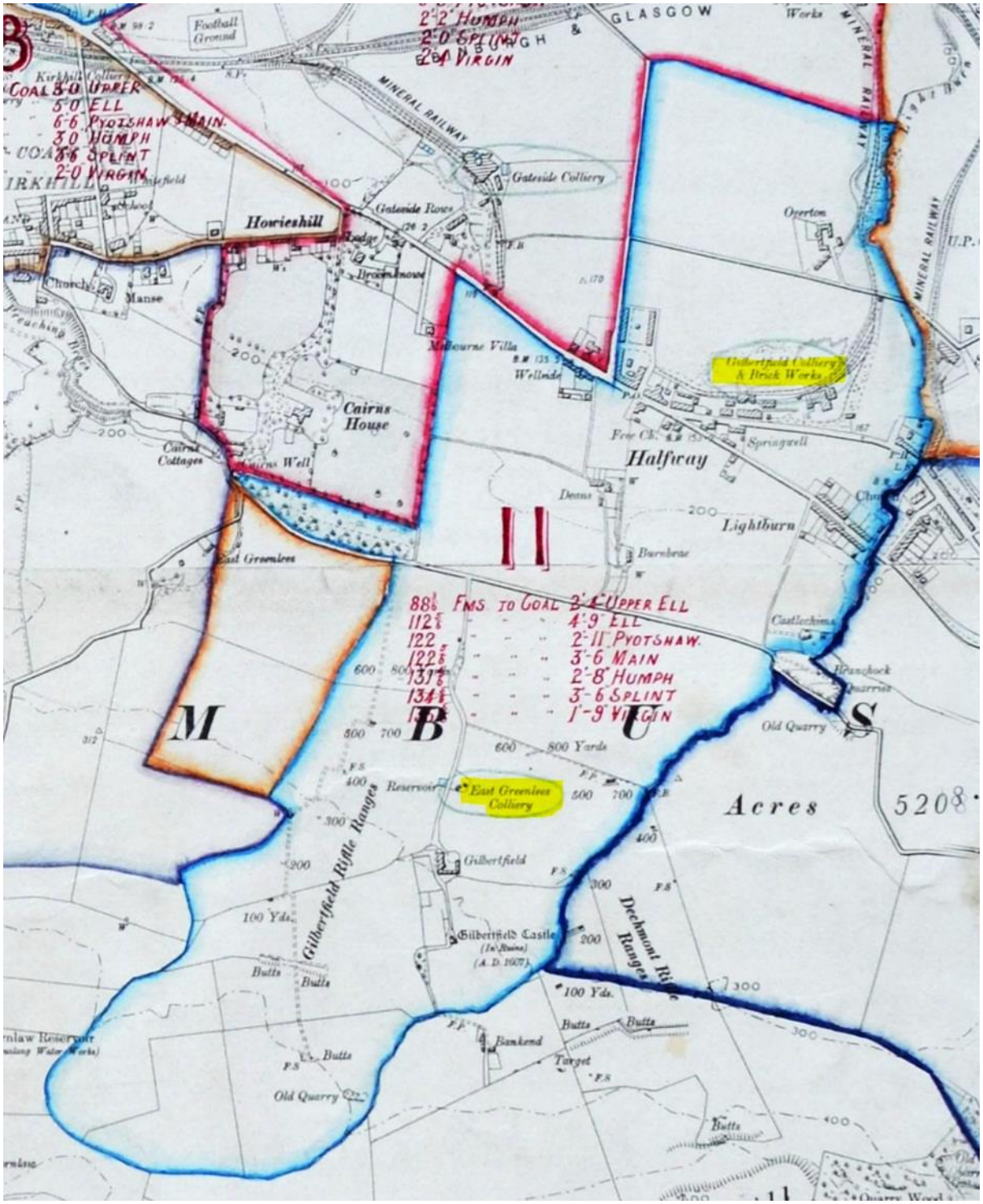
1954 Ordnance Survey Map Showing the location of the Greenlees Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Greenlees Colliery location – image from Google Maps.

EAST GREENLEES COLLIERY c1885 - 1918

East Greenlees colliery was located just to the north of Gilbertfield castle. No 3 pit was 90 metres deep. The colliery closed in 1918 (Ref 22).

East Greenlees Colliery is shown on the 1896 Ordnance Survey Map. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland. By 1910 the colliery is still shown on the map but is marked as being disused.



The above map, from about 1896 (Ref 14) shows the lease area worked by both East Greenlees Colliery and Gilbertfield Colliery. As the colliery was disused in 1910 but not abandoned until 1918, it may have been worked laterally from Gilbertfield colliery (see separate entry for Gilbertfield colliery), or used as a ventillation shaft, until Gilbertfield colliery was abandoned in 1918.

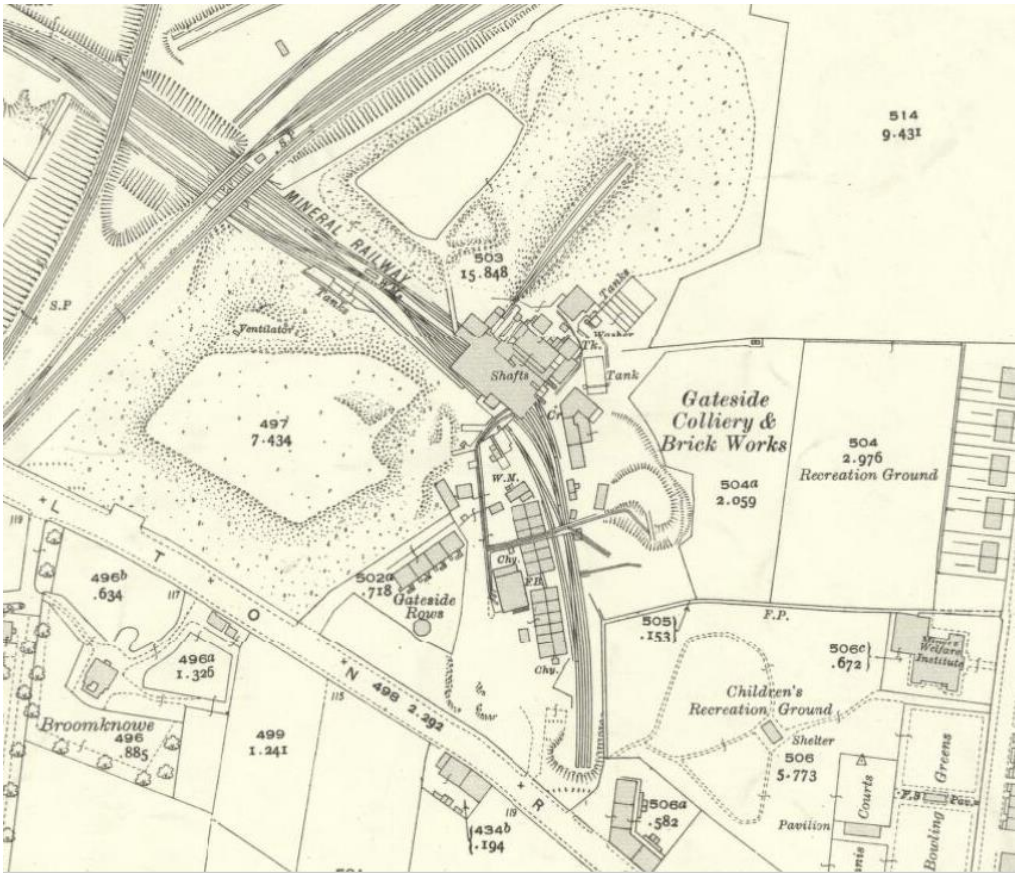
East Greenlees Mine location – image from Google Maps.

GATESIDE COLLIERY 1890 -1946

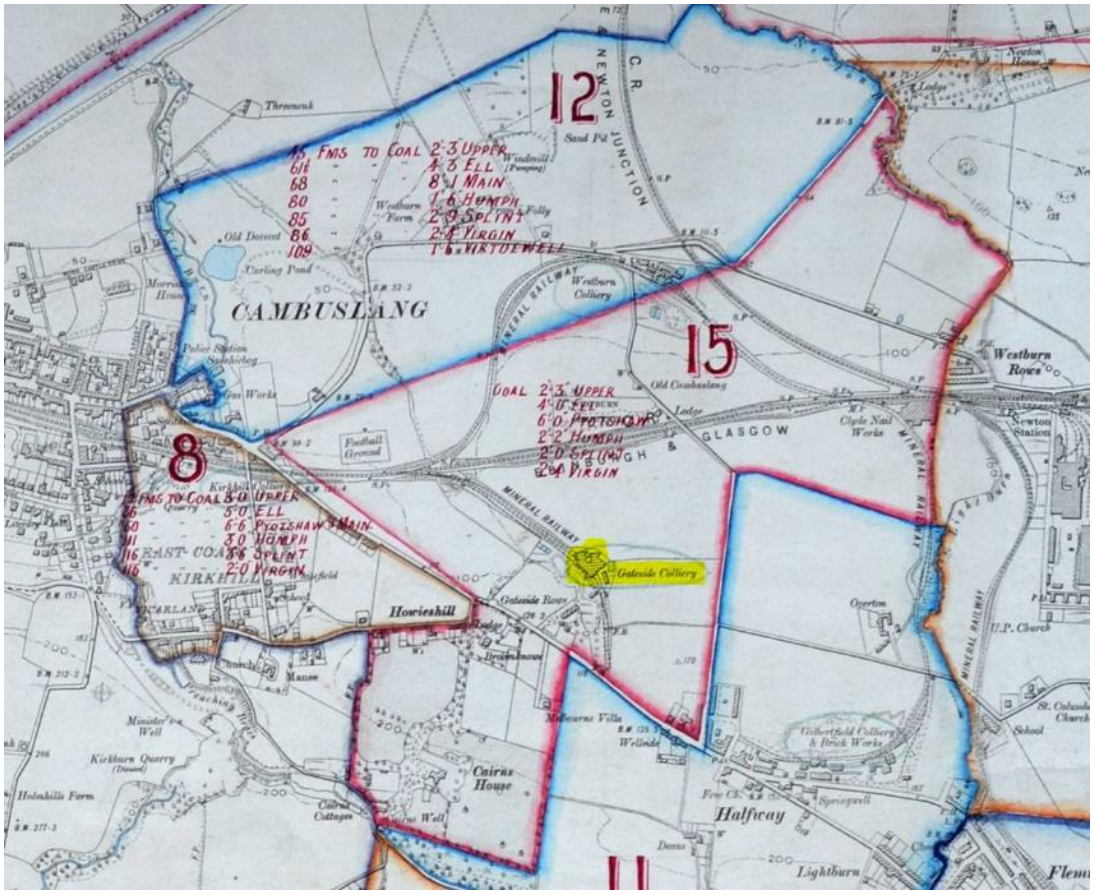
Gateside Colliery was a long-standing feature of the Halfway skyline from 1890 to 1964.

Gateside colliery, located about MacArthur Wynd, off Hamilton Road, was presumably named after the Gateside farm shown on the 1859 OS map. It opened in 1890, sunk to a depth of 177 metres, and closed in 1946.

The reserves of Westburn colliery were annexed into Gateside Colliery after its closure in 1922.



1896 Ordnance Survey Map showing Gateside Colliery and Brick Works. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (15) worked by Gateside colliery (Ref 14).

Gateside Colliery No.1 and No.2 Pits, owned by the Flemington Coal Company, opened in 1890, and employed a total of 300 men in 1896, managed by Mr J Dodds. By 1918, 550 men were employed and by 1945 376 men were employed. The manager in 1939 - 1943 was William Armstrong (also the manager of Coats Park colliery) (Ref 50). The colliery was owned by the National Coal Board from 1947 until 1950.

Photograph Showing Gateside colliery “brushers”. These men were responsible for the upkeep of underground roadways.

Co-author Joe Cunningham was a National Coal Board surveyor and worked at Gateside during the latter days of this colliery. Much of the information in this section is from his personal records and recollections.

Gateside Colliery had produced coal from both pits from the 1890 until the closure of No.2 Pit in 1942, after abandonment of the Virtuewell coal and very limited development of Blackband, Kiltongue, and Lower Drumgray Seams. It had in the latter stages been working coal to the north under Westburn, but poor labour relations and mining conditions resulted in its closure. This resulted in total abandonment of reserves in the Westburn area of Kiltongue coal and Lower Drumgray coal which had been accessed by drift mines from near the pit bottom. Although this closure was fiercely contested by Sir Patrick Dollan among others in the House of Commons, it failed to give No.2 Pit a stay of execution. No.2 Pit was approximately 100 fathoms (183 metres) deep to the Splint coal.

No.1 Pit was 46 metres deep to the Upper coal and operated until April 1946 working Blackband coal (650mm thick) in an area near the Public Park. A mine was driven from the Main coal to the Lower Drumgray near to the Kirkhill Golf Clubhouse.

On the other side of Greenlees Road the Kiltongue and Lower Drumgray coals were extensively extracted by Coatspark Mine, whilst the Blackband coal was also worked to the legal limit towards the outcrop by Coatspark in the same area.

No real workings took place below the Blackband coal. A drift mine was driven in the 1930's from Branchock Quarry, off Gilbertfield Road near Castle Chimnins Road, to provide ventilation for workings from Gateside Colliery and to access coal left after the closures of Dechmont No's 1, 2, & 3 in 1931. This Quarry was filled in using waste from Greenlees Mine during the 1950's. When No.1 Pit was abandoned in April 1946, the remaining Blackband coal workings were accessed from Greenlees Mine and very limited working took place in the Lower Drumgray coal prior to closure of the aforementioned mine. The workings in several seams such as Ell coal, Main coal, Virtuewell coal, etc. were accessed through Branchoch Mine, into the area previously worked by Dechmont Collieries.

Gateside Colliery also accessed workings from Gilbertfield Colliery No 1, 2 & 3. No 1 & 2 were located along with Brick Works opposite the Sun Inn in Halfway, while No.3 was sunk near Gilbertfield Castle for ventilation and access for miners housed in the Castle in the early part of the 20th Century. Gilbertfield Colliery was abandoned in 1918 following a shaft collapse.

During World War II a protection stoop below Kirkhill Church was partially extracted using 'stoop and room' methods in the thick Ell coal, Pyotshaw, and Main coals (maybe Splint also). A pre-existing access drift, dating from Cambuslang Colliery, No 1 pit, times, on the bank in the Public Park below Cairns Road provided access to this area as required. This colliery had a history of poor ventilation which giving the extent of the workings was not a surprise.

Gateside Colliery had served as a buffer between collieries, from around 1931, to protect those working in the Cambuslang / Blantyre / Carmyle / Shettleston / Rutherglen area by acting as a large Pumping Station for waterlogged mine workings. The pumps were located at Blackband coal level in the Sauchie Bog area below the Cambuslang Golf Club area and up to 1964 pumped approximately 3500 gallons/minute (16 m^3/minute) from the pit. Gateside Colliery was retained as a pumping station after closure in 1946 and protected the Clyde Valley Collieries from flooded workings to the west, i.e. Farme, Bogleshole, Clyde Iron Works, and the pits in the Eastfield Area. The pumps drained along the railway siding into an open culvert, which could be seen from Gateside School and Hamilton Road looking over the allotments. From there, the drainage went under the main railway line on its journey towards the Clyde and the discharge from the Gateside colliery pumps culvert formed a waterfall that could be seen by residents in the area.

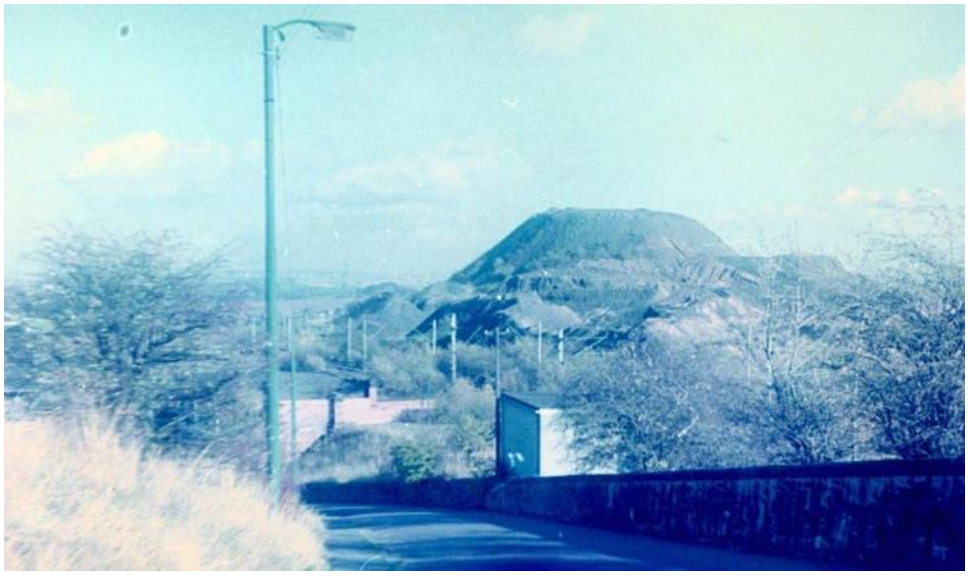
Water levels in the Bogleshole Colliery shafts were regularly monitored to ensure safe working up to the final abandonment of the coalfield. Although production at Gateside No.1 Pit ceased in April 1946, the colliery infrastructure was retained for pumping purposes until the closure of Newton No.1 Colliery (Blantyreferme No.3 Colliery) in 1964.

The types of coal produced were similar to that mined at Dechmont Colliery. A brickworks, using colliery waste, was also in existence at this colliery, which was sited between Halfway and Gateside School.

Baths were also built at Blantyreferme No.3 and Gateside Collieries in 1940 (Gateside with cubicles for 300 miners). These were sanctioned at collieries with an expected lifespan in excess of 15 years which, of course, was not the case with Gateside Colliery. However, this facility was also used by men from Greenlees, Coatspark, Bardykes, and Blantyre Collieries, who lived locally and also the general public.

Photograph showing Gateside Brickworks, looking south from the top of the colliery bing. The colliery baths are to the south west at the main road. (Reproduced by permission of Edward Boyle).

With regard to the large conical bing which stretched out towards Westburn Cemetery, the spoil was pulled by rope haulage in a single large container which tipped over when the stop was reached at the top. The waste was deposited down the side of the bing, the container tipped back and was then lowered by the haulage to the bottom for re-filling.



Photograph of Gateside Bing from Howieshill Road. (Reproduced by permission of Edward Boyle).

Co-author Joe Cunningham recalls a Mr. McGrotty of Hamilton Road Halfway being stationed at the top of the bing to carry out this operation. Joe Cunningham's grandfather, who passed away in 1943, did a similar job at Bardykes Colliery in his latter years.

After the Aberfan (Cwmbran colliery) Disaster of the 1960's which was caused by the instability of a colliery tip, conical tips like the above were deemed unsafe and, where necessary, were removed.

There would generally be a step at the bottom of the bing, since the pithead was of the order of 6 to 9 metres above ground level and the tubs of waste would come out of the pithead at that level. Joe Cunningham remembers the rope haulage in question, which would be either steam or electrically operated, when he walked to the top of the bing in the 1960's.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Cambuslang Advertiser 3 December 1898 - An old man named Patrick M'Laughlan (70), 2 Church Street, who has been all his life working about the pits in the district, met with an accident on Tuesday at No 2 Gateside Colliery. A quantity of coal, weighing 10 cwts from the face of the ell coal seam fell on the old man while he was working, causing instantaneous death.

Glasgow Herald 29 July 1899 - Yesterday forenoon, Robert Thomson, a drawer in Gateside Colliery, Cambuslang, whilst following out his employment was seriously injured by a fall of stone. One of his legs was broken while the other was pretty much crushed. He was attended to by the colliery doctor, who ordered his removal to the Royal Infirmary.

Scotsman 26 September 1914 – Yesterday a miner, John Shaw (26), 2 Westburn View, Cambuslang was caught in a fall and killed. He leaves a wife and two children.

Scotsman 15 January 1915 – Yesterday afternoon Peter McCourt, miner, 77 Easterhill Street, Tollcross, was working with an electrically driven coal cutting machine when he was accidentally caught in the machinery and died shortly after admission to Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Scotsman 18 July 1916 – A miner, James Morton (40), 56 Park Street, Cambuslang, was engaged at a ten-ton coal cutting machine when he was caught in the machine, which is driven by electric current, and was killed.

Scotsman 23 February 1916 – Yesterday morning a fall from the roof in Gateside Colliery caught two miners, John Howieson (36), 25 Bank Street, Cambuslang was severely crushed and died in half an hour. He leaves a widow and four children. John Henderson (35), 1 Silverbanks Street was seriously injured.

Scotsman 23 May 1922 – Yesterday Michael McGovern (24), 60 Glasgow Road, Cambuslang was killed and Arch Hastie, Graham's buildings, Halfway was injured when working in the splint coal section of Gateside Colliery, by a fall from the roof.

Scotsman 29 September 1923 - When engaged on the night shift ant Gateside Colliery No 2, a shot firer, Peter Smith (26), 32 Church Street, Cambuslang, was killed by a fall of stone from the roof in the main coal seam. He leaves a widow and two children.

Scotsman 1 September 1930 – William Arbuckle, 32 Graham's Buildings, Halfway, was engaged at a coal gum dump. When he was missed by a fellow workman it was surmised that he was buried. After half an hour's digging by a squad of men he was found to have suffocated. The deceased was the sole support of his mother, who is a widow.

Scotsman 20 January 1931 – A train of hutches loaded with coal broke loose and knocked down and injured a miner named John Greenhorn, 13 Colebrook Street, Cambuslang. He sustained a fractured arm cuts about the head and serious internal injuries. He was removed unconscious to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Scotsman 18 May 1932 – Patrick McCafferty, 21 Graham's Buildings, Halfway, Cambuslang, a miner employed in the Gateside Colliery, was fatally injured while at work yesterday afternoon. He was struck by a fall from the roof of the working and was removed to the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, where he died a few hours later.

Scotsman 24 May 1933 – Mathew Ward (30), 6 Gateside Buildings, was knocked down by a runaway hutch and died while being conveyed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Scotsman 3 May 1937 – Alexander Russell (46), a brusher, 45 Calder Road, Mossend, died in Glasgow Royal Infirmary yesterday after being struck by a large piece of rock, during the night shift, which seriously injured his leg.

Scotsman 14 May 1937 – An inquiry was held by Sheriff Walker and a jury at Hamilton yesterday into the death of Edward M'Laughlin, miner, 28 Colebrook Street, Cambuslang, who died in Glasgow Royal Infirmary on April 14 from injuries sustained in an explosion in No 1 pit Gateside Colliery, Cambuslang. John Purdie, colliery manager, 15 Gleeb St, Airdrie, said deceased was employed as a brusher in the Gilbertfield section, and his work involved blasting at the coalface. The appointed shot firer was William Crawford, who's duty it was to perform or supervise the stemming of any shot and to fire the shots. Deceased was working with a man named Hutton, but neither had the authority to fire shots. The pit was a safety lamp pit, and the men were inspected every day to prevent matches being taken into it. Witness said he learned of the accident and interviewed Hutton, who said he and M'Laughlin were boring holes for shots. Crawford left detonators for the holes and went away, but returned and gave M'Laughlin are dry battery. Hutton saw M'Laughlin tinkering with the end of the battery, and heard a shot go off. M'Laughlin proceeded to connect up another shot and while he was doing so, Hutton himself took up the ends of the battery and started to play about with them. There was an explosion and M'Laughlin was injured. The Fiscal decision was that further inquiry would be made.

Scotsman 13 October 1937 – At Gateside Colliery, Cambuslang, a fall from the roof caught a miner, Joseph Johnstone (29). He was extricated but was found to be dead. His back had been broken.

Scotsman 9 November 1937 – Three miners were injured when a coal face in the Virtuewell section burst out and partially buried them. They were: Thomas Hobbs, 197 Hamilton Road, Halfway, George McGinty, 32 Glasgow Road and Charles Boles, Bothwell Street. They were extracted by miners in the vicinity, seen by a doctor, and taken home in an ambulance waggon.

Scotsman 16 December 1937 – William Russell (17), Graham's Buildings, Halfway, Cambuslang, a motorman employed in Gateside Colliery, was yesterday knocked down by a runaway hutch. He received serious internal injuries and was conveyed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Scotsman 6 August 1938 – 3 men working in the splint coal section on the night shift at Gateside No1 Colliery, Cambuslang, early yesterday morning had a narrow escape from serious injury when they were caught in a fall from the coal face and partially buried. They were John Shaw, 458 Hamilton Rd, Flemington, Cambuslang; William Stevenson, 25 Muirbank Ave, Rutherglen; and William Whitting, Westmuir Place, Rutherglen. The Injured men were removed to the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow. Stevenson was able to leave the institution after his injuries had been dressed, but Whitting, who is seriously injured about the head and arms, and Shaw, with injuries to his left arm, were detained for treatment. The colliery employs 400 men and is owned by the Flemington Coal Company Ltd, and was working as usual yesterday morning.

From The Scotsman 5 July 1941 – Cambuslang Pit Being Closed "Impossible to Work It on an Economic Basis".

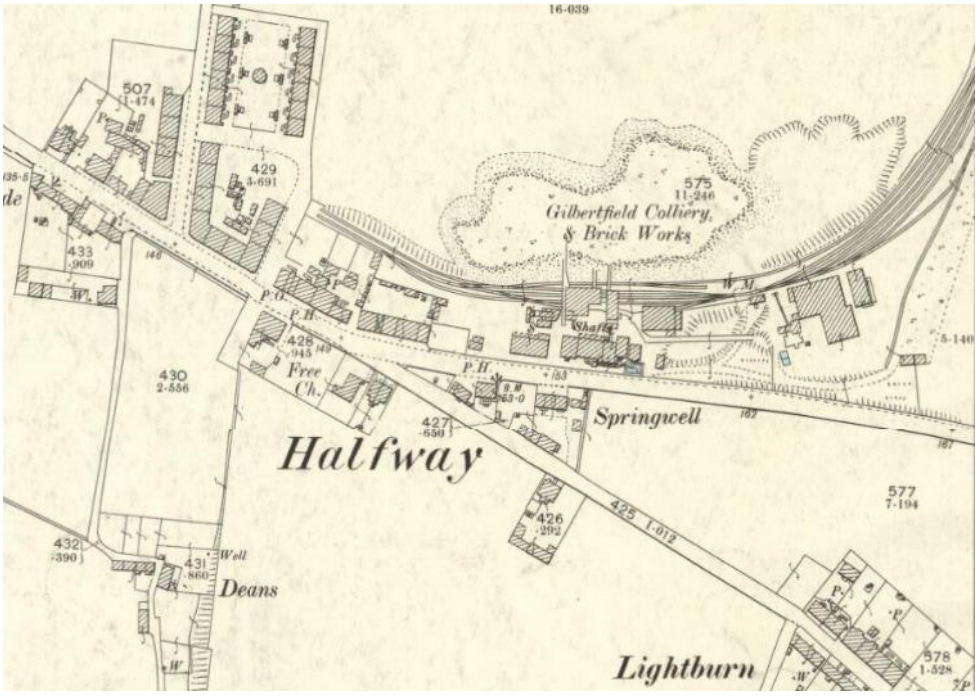
The Flemmington Coal Co Ltd, who own Gateside Collieries No 1 and 2 and Coats Park – all in the Cambuslang area – have decided to close down Gateside No 2 Colliery, and the plant is being withdrawn. Within a few weeks work will have ceased. It was stated that owing to war regulations the company have found it impossible to continue working the mine on an economic basis, and that these regulations penalise collieries in the vicinity of Glasgow by robbing them of the advantages of geographical position, for in pre-war days these advantages more than offset the high cost of production which is general in the mid-Lanark coalfields. Nearly a year ago pithead baths in the vicinity of Gateside Collieries were opened, with cubicles for fully 300 miners.

Scotsman 3 December 1943 – Joseph Monaghan (54), 15 Colebrook Street, Cambuslang, was killed in Gateside Colliery yesterday by a fall of debris.

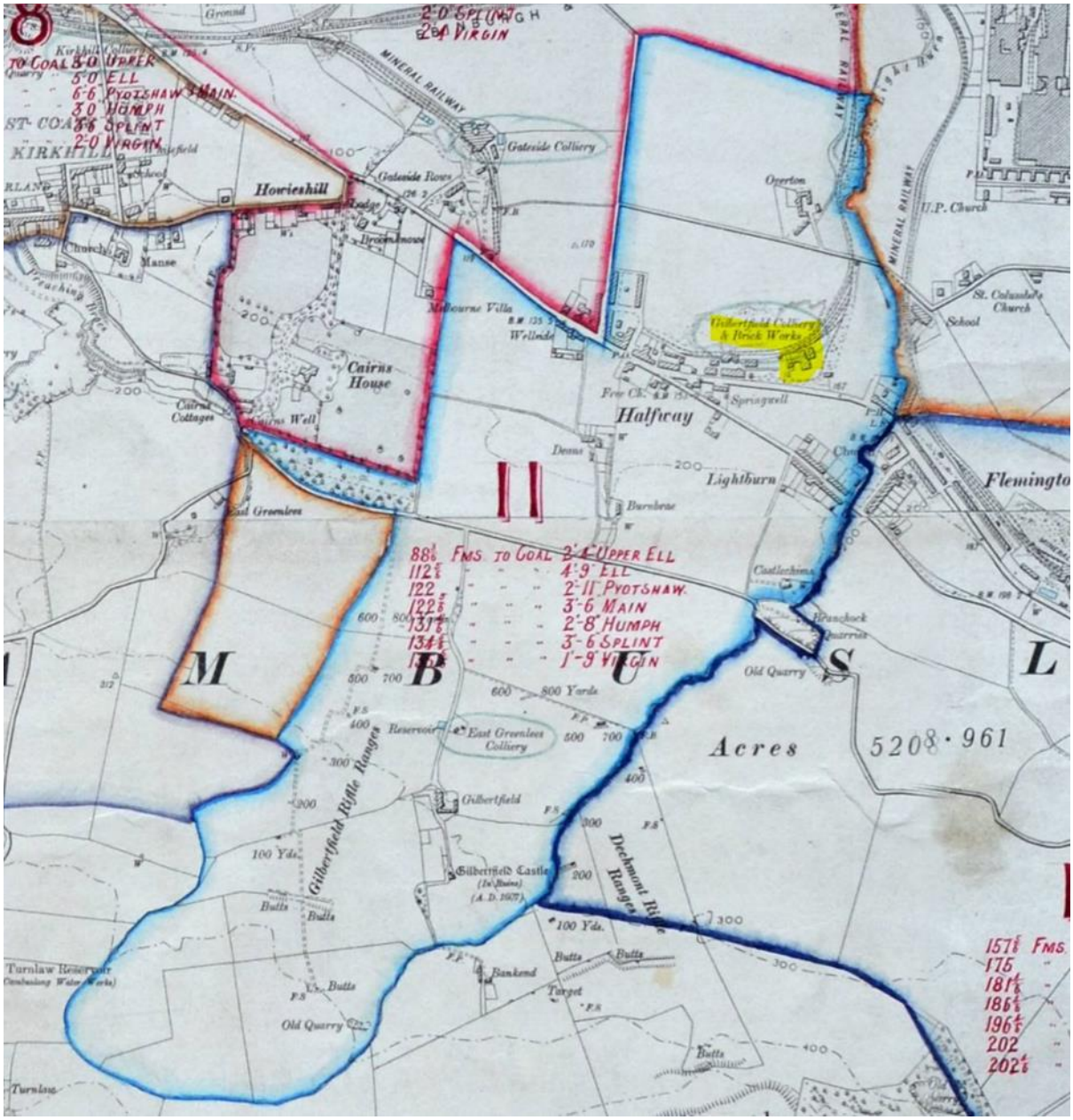
Gateside and Gilbertfield Coal Bings with prefabs. (Reproduced by permission of Edward Boyle).

1960s view of coal bings at Gateside and Gilbertfield towards Newton and Blantyre from Main Street, Cambuslang. (Reproduced by permission of Edward Boyle).

Gilbertfield colliery, sunk to a depth of 245 metres, was located to the north of Hamilton road where the park now is in Halfway. It operated from 1885 until 1918.



1896 Ordnance Survey Map showing Gilbertfield Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (11) worked by Gilbertfield colliery (Ref 14).

Gilbertfield Colliery No.1 and No.2 Pits, which were operated by the Cambuslang Coal Company, were sunk in the 1870's and employed a total of 338 men by 1896. In 1910 it employed 315 underground and 82 above ground, total 397. By 1902 it was owned by the United Collieries (Ltd), then from 1910 by Messrs John Watson (Ltd), when it had an output of 500 tons/day (Ref 77). By 1918 it employed 245 men.

It is probable at this time that a ventilation shaft (No.3, also named East Greenlees Colliery on the 1896 OS map) had now been sunk, and manpower, some of whom lived at Gilbertfield Castle, accessed the mine workings at this point. This shaft was located beside the farm road between Gilbertfield Road and the Castle.

Gilbertfield colliery closed due to a shaft collapse around 1918. However, once again the potential reserves available to this colliery, could be accessed from Gateside Colliery.

The range of coals produced was again similar to those described before. A Brickworks was also in operation on the site.

Gilbertfield Colliery No's 1 & 2 were situated on Hamilton Road, Halfway, opposite the Sun Inn Public House. They were sunk in the 1870's and abandoned in 1918 following a shaft collapse. No.3 was sunk adjacent to the Farm Road leading to Gilbertfield Castle, which was used for some time as accommodation for miners employed at the Colliery. The underground workings for Gilbertfield Colliery led from Overtown Road to the fault area adjacent to Dechmont Hill, and the available reserves were annexed into Gateside Colliery after closure. Another point of interest was the miners from the colliery were crowned World Tug of War Champions around the turn of the 19th Century.

Extract from the Cambuslang Advertiser summer 1896.

> Saturday's excursions – The workers in Gilbertfield colliery again visited Millport, going via Largs, crossing to the Cambrae per steamer. The Bo'ness Brass band were engaged to accompany the party, which numbered close on 500. As the weather was of the finest description, the time spent in Millport, where ample provision was made for refreshment and sports of all kinds, was of a very pleasant nature.

John Anderson worked at Gilbertfield and describes it in his book "Coal".

> It was as far back as 1884 that John Anderson commenced work in Gateside Colliery, Cambuslang. After pit experience at Tollcross, Benhar (near Harthill) and Dykehead he met with an accident in 1913 at Gilbertfield Pit, Cambuslang.
>
> "Around 1885 the main industry in Cambuslang was beginning to develop to such an extent that there was an extra-large number of accidents. In fact from this time onwards, owing to the steepness of the Gilbertfield colliery workings, locally known as the "Brandy'' Pit, this pit was described by the late Dr.Turnbull as the slaughter house. It was no uncommon sight to see the colliery cart, which was used for carting coal for the miners, being used as a primitive ambulance and driven to the miner's home with some straw laid on the bottom, on top of which lay the victim, who was either killed or injured. In fact, the writer himself has been driven home in one of these crude ambulances when he was severely injured in 1888".
>
> "Unfortunately for me one day in December, 1913, at Gilbertfield Pit, Cambuslang, a burst of coal struck me on the face and knocked me over into the waste. After I regained consciousness, I informed my drawer of my accident. He told me my right eye was in a bad state and advised me to go home. I saw my backshift neighbour on the surface and showed him my eye. He said it was a bad one. I went home and saw the doctor that night. He dressed my eye and bandaged it and ordered me to take a week or two of rest. As my eye did not improve the doctor sent me to the eye infirmary. After treatment there I was told that the sight was gone as the blow had separated the optical nerve from the eye. The employers would not admit liability but being a Union man (I would advise every working man to be), six months later the Union fought my case in the Sheriff Court at Hamilton, and they won it for me. I got full compensation for six months and was then put on light work on the surface with part compensation".
>
> "After two years working at the colliery, I settled with my employers' insurance company for the sum of three hundred pounds sterling. This ended my career as a coal miner. I then got a job as caretaker at Cambuslang Cooperative Society, for twenty-two years until my retirement in 1938".

The description of Gilbertfield as the slaughter house is evidenced by the large number of accidents recorded below.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

23 March 1883 - John Kirkwood, Brusher, age 38. Crushed by empty hutches at the top of an incline.

28 April 1883 - Alexander Dunn, Roadsman, age 58. Killed by hutch running away upon an incline.

Scotsman 3 August 1883 - On Wednesday night, William McHenry, brusher, Lightburn, Cambuslang, was killed in No 1 pit, Gilbertfield Colliery. In descending the shaft to his work in the main seam, he left at the staging leading to the Pyotshaw seam, which is 16 fathoms above the main coal, and after getting something he required, returned to the shaft with the intention of proceeding to his destination. Having no light he accidentally went to the wrong side, and fell to the bottom. Death was instantaneous, his neck and back being broken. Deceased, who was 18 years of age, had worked for two years in the pit, and was well acquainted with the workings.

28 August 1884 - David Duncan, Boy, age 15. Fell off the cage at surface into shaft.

Glasgow Herald 17 December 1884 - Two miners, William Beebs and Hugh Hannah, East Kilbride, were charged at Hamilton yesterday- before Sheriff Birnie - under the Mines Regulation Act, with having on 27th ult in the main coal seam of No 2 Pit Gilbertfield Colliery, Cambuslang, where safety lamps were required to be used, used open lights. Mr. D Miller defended them. The evidence of the fireman and officials, corroborated by a drawer, that for several days there had been some firedamp in accused working place owing to a break in the roof, in consequences of which they were supplied with and ordered to work with safety lamps only. On the day libelled, an explosion took place, setting fire to the coal and causing a burning which it took between three and four hours to extinguish. Afterwards, when questioned by the fireman, Beebs admitted that the gas had been ignited by his naked light. It was further shown that he had no right to have a naked light in his possession. For the defence, a neighbour workman stated that he received a safety and a naked light to work with and on coming out on the day of the explosion the fireman asked him to swear that he had 2 safety lamps. The Sheriff convicted Beebs and acquitted Hannah. Looking at the danger not only to himself but also to the other men in the pit, his Lordship imposed the full penalty of £2, with the alternative of 7 days imprisonment.

Dundee Courier 15 April 1885 - On Saturday night, as John Kildare eight years of age, and Francis M'Kay were amusing themselves at Gilbertfield Colliery, near Cambuslang, pushing a bogey along a gangway seven feet from the ground, it tipped over the end, and the boys fell with it. M'Kay escaped unhurt but the bogey falling partly above Kildare, he received severe internal injuries. He was carried to his father's house at Halfway but he died on Sunday.

Scotsman 5 June 1885 - On Wednesday, as John Johnston (33), oversman, residing at Halfway, Cambuslang, was engaged shifting the points in the hutch road of No. 1 pit, Gilbertfield colliery, the wire rope to which a race of six loaded hutches were attached broke. They ran down the level towards Johnston, the first of them knocking him against a stoop, nearly burying him under the coals. He received severe internal injuries, from which he died at 7 o'clock at night. A widow and four children survive him, the eldest only being able to work.

Dundee Courier 17 June 1885 - While Terrence Folly, a miner, and his brother-in-law were at work at the face in the ell coal seam of Gilbertfield Colliery, Cambuslang, a fall of 10cwt of coal came unexpectedly away, and a solid block of 3cwt fell on Terrance's head killing him instantaneously. He was 16 years of age, and resided in Church Street, Cambuslang.

28 January 1886 - Gilbertfield No 1, Cambuslang Coal Co. James McCallum, Miner, age 50. Fall of head coal (died on 1st February).

27 April 1888 - Gilbertfield No 2, Cambuslang Coal Co. James McLachlan, Chain runner, age 20. While riding in front of the dook "race" he was jammed against a steam-pipe which crossed the road.

24 March 1890 - Gilbertfield No 2, Andrew Young, miner (35) was killed by an explosion of fire damp. This occurred in a part of the workings where the Ell coal was being stooped. The deceased left his working place, and went towards the waste for a private purpose, when his naked light ignited some firedamp which had, evidently unknown to the fireman, accumulated there.

16 November 1892 - Gilbertfield No 2, Terence Gaffney, miner, age 50. Fall of coal.

15 December 1892 - Gilbertfield No 2, Jas. Laird, miner, age 20. Fall of coal.

27 April 1893 - Gilbertfield No 2, Patrick McNamee, miner, age 20. Fall of coal.

Hamilton Advertiser 21 April 1894 - On Monday, John and Robert Mullen (cousins), Halfway, were at work taking out stoops in the Main coal of Gilbertfield Colliery, No 2, when the roof fell, and both men were buried in about 12 tons of debris. John was alive when help arrived, but died before he could be relieved. Robert, who had only entered on work a few hours before, was taken to the Royal Infirmary. The body of John was taken home to his young wife, to whom he was married at the New Year.

9 January 1899 - Gilbertfield No 2 Pit, Thomas Stene miner age 24. On entering his working place to commence work, his naked light ignited fire-damp, which the fireman affirmed was not present when he made his inspection. The bratticing was five yards back from the face.

21 July 1899 - Gilbertfield No 2 Pit, Wm. Thomson miner age 34. Fall of coal, owing to want of sprags. Another man was injured.

Scotsman 30 January 1900 – Yesterday at Gilbertfield No 2 Pit, Charles Sneddon, miner (58) from Halfway. Fall of roof in working place. This is the third accident from a similar cause in Cambuslang collieries within eight days, and two have had fatal consequences.

25 February 1901 - Gilbertfield No 2 Pit, Patrick Kilrain (18), pony driver, fell off the front of a "race" of full hutches and was run over.

26 February 1901 – A miner, named Michael Colraine, residing at Halfway, was knocked down and killed by hutches.

Scotsman 29 June 1901 – Yesterday, a miner, named David Livingston, was killed by a heavy fall from the roof of Gilbertfield Colliery, Cambuslang.

25 December 1901 - Gilbertfield, John McLean (40), labourer. When leaning upon a gangway railing it gave way, and he fell upon the rails, a distance of 20 feet, and was run over by a waggon.

23 March 1903 - Gilbertfield No2, Wm Coyle (44), miner. Fall of coal.

30 March 1903 - Gilbertfield No2, James Biggans (15), coupler. While uncoupling hutches a "race" of hutches coming up crushed his head between them. He resumed work on 7th April but took suddenly ill and died.

31 August 1903 - Gilbertfield No2, Jas Goudie (24), miner. Fall of coal caused by failure to set sprags in terms of the regulations.

16 December 1903 - Gilbertfield No2, Jas McMenemy (46), repairer. Fall from side of road while enlarging it.

17 August 1906 - Gilbertfield No 1, John Campbell (42), contractor. While descending the shaft, in some unexplained manner he got crushed by the cage.

23 October 1906 - Gilbertfield No 2, William Glen (45), miner. Fall of roof in working place.

11 December 1906 - Gilbertfield, Thos Scobbie (21), engineer. While inside a dross conveyor, repairing it, the engine was started and he got caught. From main body of report: The third fatal machinery accident resulted in the death of the manager's son, who, with his father and others, was engaged repairing a dross conveyor. They were inside the conveyor when the engine started. The others escaped, but the deceased was caught and carried over the driving drum. Owing to the thread of the spindle of the steam stop valve having become "stripped," the valve could only be kept closed by jamming a piece of wood between the wall of the engine house and the valve spindle, and it seems that this piece of wood was accidentally knocked away by a boy, with the result that the engine started.

21 October 1908 - Gilbertfield No 2, Peter Coyle (50), miner. Fall of coal and overlying fireclay. It is doubtful if the face was properly spragged.

18 April 1911 - Gilbertfield No 2, John Watson Ltd. James McCance (56), coal miner. At 6.50am he was proceeding to his work with several other miners. At a part of the roadway where there was a hole in the roof, the naked light, carried by one of the men, ignited some gas, causing an explosion, the force seems to have thrown him against the corner of a loaded tub, which was in the lye, about 90 yards from the seat of the explosion, and his skull was fractured. The fireman stated that he examined the part about 1 ½ hours before, and it was clear of gas; the barometer was abnormally low.

27 October 1911 - John Watson Ltd. John Jenkins (37), sawyer. Deceased worked at a saw mill used to cut up wood for props ; he had sawn a prop 5 ins. diameter into two, and had put through one of the pieces to cut it into other two pieces, and when the operation had been done the man at the opposite end failed to take away one of the cut pieces clear from the saw, and it was caught and drawn into the saw again and thrown forward with terrific force, and it struck deceased on the face.

Scotsman 4 May 1912 – Thomas Murray (23) was seriously injured when he was jammed by a rake of hutches, which injured his head and broke several ribs. He was removed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary where his condition is critical.

2 October 1912 - John Watson Ltd. Samuel Cockburn (33), contractor brusher. He was taking a full tub down a steep "cuddy" or back balanced road when the rope broke. He somehow got in the way of the balance tub, which was on the adjoining set of rails, and was caught and jammed by it against a prop. He was so severely injured that he died an hour after the accident occurred.

Scotsman 4 October 1912 - Samuel Cockburn, miner, who resided at Victoria Buildings, Gilbertfield, Cambuslang, met with a fatal accident. He was jammed so severely by some hutches that death was instantaneous. He is survived by a widow and five children.

Scotsman 15 October 1912 – Hutch pinning at Cambuslang Colliery - At Hamilton Justice of the Peace Court yesterday, Franches Hillhouse, miner, Halfway, Cambuslang, was charged with having on 10th October, in No 1 Pit, Gilbertfield Colliery, Cambuslang, fraudulently removed the identification pins from two loaded hutches of

coal belonging to another miner, with the object of obtaining credit for the hutches by substituting his own pins for those he had removed. The Fiscal characterised the offence as a most contemptible one, which was very difficult to detect, although much too common in the district. The Justices imposed a penalty of £5, with the alternative of 30 days imprisonment.

Scotsman 28 June 1913 – A miner, George Reid (16), working in Gilbertfield Colliery, was severely crushed by a hutch on one of the roads, and was removed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary, in a critical condition.

29 October 1913 - Gilbertfield No 1, John Watson Ltd. William Cunningham (26), cousieman. Deceased, whilst attempting to prevent a hutch from running on to the landing plate, stumbled and fell; his neck coming into violent contact with the taut cousie rope caused instant strangulation. He was himself somewhat to blame for failing to replace the block on the level after he removed the last load.

3 November 1914 - John Watson Ltd. Henry Kerr (37), repairer. Deceased and another man were sent to take material out of a disused rising road, but were told by the deputy not to go beyond a fence, as there was an accumulation of gas on the inbye side of it. They disobeyed these instructions with the result that deceased was suffocated and the other man rendered unconscious for some time. A breach of General Regulations 4 and 9 was committed.

Hamilton Herald 30 January 1915 - When John Jackson, a miner, who resided at 1 Church Street, was injured in Gilbertfield Colliery last week, little hope of his recovery was entertained. The worst fears of his wife and family were realised on Monday evening when intimation was received that he had died in the Glasgow Royal Infirmary. As reported here last week, Jackson was at work in the Humph coal seam of the colliery when he was caught in the revolving machinery of an electric coal cutter and had both legs fractured. He is survived by a widow and 5 children.

Hamilton Advertiser 6 January 1917 - Early on Monday morning a fall from the roof took place in Gilbertfield Colliery, when a miner named Peter Galaghley, 5 Eastfield Cottages, Cambuslang, was killed. He leaves widow and a family of three.

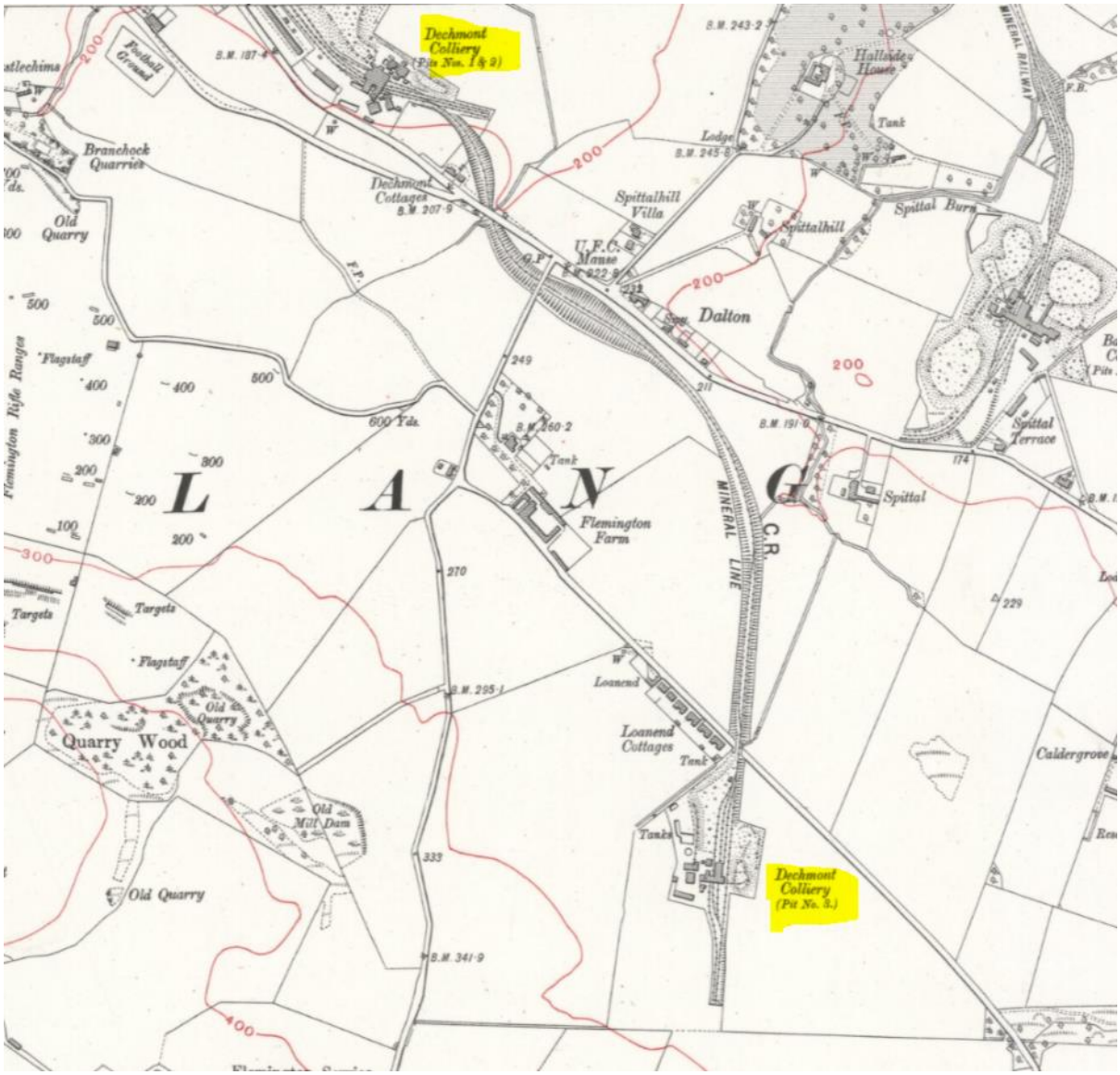
30 May 1918 - James Arbuckle, fatal accident, fall of stone.

Scotsman 1 September 1919 – Upon closure, a sale of colliery plant at Gateside Colliery included Lancashire steam boilers, 2 pairs 24 inch coupled winding engine, 30-inch horizontal pumping engine, washing machine, cola cleaning plant, brick making machine.

DECHMONT / LOANEND COLLIERY 1890 - 1931

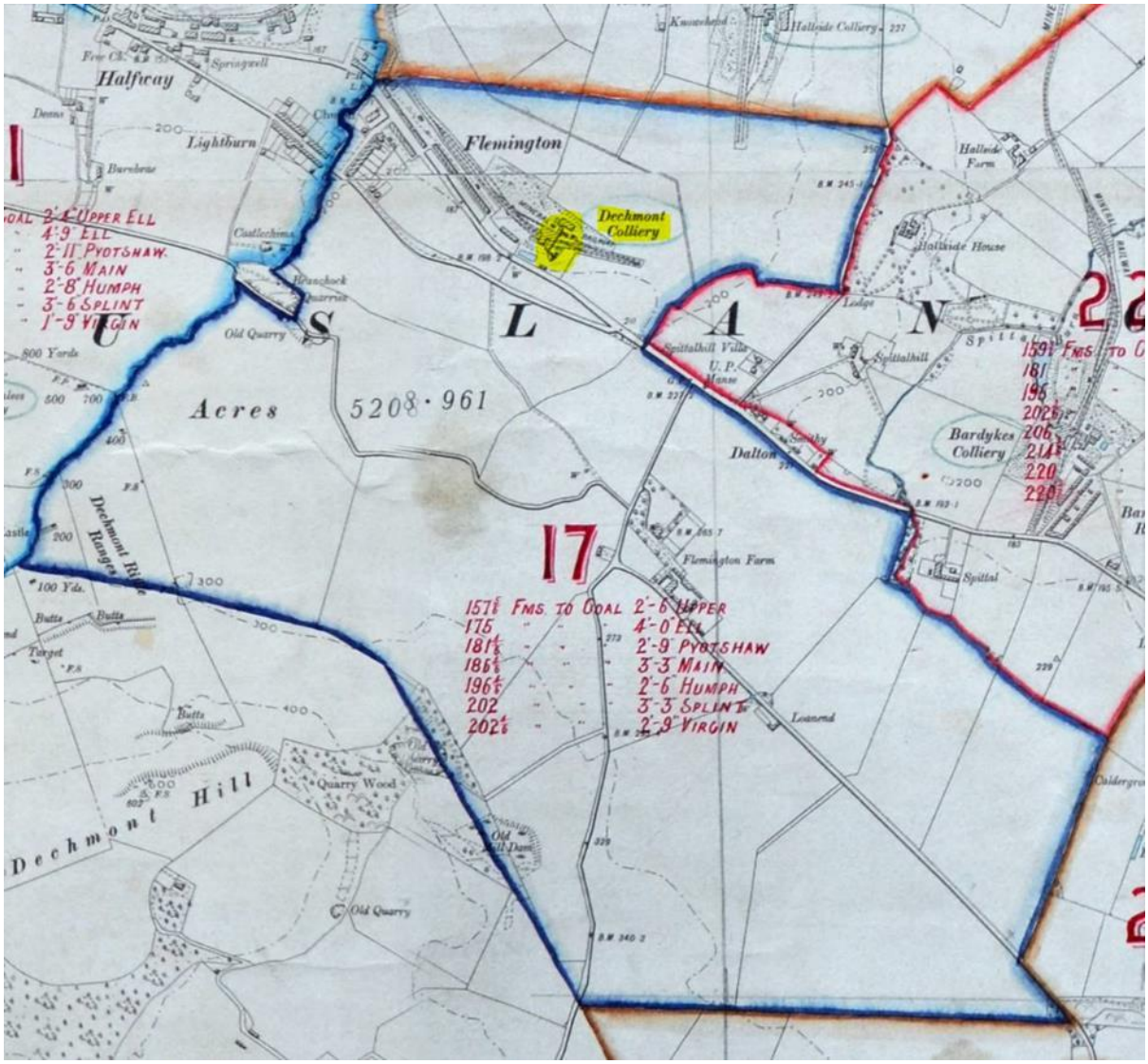
Dechmont No's 1 & 2 Collieries were located in Flemington, owned by the Dechmont Coal Company, and producing domestic, manufacturing, and steam coals. Operation started in 1890 and in 1896 employed a total of 339 men. By 1918 it was owned by Archibald Russell and had been developed with a third shaft (No.3 Pit), also known as Loanend colliery, where the remains of the railway to the colliery and subsequent spoil heap is still visible.

The manpower employed at No.1 and No.2 Pits in Flemington was 762 persons and at Loanend was 644 persons. The 1923 Colliery Yearbook and Coal Trades Directory shows the manager as Wm. McFarlane

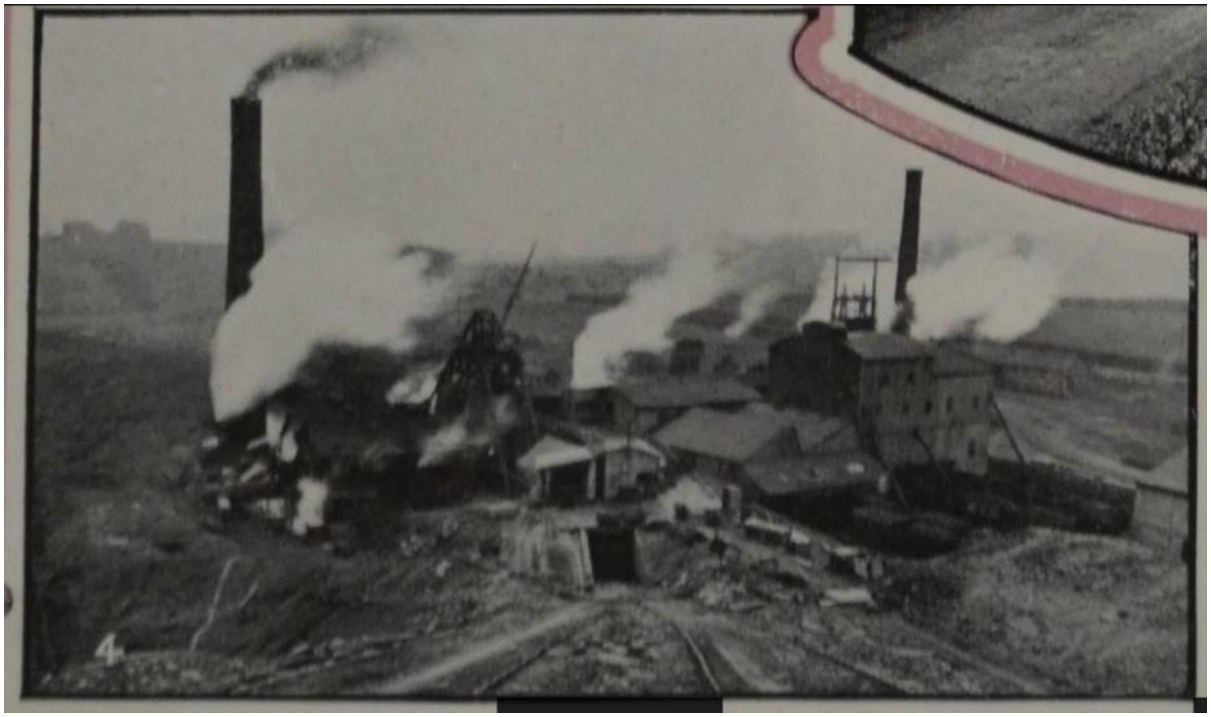


1910 Ordnance Survey Map Showing Dechmont No 1,2 and 3 pits. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

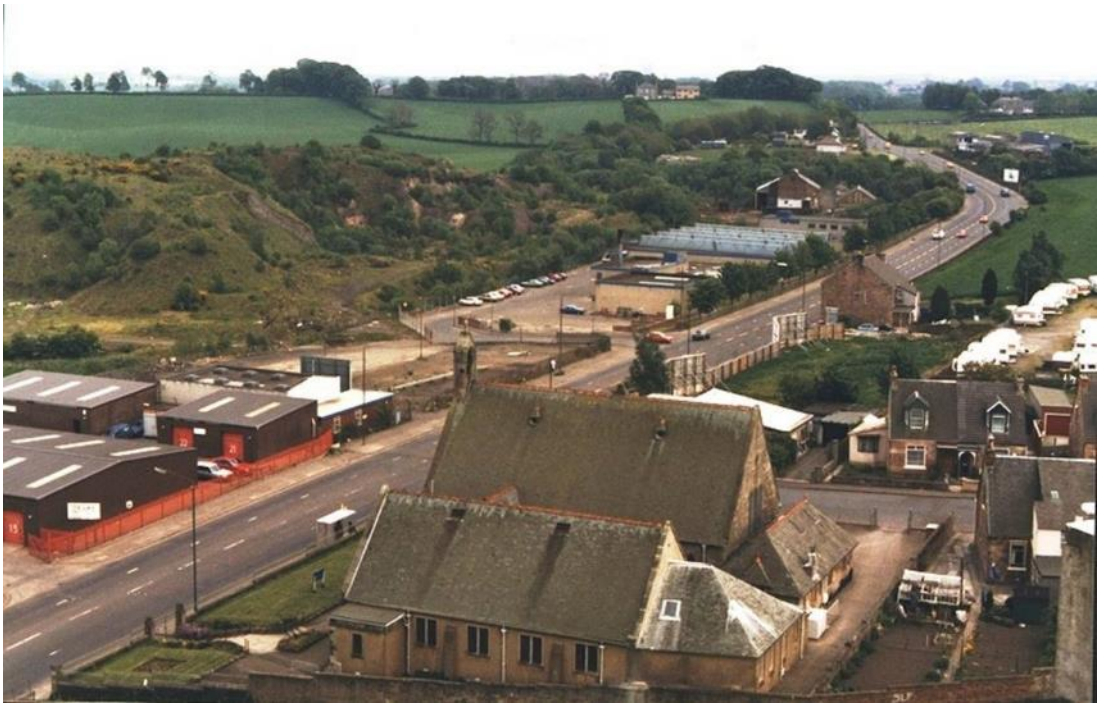
1946 Aerial Photograph Showing Dechmont No 1,2 and 3 pits. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (17) worked by Dechmont colliery (Ref 14). No 3 pit, at Loanend, which is not shown here, must have been sunk between 1896 and 1910.



Dechmont Colliery, No 1 and 2 Pits, about 1920 (Ref 7).



Dechmont Colliery Bing. (Reproduced by permission of Edward Boyle).

About 1918 a new Coal Preparation Plant was developed to process fine coal into coal briquettes. This facility continued production until the advent of the Clean Air Act which precluded the use of the 'smokey' briquettes in many areas, and the plant finally closed in 1964.

The advent of the Depression of the 1930's brought about the closure of Dechmont No 1, & 3 in 1931. The colliery worked steep reserves at a slope of 1 in 2 towards Dechmont Hill and after closure Blackband Coal was worked up to Flemington from Bardykes Colliery and several seams were worked from Gateside Colliery in the Branchock area. Loanend Colliery was also known as the Electric Pit and its electric winder was transferred to Polmaise Colliery (which was also owned by Archibald Russell) after closure. Considerable reserves in the Splint and Virgin, Blackband, Virtuewell, and Lower Drumgray coals were left unworked on closure due to the poor trading conditions in the 1930's.

Co-author Joe Cunningham's Grandfather (who was employed for 37 years at Dechmont No's 1, 2, and 3 Colliery) frequently mentioned the Lettrick Pit. This pit appears to have been located adjacent to the Blantyre to East Kilbride Railway Line about 440yds N.W. of the Viaduct. The shafts also appear to have been located about 270yds from the Main Dechmont Fault which threw the Productive Coal Measures out towards East Kilbride.

Joe Cunningham recalls hearing that when the Loanend Colliery shaft was being sunk it encountered a fault which required a landing to access the up-thrown measures between two faults.

Another interesting fact relating to the Lettrick Pit is that prior to the closure of Blantyre Colliery, due to a shaft collapse in July 1957, a steep inclined drift mine was driven from the Virtuewell coal level to access a coal pillar left to protect the old railway viaduct in the Ell, Pyotshaw, and Main coals. Joe Cunningham was responsible for this drivage and does not recall any knowledge of the Lettrick Colliery and its workings existing in the area but after close perusal of the relevant Geological Sheets for the Loanend area, which gave no indication of any other abandoned shafts, Joe concludes that Letterick must be a colloquial name for Loanend Colliery.

Joe has no recollection of any barrier being left between the Lettrick Colliery workings and the reserves to have been worked by Blantyre No.2 Pit, although the planners should have been aware of its existence (as his grandfather was).

Dechmont Colliery was operated by Archibald Russell Ltd, and was part of the Colvilles group. The following two articles appeared in Colvilles Magazine.

THE GHOST OF THE 12 FOOT LEVEL.

By Andrew McGhee (Dechmont Colliery), March 1921 (Pg. 56).

"The busy little town boasted of having a Steelworks and a Coalmine, as well as other industries. I was employed in the mine.

One day the Manager asked me if I would take a job on a certain level, twelve feet wide, being driven to air another section, as he was in a hurry with it. He explained that it was being driven under the Steelworks; and his reason for going twelve feet wide was that to work it long-wall system might affect the foundations of the Steelworks and put the machinery out of gear. He also told me that he could not get anybody to work in this level on the night-shift, as it was said to be haunted.

Now, I had never believed in ghosts; so I assured him it would be all right—I would go on the night-shift and let the other men work by day.

"Good !" said the Manager. "You can employ a lad to fill your coals. Start to-night, and I'll make it my business to see that you get a good wage."

I secured a lad that day, got all the tools I required, and by ten o'clock I was ready to descend the mine. We walked the quarter-mile to the coal-face, the lad whistling a music-hall air, took off our jackets, and began to get busy.

About quarter to twelve I sent the lad out to the lye for a hutch. In about ten minutes he came running back, looking scared.

“Do you hear that?" he shouted.

I listened. Sure enough, there was the sound of heavy footsteps, sometimes coming nearer and at other times seeming to fade away in the distance. It could not be a horse which had strayed from the stables, as no horse could get to this part of the mine. And there was nobody working in this section except ourselves. What could it be?

“We must find out what it is,” I said; so we set off to the lye. We listened. There it was again—tramp, tramp, but now it seemed to come from the coal-face. How could it get there? Nothing had passed us on our way out, and there was no other way in.

By this time the lad was scared almost out of his wits; his eyes were like saucers, and he could not speak. I must get him out of here. We went back to the coal-face and got our clothes. There was nothing there, and now the sounds seemed to be out in the lye. Strange! How did it pass us?

I took the lad to the pit-bank, where he fainted; and no wonder—he was only sixteen years of age.

Next morning I went to the Manager and told him what had happened. “I hope you are not going to give up !” he exclaimed. Get a man to draw your coals—try anything ! I want that level driven ! "

I started a man that night. He worked until he heard that strange noise, then he ran away without even taking his jacket. I tried two men the next night, but it was no good. As soon as the ghost started to walk, they went off. Almost a week gone, and not a shift's pay.

Experts came at the week-end; and within an hour of descending they had discovered the ghost. And what do you think it was ?

As I have said, this level was under the Steelworks. A big steam-hammer had just been introduced there; and it was the thud—thud—thud of that steam-hammer sounding down through the minerals into the mine that we had imagined was the tramp—tramp——of something unearthly”.

NO. 3 DECHMONT COLLIERY, AS SEEN BY THE GLASGOW ORKNEY AND SHETLAND RAMBLING CLUB.

Colvilles Magazine Sept 1922, Pg 166.

“Arriving at the little group of buildings which clustered round the shaft of No. 3 Dechmont Colliery, the members found all was in tidiness and order. We were cordially welcomed by the officials, and under their guidance set off in parties to satisfy our curiosity about the getting of that most precious of minerals—Coal !

First we had demonstrated to us the "screening." The machinery was set agoing; hutches were capsized by the pull of a lever, and the coal rattled down upon the screen. Before being tipped into a railway wagon, any stones among the larger coal were picked out by hand as it passed along a conveyor. The travels of the coal, which had passed through the screen, now engaged our attention. Conveyed to the top of an adjacent building

of rumbling, clanging machinery, the coal was then graded and washed— yes !—with water, mechanically agitated in tanks. Here we had explained to us how the ingenuity of the engineer separated the coal from the impurities by taking advantage of the differences in their specific gravity. Some “peas” we handled were as clean to the touch as the garden variety! Nothing is wasted; the material recovered from the washing water, containing, as it does, a large percentage of carbon, is used for firing the boilers.

Precautions there must be for the safety of the miner in his hazardous work, and the safety devices on the cages and winding machinery were pointed out and their modes of operation explained. The action of both the disc and bar coal cutters was also lucidly described to us. To recount the wonders of the ventilation, of the engine-room and lamp-room would occupy too much space. The lamps are lit by means of electric sparks, and can only be unlocked by an electric magnet. Our lamps were then tested to see that the only access the air had to the flame was by means of the gauze which made them " safety."

Now for the great adventure! As we stood round the mouth of the shaft—waiting to make the descent—peering into Stygian darkness—

> “There was a silence deep as death,
> And the boldest held their breath
> For a time.”

The curiosity of the ladies, however, outweighing their dread, they faced the ordeal “like men." We were whizzed down, in the gently swaying cage, many hundreds of feet, into the blackness—murky and unknown. All were surprised at the smoothness of the descent.

Below, we visited the haulage power house, and the stalls where "Jock" and " Donald " and the other ponies—all well cared for and in fine condition—were stabled.

The trek to the coal face now began. As we passed, two or three cheery, grinning miners facetiously reminded us to “keep off the grass " and "not to pluck all the flowers” by the way …… Biff! one or two knocks against the roof supports, and we learned the wisdom of keeping our heads lowly.

Toiling and slipping—at times bent double—we journeyed onwards, up the steep slope for about half a mile, towards the coal face.

On retracing our steps to the bottom of the shaft we were quickly projected into the light of day again. After the necessary ablutions had been performed we sat down to a tea—which would have delighted the palate of an epicure —generously provided by Messrs. Archibald Russell, Ltd. Mr. Halcrow, on behalf of the members cordially expressed thanks to Mr. Hughes and the other members of the staff, who had spared no effort to make the visit both pleasant and instructive. Mr. Hughes replied in a most interesting and amusing speech, which was much appreciated.

The day's outing terminated with a musical evening at the house of a member in the vicinity of the Colliery, Miss Callander, of the Company's Staff, lending her able and kindly assistance in the entertainment.

The members of the party were much gratified by and highly appreciated the great kindness extended to them by Messrs. Archibald Russell, Ltd., and a special need of thanks is due to Mr. T. G. Hardie, Managing Director, for his courtesy in providing them with such an enjoyable and unique experience”.

Dundee Courier 7 May 1894 - An explosion of firedamp occurred at Dechmont Colliery, Cambuslang, on Saturday whereby Alexander Forsyth, brushing contractor, and Patrick M'Guire and John Hamill, brushers, were severely burned about the face, hands and arms. They were firing a shot when the gas ignited, causing an explosion. They were able to walk home. Hamill being afterwards sent to the Infirmary.

Scotsman 25 November 1896 – Martin Feeney versus Dechmont Colliery Company. The Division ordered issues for the trial of an action by Martin Feeney, miner, 63 Flemington Rows, Cambuslang, against the Dechmont Colliery Company Ltd, 46 Gordon St, Glasgow, for £500 damages is for injuries to his pupil son John, nine years of age. The boy, on Sunday, fifth July 1896, was in the field where part of a bing of coal and debris from Dechmont Colliery lay. This bing, it is said, is on fire – in a smouldering state- and the boy stepping upon it sank up to his knees and had his legs burned. The defenders say the fire in the bing was due to spontaneous combustion, and aver that the boy was trespassing.

Glasgow Herald 30 December 1897 – While a miner named William Mathieson was at work in the ell coal seam of Dechmont Colliery, Cambuslang, a large stone gave way and fell on him crushing him severely about the body. He was taken home and attended by doctor M'Pherson but he succumbed to his injuries while on the way to the Royal Infirmary. Mathieson, who resides at Flemington, Cambuslang, leaves a widow and 9 of a family.

Scotsman 2 March 1899 – Fire broke out at Dechmont Colliery on Tuesday afternoon. The fire is a very fiery one, caused by the firing of a shot, the sparks from which ignited the accumulated gas. Five of the horses could not be removed and were suffocated. On Monday a series of explosions occurred and it was probable that the coal was on fire. About 500 workers are left idle and it is uncertain when work may resume.

Scotsman 24 May 1899 – Mines Act Prosecutions - Before Sheriff Davidson at Hamilton Yesterday, Peter Cunningham, miner, Cambuslang, for having in this possession, in breach of the Mines Act, nine matches in Dechmont Colliery, where safety lamps are used, was fined 20 shillings or 14 days imprisonment. Thomas Creighton, fireman, Dechmont Colliery, pleaded guilty to a charge of having on 6th April failed to report in the book kept for the purpose that he had found firedamp in one of the working places in the pit. He gave the excuse that while he had found gas on different occasions on his early morning inspection, he always found that by eight o'clock in the morning it had disappeared, and there was no danger. Indeed, the quantity had been so trifling he did not think it necessary to make an entry of it in his book. The Sheriff, in imposing a fine of 30 shillings or 21 and days imprisonment, said it was not for the fireman in the discharge of his duties to judge as to the quantity of gas found by him. His duty was to make an entry of the same, however small, in his report book.

Scotsman 4 May 1901 – The death of a miner, John McAllister happened while the oncost men were ascending the shaft, which had to be under repair during the night, when the clutch which had been hanging on the rope of the winding whorl snapped and the cage was brought to a sudden stop. The cage was about one fathom from the surface, McAllister being thrown from it and falling down the shaft about 180 fathoms, death must have been instantaneous.

27 May 1908 – The son of Archibald Anderson was knocked down and fatally injured by a train of hutches.

Scotsman 6 August 1910 – Three accidents occurred at Dechmont Colliery, Cambuslang, yesterday. By a fall from the roof, John McNaughton, Forrest Place, High Blantyre, had his left wrist and hand so badly injured that on his removal to the Glasgow Infirmary fears were entertained that it would require amputation. John Davidson, miner, Bluevale Street, Dennistoun, was also removed to the Infirmary suffering from a fractured

left leg, due also to a fall; while another man, Edward Haughton, Halfway, received scalp wounds as a result of runaway hutches knocking him down.

Scotsman 22 April 1911 – A fatal accident took place yesterday morning at Loanend Colliery, Cambuslang. Accompanied by a number of workers, Mr. Robert Edgar, the under manager, was about to undertake the stemming back of a quantity of gas which had accumulated in the pit, when they were completely overcome, and had immediately to retreat in a more or less dazed condition. All succeeded in regaining a clear zone with difficulty except Edgar, who was unable to crawl out of the danger. The alarm was speedily spread and repeated heroic efforts at rescue were made, but without avail, as the fire damp was exceedingly dense and occupied a considerable space. Doctor Hutchison was lowered into the pit and lent assistance to the workers who had been affected by the fumes. Mr. Low, the manager, was among those who endeavoured to reach Mr. Edgar, but he met with complete prostration and his removal to the pithead where he gradually recovered was imperative. There, others needed attention, but the arrival of doctors McPherson and Beverage relieved the strain. The accident occurred about nine o'clock in the morning but it was about one in the afternoon before a young Cambuslang miner, named Duncan Dunn, succeeded in reaching the place where Edgar was. Edgar was dead and all attempts at resuscitation failed. Edgar (36), resided at Loanend Cottages, Flemington, Cambuslang, and is survived by a widow and six children. The colliery was thrown idle for the day.

Scotsman 16 Oct 1911 –About three o'clock yesterday afternoon, a serious explosion of fire damp occurred at Loanend Colliery, Cambuslang. A number of men, were taking a meal in their working places by the light of the safety lamp, when, without the slightest warning, a violent explosion took place. The workmen were thrown in all directions and seriously injured, four of them so badly that they were removed in the ambulance waggon to the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow. The four men who are badly bruised and burned all over the body are: William Blake, Lightburn, Cambuslang; Walter Napier, a married man from Hamilton; Neil Crow, Barrack Street Hamilton; and John McGuire, Church Street, Hamilton. In addition to these, Duncan Dunn, Church Street, Cambuslang, was knocked down by the force of the explosion and cut about the head; Thomas Murphy, Loanhead, had a remarkable escape. He was blown a considerable distance against the workings of the pit and cut about the head, besides suffering from severe shock. These two men were taken home. The cause of the explosion is unknown. At the Infirmary it was found that all the men admitted were severely burnt on the face, head and back, while suffering from shock. All of them, especially McGuire, Crow and Napier, are in a serious condition.

Scotsman 12 February 1912 – A miner, James Boyle (55), 54 Glasgow Road, Cambuslang, lost his life on Saturday morning at No 2 Dechmont Colliery when working at a coal cutting machine. He was caught and terribly mangled, both of his legs and one arm being severed. He leaves a widow and seven children.

Scotsman 5 September 1913 – Yesterday an accident occurred in Dechmont Colliery, Cambuslang. While working the humph coal section a large fall of stone from the roof took place. All escaped except a Pole named John Gladys, who reside in Coburg Street, Glasgow. He was felled by a mass weighing fully half a ton and was killed instantaneously.

Scotsman 22 Nov 1921 –James Smeaton (34) was killed by the fall of a large stone from the roof. He resided at 4 Somerville Road, Cambuslang and leaves a widow and five of a family.

Scotsman 29 Dec 1921 – A miner named Robert Syme was killed yesterday in Dechmont Colliery, Cambuslang, by a fall from the roof. He resided at Loanfoot, Sydesbrae, High Blantyre, and leaves a widow and two of a family.

Scotsman 20 May 1914 – In Loanend Colliery, Cambuslang, a fall from the roof yesterday caught a miner named David George, resident, in Hamilton, he was killed instantaneously. He was 40 years of age and leaves a widow and children.

Scotsman 16 January 1924 - When the night shift were at work early yesterday morning in Loanhead Colliery, Cambuslang, an explosion took place during blasting operations. It was caused by an accumulation of gas in the workings becoming ignited when the blast took place. Two miners were injured, their names are Alexander Maxwell, 78 Lightburn Rd, Cambuslang, and Christie Burns, 7 Sauchiebog, Cambuslang. Both men were conveyed to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary in the Cambuslang ambulance waggon suffering from burns to the face and upper parts of the body.

Scotsman 9 December 1925 – Following a number of hutches breaking away two miners were unable to get clear. John Puddy, Blantyre was killed and James Duvanney, Flemington was seriously injured and was removed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

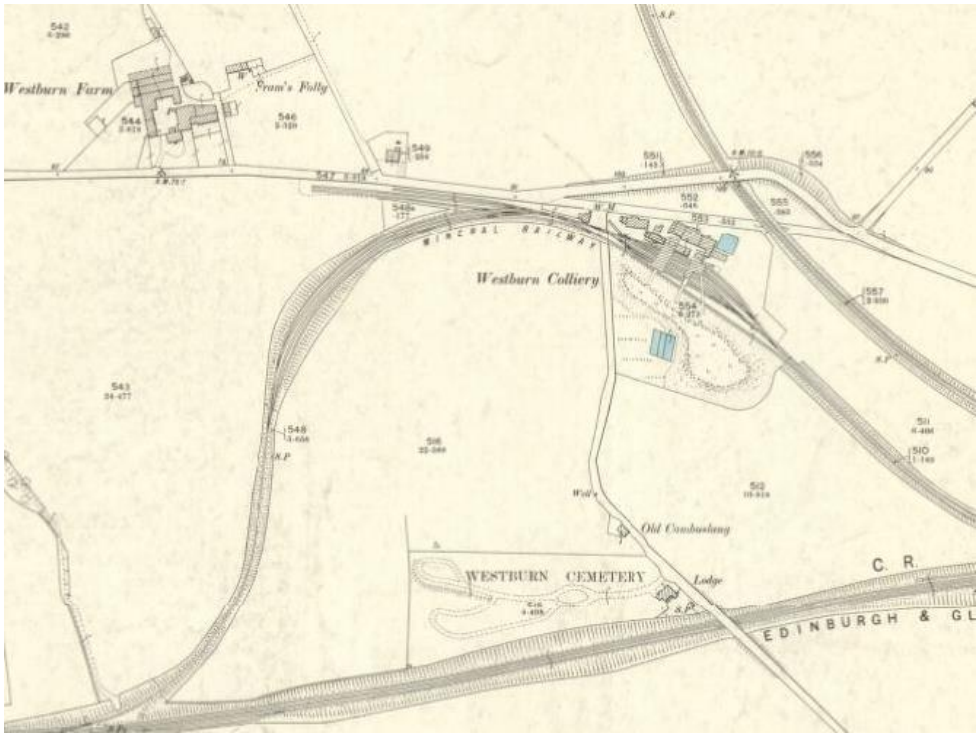
Scotsman 11 February 1929 –About 9 o'clock on Saturday evening, during a snowstorm, fire broke out on the pit head of Dechmont Colliery, Cambuslang, owned by Archibald Russell and Co Limited. The colliery lies in a deep hollow on the main highway from Glasgow to Hamilton, slightly east of Flemington, Cambuslang. It has been idle since last March, and the outbreak was fortunately detected by the solitary underground workman Thomas Walters, pump attendant, the smell of fire being wafted down the mine in his direction. He immediately "belled" to the surface, and on arriving there, in company with the engineman Thomas Condie, proceeded round to a large building, 60 feet long by 100 feet broad by 60 feet high, which contained the valuable coal washing plant, with all the intricate machinery for separating the coal and rendering it marketable. When discovered, the flames inside were raging 30 feet in height and Cambuslang Fire Brigade, on arriving, summoned the assistance of the Bellshill, Larkhall, and Hamilton Brigades. Traffic was stopped on the main highway, and, notwithstanding, the driving snow, large and excited crowds arrived at the colliery. The four fire brigades, under Chief Constable Keith, and assisted by colliery officials, were aided in their work by an additional supply of water from the colliery pond, but notwithstanding their efforts the flames shot high into the air, the sky being illuminated for miles around. The whole coal washing plant was reduced to scrap, and three of the brigades withdrew at 3 o'clock yesterday morning, the Cambuslang Brigade, leaving six hours later. The origin of the fire is unknown, the loss is roughly estimated at £10,000.

WESTBURN COLLIERY 1873 – 1922

Westburn Colliery was at the east side of the junction of Mill Road and Westburn Road, in Findlay Terrace, Westburn, and operated from 1873 to 1922 (Ref 22, Pg. 326). The reserves of the colliery were annexed into Gateside Colliery after closure.

Westburn Colliery No.1 and No.2 Pits, were owned by R Forrester from 1873 to 1880, then by the Westburn Coal Company. They were sunk to a depth of 172 metres, and employed a total of 434 men in 1896. Where two pits were sunk near to each other, one was used as down-cast, the other as up-cast. In John Anderson's book Coal (Ref 12) he mentions a mechanical fan being installed at the top of the up-cast shaft for ventilation in 1893.

This colliery produced gas, household, manufacturing, and steam coals in addition to fireclay.



1896 Ordnance Survey Map Showing Westburn Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (12) worked by Westburn colliery (Ref 14).

Cambuslang Advertiser 14 January 1899

Successful Mining Science Student - Mr. James Holmes, Westburn, was successful in obtaining his certificate as a Colliery Manager at the examination held in Glasgow in November last. Mr. Holmes is a member of the Cambuslang mining class, where he has obtained the most of his successes in that subject under the Science and Art Department. He has successfully passed all the stages up to the 1st Class Advanced In Mining, and was awarded a 1st class certificate in magnetism and electricity last year. He carried off the first prize in the Mine Surveying Class (held during the summer) for the last two years. He was appointed Underground Manager at Westburn Colliery shortly after obtaining his certificate for that position about 3 years ago.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 12 October 1883 - Going Colliery Near Cambuslang For Sale - There will be held by Public Roupe, within the Facility Hall, St George's place Glasgow, on Wednesday 24th day of October at 2 o'clock afternoon. The Westburn Colliery extending to a total surface of 180 acres held on lease from the Duke of Hamilton, expiring Whitsunday 1894. The sale will be conditional on the Duke of Hamilton accepting the purchaser but the exposure is informed that there is little doubt a suitable purchaser will be accepted as tenant for the remainder of the lease, or if desired for a period of 21 years. The colliery has 2 pits in active operation. It is situated on the Caledonian Railway Company's main line. The field contains all the coal seams of the district. A ready market is found for the coal. The output for the year 1882 to 83 was 88,281 tons. The engines machinery and plant are of substantial character, and with the railways fittings shafts etc are included in the sale upset price £17,000 pounds.

Dundee Courier 31 December 1887 – On Thursday afternoon John Paterson Cowen (18), pony driver, was killed in No 2 Pit, Westburn Colliery, Cambuslang. He was crossing from one side of the pit to the other for water for his pony when he was caught and crushed by a descending cage containing a couple of hutches, and weighing 2cwt. Death was instantaneous.

Glasgow Herald 28 September 1889 - Yesterday it was reported to the police that Thomas McCann, 17, miner Westburn Rows, Cambuslang, had been killed in Western Colliery, Cambuslang, belonging to Hamilton and Co. He was working at the face when a fall of stones weighing 4 tons came away and crushed him. Death was instantaneous.

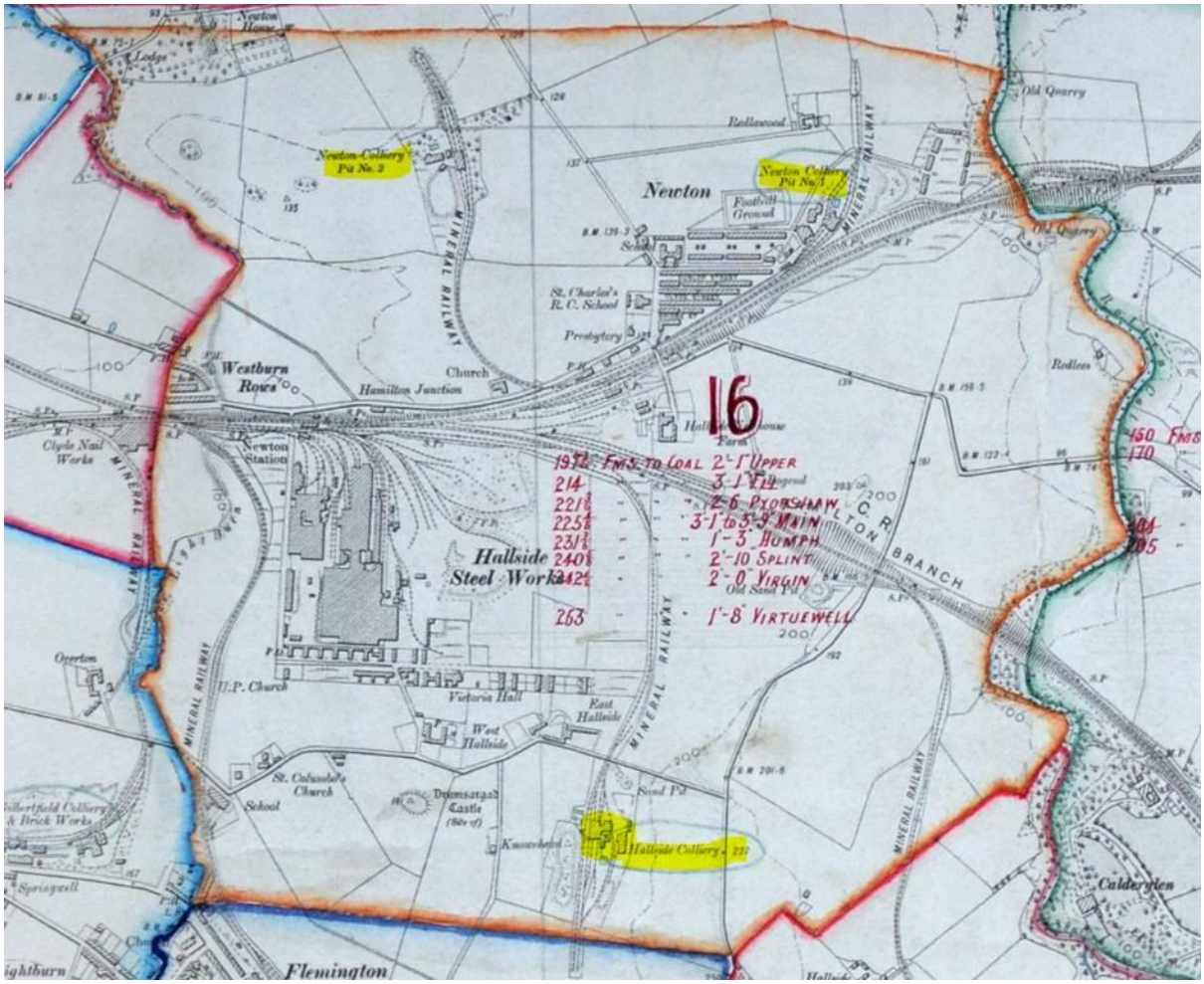
Dundee Courier 23 August 1893 – New branch railway operations have just begun near Westburn Colliery, Cambuslang, in connection with the construction of a new branch railway between Newton and Carmyle stations, whereby the frequently congested traffic at the Glasgow Central Station may be relieved and greater facilities offered to the travelling public. Branching off the mainline at the signal box situated at the West End of Newton platform the line takes a sharp curve on the East side of Westburn Colliery and dipping rapidly will go underneath the main road between Newton and Cambuslang, which road will be diverted about 100 yards to the North and carried over the railway, to do away with the necessity of steep gradient. Continuing in a North westerly direction the line passes through Westburn Farm occupied by Messrs J&J Wilson, crossing the Clyde by way of a handsome bridge and joining the Coatbridge and Airdrie line at the East End of Carmyle passenger station.

Glasgow Herald 11 October 1900 - Yesterday afternoon an accident occurred in Westburn Colliery, Cambuslang, whereby a miner named John Smith, whose present address is unknown, sustained injuries to the head and legs. Smith was employed at the bottom when heavy fall from the roof occurred. He was removed the Royal Infirmary in a critical condition.

HALLSIDE COLLIERY 1873 - 1920

Hallside Colliery, which was owned by James Dunlop and Company, was sunk in the 1870's and employed a total of 325 men in 1896. In 1910, persons employed underground 268, above ground 69, total 337. By 1918 It employed 355.

Manufacturing coal was produced and the pit was located at the top end of Hallside Village, and later became officially known as Newton No.3 Colliery.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (16) worked by Hallside and Newton collieries (Ref 14).

Hallside Colliery closed due to flooding during the 1921 Strike. The pit was sunk into the lowest point of the Clyde Valley and was 274 fathoms (501 metres) to the Splint coal. After closure, the Upper coal and Ell coal reserves were worked from Newton No.1 Pit but sizeable reserves down to the Blackband coal were not worked due to flooding. In more modern times the location of this colliery would have been ideal for development for efficient high production mining methods. The colliery was located at the end of Hallside Village not far from the Hallside Steel Works site.

1896 Ordnance Survey map showing Hallside Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Scotsman 31 May 1901 – Michael Flaherty, miner, was crushed yesterday morning in Hallside Colliery and died while being conveyed to Glasgow Royal Infirmary.

Scotsman 12 November 1902 - Yesterday on the Caledonian Railway near Hallside Colliery, a nine year old boy, George Walkinshaw, Montgomery Place, Newton, while proceeding along the line to the pit with his brother's breakfast was killed instantaneously by a mineral locomotive.

BARDYKES COLLIERY 1874 - 1962

Bardykes Colliery was sunk around 1873 by Merry and Cunningham on the site of an infectious disease hospital, and nicknamed the 'Spittal Colliery'. It was located at the boundary of Cambuslang and Blantyre on the site subsequently occupied by Bardykes Chemicals. Served by two shafts, Spittal No.1 pit was 380 metres to the Humph coal bottom and No.2 Pit latterly was around 503 metres to the Lower Drumgray.

In the Glasgow Herald, of June 7th, 1905, it was reported that a demonstration of miners was held in Castle Park, Blantyre, near Glasgow, on the previous night, to protest against the action of those responsible for the closing down of Bardykes Colliery, which had thrown 700 men out of employment. The landowner had made a demand for higher mineral royalties from Messrs. Merry and Cunninghame, the coalmasters, and as the latter had been working at a heavy loss for two or three years they were obliged to close the mine. On May 1st, 1908, the following report appeared in the same paper: — "At a time when unemployment is causing so much concern in the country, the intimation that the Summerlee Iron Company, Coatbridge, will shortly re-open the large colliery which is situated on the estate of Bardykes, will be welcomed by the mining community of Mid- Lanark, and more particularly in the districts immediately interested — Uddingston, Blantyre, and Cambuslang. It may be recalled that the colliery, which was sunk nearly thirty years ago by the Clyde Coal Company, was shut down a few years ago and completely dismantled, as the result of a

regrettable dispute between the lessees, Messrs. Merry and Cunninghame, coalmasters, and the proprietor regarding the payment of mining royalties. From 600 to 700 miners were at that time thrown out of employment, and the village of Bardykes was demolished. . . . The shafts are sunk to a depth of 224 fathoms [410 metres], and there is sufficient coal in the workings to keep the colliery going steadily for at least the next thirty years, and the daily output will exceed 1,000 tons per day."

Co-author Joe Cunningham was a National Coal Board surveyor and worked at Bardykes during the latter days of this colliery. Much of the information in this section is from his personal records and recollections.

By 1918 the colliery was now owned by the Summerlee Iron Company, which had re-opened the colliery in 1908, following the dispute in 1907. In 1910 it employed 270 underground, 70 above ground, total 340. The manpower in 1918 was 505, and proved to be a very successful operation for many years due to good management and excellent geological conditions. In 1945 it employed 760 men and continued operation after nationalisation on the 1st January 1947. Bardykes closed in October 1962 having been operated by a workforce of on average 479 miners. The workforce peaked at 775 in 1947 when the daily production was 970 tons, which equated to 1372 kg/man shift, highlighting the efficient operation of this unit. Horses were still used to move supplies underground and geological conditions were superb.

The coal produced was sold on to the manufacturing sector. This colliery continued to operate after nationalisation in 1947 and by 1948 the output was 750 tons per day, or 202,500 tons per annum. The colliery used steam for winding and generated all its own electricity. The colliery had 4 picking tables, a Dickson and Mann washer, a canteen, an ambulance man (day shift). One large haulage engine situated near the pit bottom moved coal from the workings below Hallside.

Things changed for the worse in 1948 with a shaft collapse, which destroyed No.2 Pit completely and brought about closure for 10 months while an intake airway was driven from Blantyreferme No.3, and No.1 Pit was converted from a downcast shaft to an upcast shaft to allow ventilation to be restored. Production was then resumed in the Humph, Splint and Virgin coals, and Blackband coals but the Lower Drumgray coal workings and reserves were abandoned. The manpower was subsequently reduced to 300 men.

During 1955, a coal face in the Humph coal was driven towards Bothwell Castle No 4 Colliery, Blantyre, which became the upcast for Bardykes, while No.1 Pit reverted to a downcast operation.

Working continued in the Blackband seam (750mm thick), in an area below Hallside and up to Flemington, up until the abandonment of the pit in 1962. Although attempts were made to further develop available reserves in the Main, Pyotshaw, Splint, and Virgin coals, this became non-viable because previously flooded abandoned workings could not be pumped dry.

Around 1956, the Splint and Virgin coals were being worked by Bardykes below the flooded Newton No.3 Colliery (Hallside) but excessively wet conditions caused the abandonment of this area of coal. Numerous attempts were made to de-water Hallside and Dechmont Collieries from Bardykes Colliery but these failed.

At closure, No.2 Pit was producing coal from the Lower Drumgray Seam at 494 metres depth, but these reserves were abandoned after closure never to be re-opened. No.1 Pit was sunk to 380 metres to the Humph coal and up to closure, in 1962, produced coal from the Humph, Splint and Virgin, and Blackband coals.

At abandonment, the workings had reached the border with Gateside Colliery and extracted the Blackband seam to a position, adjacent to Flemington, below the flooded workings of Dechmont Colliery. Fears that an inrush may result was the reason given for closure. On its closure considerable reserves of Humph, Splint and Virgin, Virtuewell and Lower Drumgray coals, which were mainly located in the Dechmont and Newton takes, were left unworked.

The Humph coal was a total of 760mm coal thickness, with an 20mm dirt parting, and was extracted to connect with Bothwell Castle No's 3 & 4 Colliery at Blantyre in 1956. The Splint and Virgin coals were worked separately with 1.14metres and 760mm respectively in the Hallside area but were abandoned in 1956 due to very wet conditions from the flooded Hallside Colliery workings.

A bore road was driven towards Dechmont Colliery, to access Splint and Virgin coals left unworked after the closure of the latter Colliery, but this was never accomplished successfully.

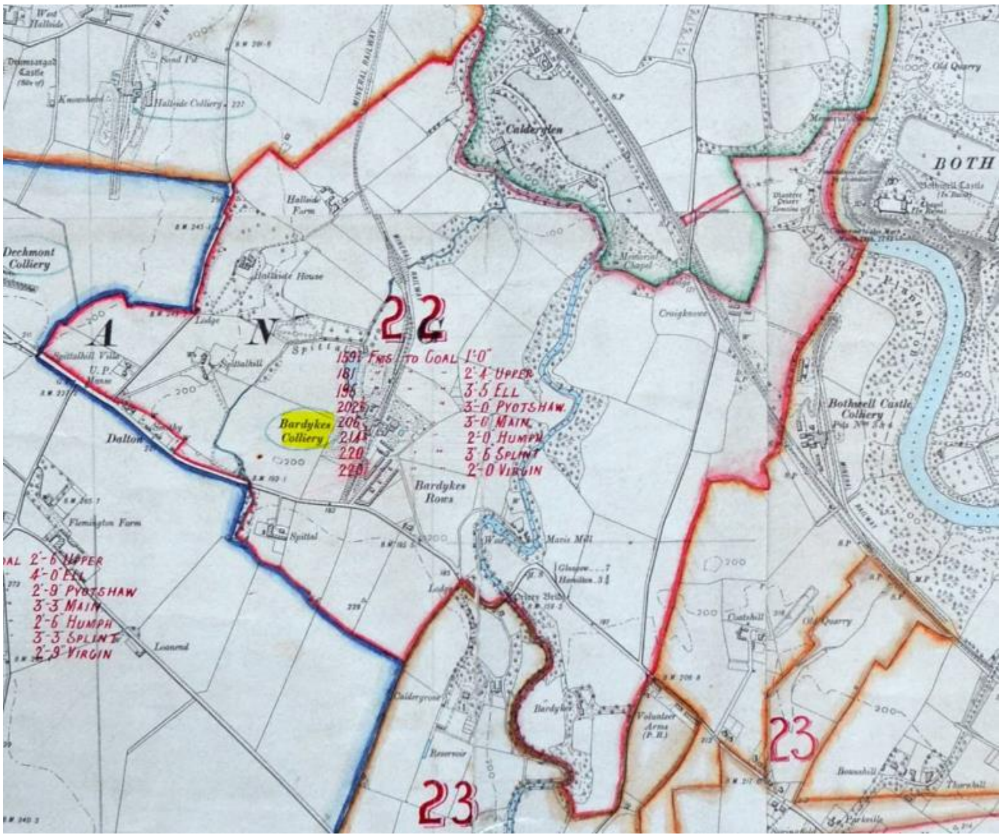
The Blackband coal, at 760mm thickness, was worked in the Newton and Flemington areas up to closure in 1962. The reason for the closure was given as safety fears of the risk of water ingress from the abandoned flooded Dechmont Colliery workings, but was more likely to have been on economic grounds.

A water drainage pipe was installed from the Blackband level in an endeavour to de-water Hallside Colliery and access Main and Pyotshaw coals from the Hallside Colliery Shaft area (0.5 million Tons) but this was not successfully concluded.

When this very successful Colliery finally closed considerable reserves were lost, although poor sales and pumping costs finally resulted in closure.

1896 Ordnance Survey Map Showing Bardykes Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

1946 Aerial Photograph Showing Bardykes Colliery. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (22) worked by Bardykes colliery (Ref 14).

Photograph of Bardykes Colliery, courtesy of Blantyre Project, www.blantyreproject.com The Blantyre History Archives.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 10 December 1894 - The trial was concluded today in which John Reid, miner, 43 Buchanan Buildings, Greenfield, Hamilton, sued Merry & Cunningham Ltd for £500 damages for the death of his son William Reid, aged 20. He was fatally injured on 9th February 1893 when working in defenders No 2 Pit Bardyke Spittal Colliery, near Cambuslang. On that day the deceased was working in the "Wee" coal seam of the pit, and was instructed to put hutches on to the cage for the purposes of dispatching them to the surface. Preparatory to doing so, he shouted to the bottomer in the ell coal seam to send up the cage, and in the belief that had been placed in position he pushed forward a hutch. The cage was not in its place, and the result was the hutch fell down the shaft, past the ell coal bottom on to the main coal bottom, carrying the pursuer's son with it. He was seriously injured, and died nine days afterwards in the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow. The faults alleged were that the defenders failed to have a bottomer at the "Wee" coal bottom, that the place was insufficiently lighted, and that the system of signalling was deficient. The defenders averred that the deceased acted as a bottomer in the seam, and they denied the pursuer's statement regarding the want of lights and that the system of signalling was deficient. They also said that William Reid contributed to the accident by his own carelessness, and that's in pushing the hutch forward he proceeded in the face of a known danger, or undertook voluntarily the risk of the accident. The pursuer denied that his son was acting as bottomer. The jury returned a verdict for the defenders.

Scotsman 7 September 1909 – Two miners were killed yesterday morning when a large part of the roof gave way. They are Andrew Alexander (38), night oversman, Aitkenhead Buildings, Lightburn Rd, Cambuslang and John Smith (29), 6 Bothwell Street, Silverbanks, Cambuslang. Both are married men and leave widows, the former with eight children and the latter with two.

Scotsman 26 June 1911 – Robert Black, pit contractor, Cambuslang was jammed by a rake of hutches on Saturday. Having been caught by the neck, he was instantaneously killed. He leaves a widow and five children.

Scotsman 17 October 1912 –Early yesterday morning an explosion occurred in Bardykes Colliery, a large mine in the east end of Cambuslang Parish. A night shift of about 100 men were employed, when without any warning the safety lamps in use were extinguished and a load report with heard simultaneously throughout the ell coal seam. After a search four or five men were found in a serious condition. Medical aid was at once procured and Mr. Samuel Agnew, the manager, and other officials were promptly on the spot. The men most seriously injured included: John Keith, Silverbanks Street, Cambuslang, burned about the back, arms, and face; and James Joyce, 36 Florence St. Glasgow SS, scorched all over head and face. Both men, after a little delay, were removed in the ambulance waggon to the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow. James Murphy, Main Street, Cambuslang, and Peter Boyle, Wellside Place, Gilbertfield, Cambuslang, were also burned about the head and face, but their cases were not considered serious enough for removal to the Infirmary, and they were conveyed home.

Scotsman 28 January 1913 – Bardykes Colliery, the largest pit in Cambuslang Parish, was the scene of a gas explosion, involving injury to four men engaged in repairing work. The injured men are John Hunter (31) 6 Buchan Square Cambuslang; James Duncan (30) 23 Cross Row, Low Blantyre; John Cox (26) 27 Green St, Bothwell; and Michael Garraty (35) 23 Young St, Hamilton. Dr Wilson, Blantyre, later ordered Garraty's removal to the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow, as his condition became more serious. Hunter and Duncan requested to be taken home but the colliery officials deemed it more expedient to convey them to Blantyre Cottage Hospital. At the time of the occurrence few men were working in the colliery, which employs 700 men. The repairs by the squad affected were being carried out in No 2 Colliery, where the roof of what is known as to Glasgow coal seam was being heightened. To accomplish that the men, who are being superintended by a Blantyre oversman, named Thomas Malcolmson, had to remove a considerable quantity of roof material, and lest any gas had accumulated in the gap Malcolmson fixed a safety lamp at the spot, and warned the workers. He had only left that portion of the workings for a short time when the sound of an explosion was heard, the flame of a naked light having probably ignited the gas. Mr. Samuel Agnew, the colliery manager and Mr. Highet, an oversman, were quickly on the spot, and the men were attended to as speedily as possible.

Scotsman 12 April 1915 – Yesterday morning at Bardykes Colliery, Cambuslang, one miner was killed and another slightly injured. It appears that Robert Alexander, oncostman, residing at 76 Lightburn Road, Cambuslang, and Hugh Scott, oncostman, Spittal Rows, were riding in the cage to a part of the shaft. The cage was a double decker, and it was necessary from a mining point of view that the men should ride in the lower deck. Both intended to come off at the 180 knock to attend to the electric pump, and from the sluice further up the shaft they gave to the engineman the necessary signal. Without warning, it is stated, they were hurled to the pit bottom. With the fall of the cage the bolts keeping the decks together snapped. The result was that the top deck came down on the one side and pinned Alexander to the bottom deck. The other side, however, held. Scott was thrown out, sustaining slight injuries to the ankle. Mr. Samuel Agnew, colliery manager, was in the vicinity of the colliery. On descending he was able to reach Alexander, who by this time was dead. The deceased man was 18 years of age, and resided with his mother at 76 Lightburn Road, Cambuslang. The colliery now claims two victims in the same family, as the father of the man who was killed, Andrew Alexander, when oversman, received fatal injuries about six years ago, along with another miner named Smith.

Scotsman 20 April 1927 – Owen Harty (54), 118 Dukes Road, Cambuslang, while working in Bardykes Colliery yesterday was caught and buried in a heavy fall from the roof. When extricated life was extinct. He leaves a widow and family of eight.

On Saturday 21st March 1936 a terrible disaster occurred at the colliery in which five men lost their lives. when tons of debris from the roof entombed the men as they were brushing the coal face in No. 1 Hawthorn face of the pit, a mile and a half from the pit bottom. The victims, all of whom were married, were: Thomas Coulter, of Bothwell-street, Cambuslang: James Conloy, of Glasgow-road, Blantyre; Robert Dawson, of Church-street, Cambuslang; George Kirk, of Church-street, Cambuslang; and Gilbert Roy, of Hamilton-road, Flemington. All had fairly large families. Campbell Hawthorn and William Evans, both of Cambuslang, who were also in the section when the roof fell, had a narrow escape. Evans heard a sizzling noise, and with Hawthorn jumped clear. Had they jumped the other way they would have been buried by the tons falling debris (Ref 52).

Scotsman 25 October 1943 – William McPheat (50), electrician, 111 Main Street, Cambuslang was knocked down by an engine at Bardykes Colliery and died shortly after the accident.

NEWTON COLLIERY 1850s - 1964

A description of Newton Colliery from Ordnance Survey name books in 1858 does not show a promising start for this colliery (Ref 53).

> "A Coal Pit 20 fathoms deep & about five seams in use. The workings are not sufficiently extensive to show as a colliery. It has been flooded twice, & has lately become so full of water, that it is thought the Water of "Rotten Calder" flows into the Works, There is every probability of it being given up. There are workshops & dwellings south west of the Pit which go under the same name S. G. Kidstone Esqr lessee- The Property of His Grace the Duke of Hamilton. Map of coal Works J. P. Kidston Esqr. Thomas Muir, Manager".

However, the following list of pits subsequently developed by J. Dunlop, the original owners of this colliery, at Newton showed this pessimism to be misplaced.

- Newton No 1 (the Auld Pit, later to become Blantyreferme No 3)
- Newton No 2
- Newton No 3 (Hallside)
- Newton No 4 (Kenmuirhill)
- Haughead 1865 - 1930

The Ordnance Survey map of 1859 shows No.1 Pit, and this was located near Newton School adjacent to the railway.

This pit was initially operated along with Newton No.2 Pit (which closed in 1926) and No 3 Pit, also named Hallside colliery, (which closed in 1921).

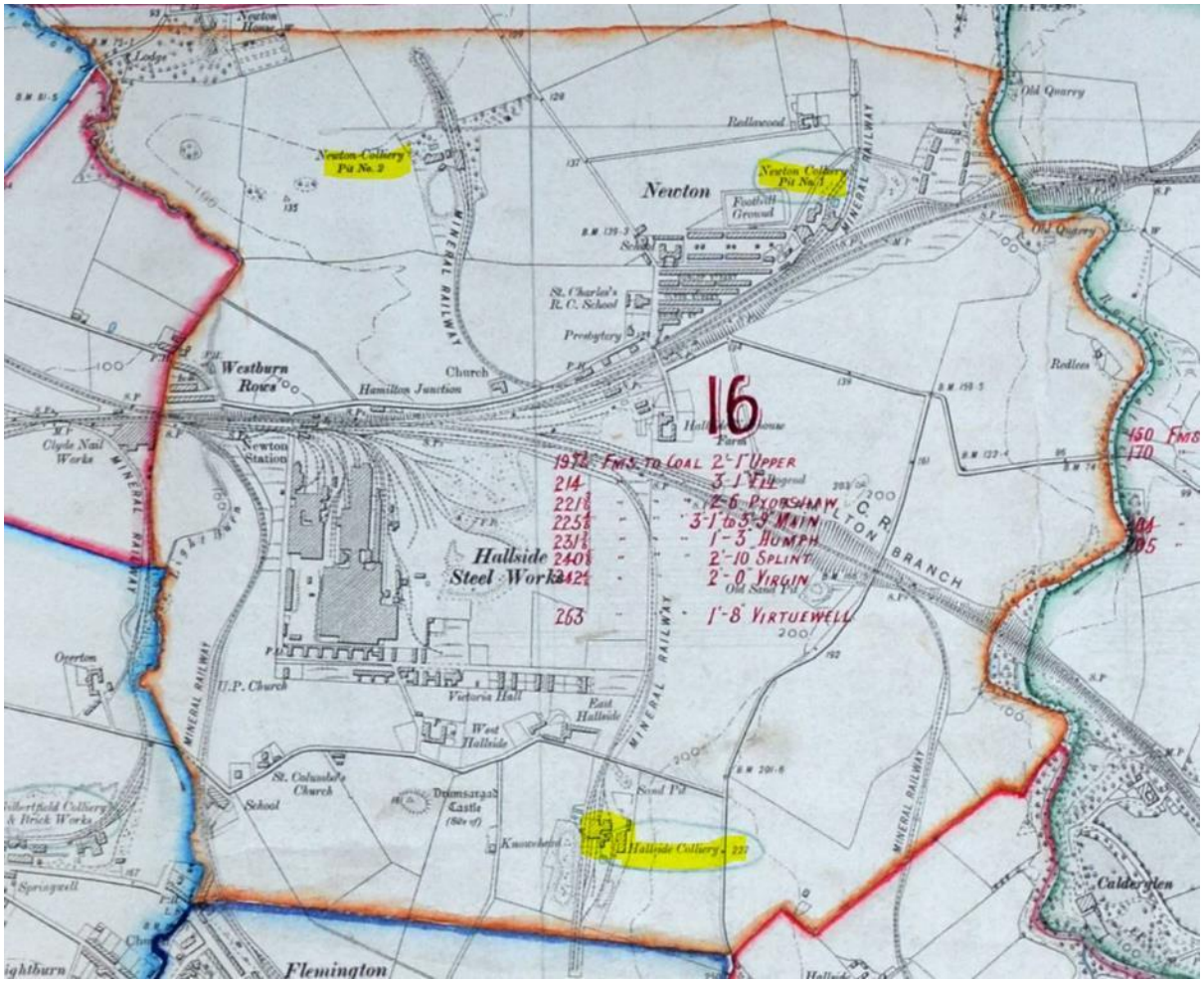
No.2 Pit was sunk in the 1870's, near to the Miners Welfare and Church buildings where the colliery spoil heap is still in evidence to this day. The coal bing at Newton No 2 Pit, to the north of Newton railway station was one of the last in the area to be removed and levelled to make way for housing at the beginning of the 21st century.

Manufacturing coal was produced and a total of 518 men were employed in 1896. In 1901, 594 men were employed, in 1918, 561 men were employed. Every seam from the Upper coal to the Lower Drumgray seam was mined.

No.3 Pit (also named Hallside colliery), sunk in 1873, was located at the top of Hallside Village and was the deepest shaft in the Clyde Valley at 516 metres and closed due to flooding during the 1921 strike, while No.2 Pit closed after the 1926 strike.

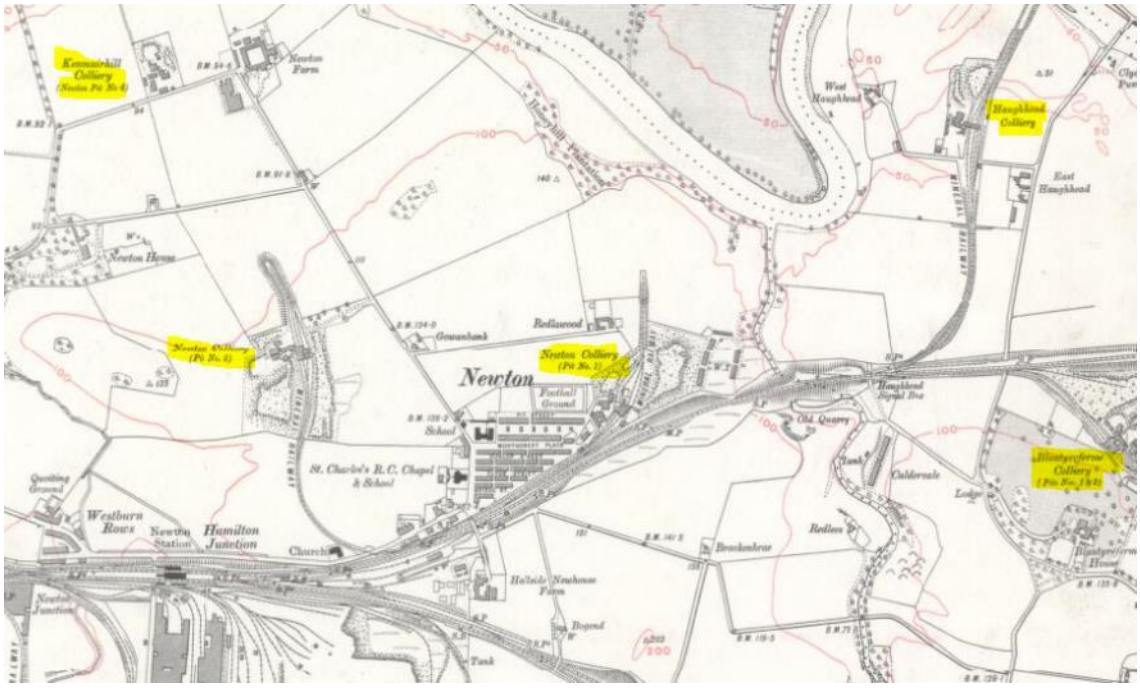
At that time No.1 Pit was annexed to Blantyreferme colliery for ventilation reasons and was purchased by A. G. Moore, the owners of Blantyreferme No.1 & 2 colliery, Uddingston, becoming Blantyreferme No 3 (see separate entry for Blantyreferme No 3 colliery for subsequent information about Newton No 1 pit).

In later years (1940's) the Upper and Ell coals were extracted from the area around the No 3 (Hallside) shaft, but Pyotshaw, Main, Humph, Splint and Virgin were unworked by Newton colliery with considerable reserves left untouched.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (16) worked by Newton and Hallside Collieries (Ref 14).

No.4 Pit was located near Newton Farm but was more part of the Kenmuirhill Colliery operation, sited on the other side of the River Clyde. Both the latter collieries were sunk on the opposite side of a large downthrow fault to the North of Newton No's 1 & 2 Pits (see separate entry for Kenmuirhill Colliery).



1910 Ordnance Survey Map showing Newton Colliery pits 1, 2. No 3 pit (Hallside) is to the south. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

1868 - Serious Accident at Newton Colliery. Mr Richard Sneddon, Colliery Manager (in the employment of J. P. Kidston Esq. Coalmaster, Newton Colliery in the Parish of Cambuslang), met with a serious accident, which it is feared will terminate fatally. About ten o'clock, while on a scaffolding at the pithead, he had been giving instructions to one of the workmen under his charge and had just leaned forward for the purpose of resting his hand on a rhone, or water conductor, when it slipped from his grasp, causing him to lose his balance and precipitating him with great violence to the ground, a distance of fifteen feet. Dr Turnbull, who was promptly in attendance, found Mr Sneddon's head was severely cut and bruised and that he had sustained other injuries so serious a character that life is despaired of. At present he lies in a very precarious state (Ref 54).

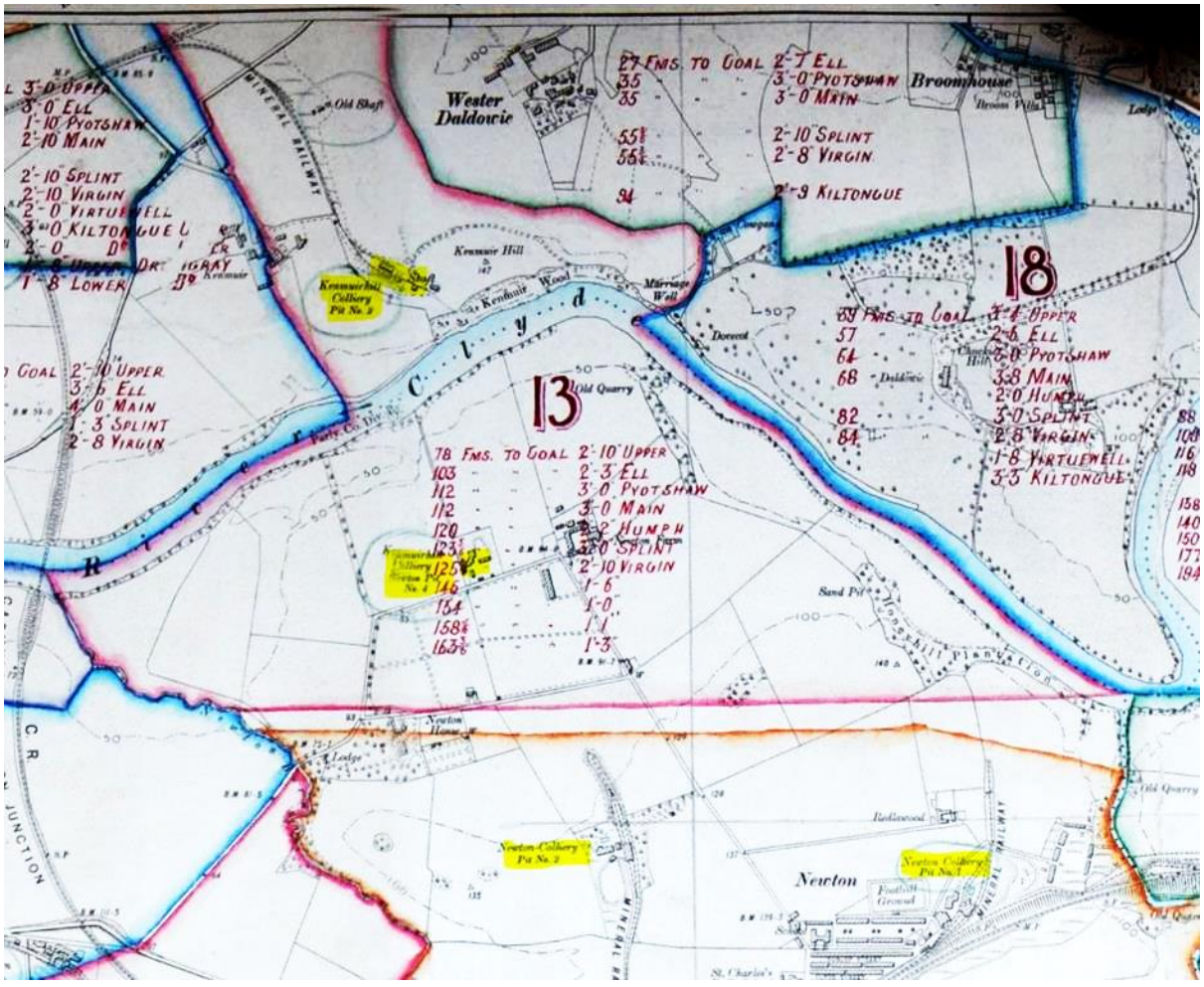
Scotsman 1 April 1919 – Scottish VC's father killed – When the miners were at work in Newton No 1 Collier, Cambuslang, yesterday, a fall from the roof in the virgin coal section took place. Two miners were caught and one of them, John Dickson, Alexandria Terrace, Newton, was extricated and removed home. The other miner, Hugh McIver, 34 Dunlop Street, Newton, father of the late Private Hugh McIver, VC, Royal Scots, was, however, buried alive. Efforts were made to rescue the entombed man, but when he was brought out life was extinct. The deceased was 67 years of age and had worked in the mine since early manhood. He leaves a widow and a grown-up family. About a month ago Mr and Mrs McIver were summoned to Buckingham Palace and received the Victoria Cross which had been gained by their son the late Private Hugh McIver, who was killed a fortnight after having been recommended for the honour. About a fortnight ago the parents received as a testimonial about £300, with a framed photograph of their VC son, at a public meeting in the Institute. After the accident the miners remained idle for the day.

KENMUIRHILL COLLIERY Pre 1893 – Pre 1934

Kenmuirhill Colliery was operated by Dunn Brothers of Mount Vernon. No.2 Pit was on the North of the River Clyde near Daldowie. Another Kenmuirhill pit on the South of the River Clyde was known as Newton No.4 Pit. This No 4 Pit was located near Newton Farm and worked the following seams (Ref 41):

- 188m to the Ell coal
- 205m to the Main coal
- 238m to the Virgin coal
- 349m to the Virtuewell coal.

The total number of workers employed at the pit in 1893 was 86. By 1901 the number employed had increased to 383, managed by Thomas Moodie.



Leasing Plan, c1896, showing the area (13) worked by Kenmuirhill Colliery (Ref 14). The pit on the south side of the river Clyde was also known as Newton No 4 pit.

Kenmuirhill, Newton No 4 closed prior to 1934, as it is shown as disused on the 1934 Ordnance Survey map.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Glasgow Herald 28 September 1874 - The other day in case of accidental drowning took place in the Clyde at Kenmuirhill Colliery, near Broomhouse. An old man named William Winning, employed as a labourer had gone to the river to wash clay from his boots, when he fell in, and no help being at hand was drowned.

Glasgow Herald 17 May 1900 - Ferry v Dunn Brothers - The First Division ordered issues for jury trial of an action brought by Hugh Ferry miner's drawer, 2 Clifton Terrace, Park Street, Cambuslang, against Dunn Brothers, coalmasters, 183 West George St, Glasgow, for payment of £500, or £253 10 shillings under the Employers Liability Act, as damages in respect of personal injuries. While working at the defenders' Kenmuirhill Colliery on 14th June last, the pursuer's left leg became entangled in a coil of chain attached to a loaded hutch which was being drawn up an inclined plane. His leg has been permanently injured, and he will never again be able to follow his occupation as a coal miner. The pursuer pleads a faulty and dangerous system of working. Fault is denied by the defenders.

Scotsman 26 March 1895 – Yesterday afternoon as a squad of four men were stemming a hole with compressed powder at the new pit being sunk by Messrs Dunn Brothers at Kenmuirhill, an explosion took place and two men were injured, one in a serious condition.

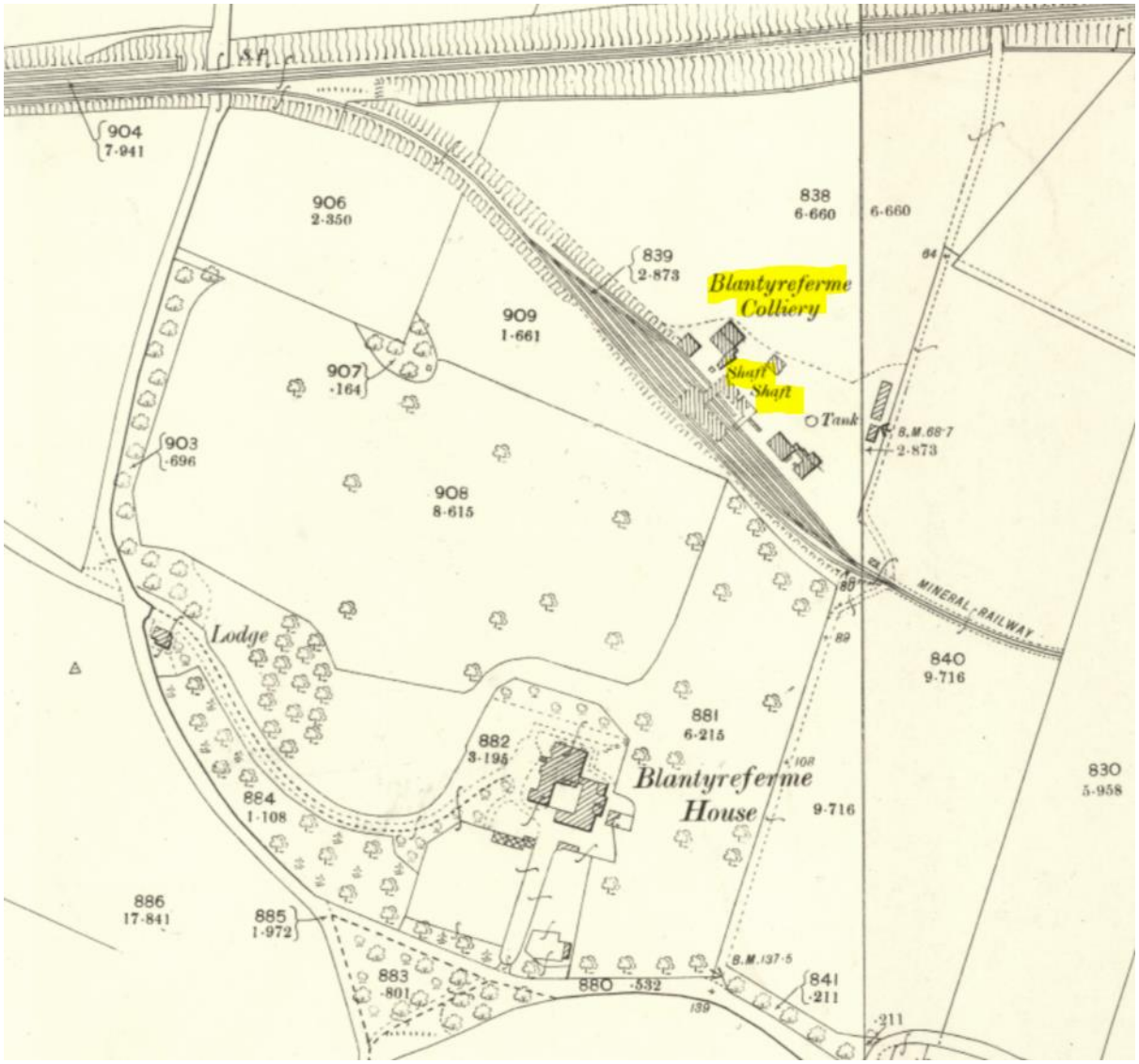
Scotsman 15 July 1929 – A fatal accident occurred on Friday evening at Kenmuirhill No 4 Colliery. Robert Gibson Carmichael (43), Hallside, Newton. The deceased was employed as oversman and pump inspector. After making his last inspection of the pumps he signalled to be taken to the surface. The colliery is 150 fathoms deep and when the cage reached 100 fathoms a rope broke and the cage and man were dashed to the pit bottom. Rescue commenced immediately but it was not until Saturday afternoon that the body was recovered. The deceased, who leaves a widow and one child was the son of the late Mr Robert Carmichael who was a colliery manager in Cambuslang. He came over with the 25th Canadian Battalion and fought to the end of the war, gained the Military Medal and was twice mentioned in Dispatches.

BLANTYREFERME COLLIERY 1 & 2 1894 -1962

This pit was sunk in 1894, to the east of Blantyre Farm Road, with two shafts each 244 metres deep. It was associated with a village called Calderglen (or Finmeoot after its hidden location in the Calder Valley) located near the Calder going towards Newton.

In common with the Auld Pit (Blantyreferme No.3 Colliery) this colliery was sunk to the Humph coal and accessed seams down to the Lower Drumgray through a steep drift. A brick works was also located on the colliery site. Co-author Joe Cunningham surveyed this pit in the late 1950's, but in 1954 two new drifts were sunk from the surface and a new brick work constructed to produce facing bricks from a top-quality clay seam existing in the area. Co-author Joe Cunningham assisted the Area Civil Engineer and Mr. John Gavin, a respected Lanarkshire Mining Engineer, at the collieries in this area for about 6 months in 1954.

In 1948 the output was 450 tons per day, 110,00 tons per annum, it operated with an average workforce of over 500 miners (and a peak of 656 miners in 1950) producing house and steam coal, closing in 1962.



1896 Ordnance Survey Map showing Blantyreferme Colliery pits 1 and 2. Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

In 1945 Blantyreferme Colliery Nos 1, 2 & 3 Pits employed 656 men.

Blantyreferme No.1 and 2 Colliery ceased production in 1962 on economic grounds leaving the oldest pit in the area, Blantyreferme No.3, to remain in operation. Workings in the Lower Drumgray coal continued at Newton using modern mechanised methods until 1964, when safety issues associated with water (after the cessation of pumping at the two pumping stations at Gateside and Bothwell Castle) resulted in closure.

Photograph of Blantyreferme Colliery Nos 1, 2 in 1938, courtesy of Blantyre Project, www.blantyreproject.com The Blantyre History Archives.

Blantyreferme Colliery No's 1, 2, in the 1940s, showing new pit baths, courtesy of Blantyre Project, www.blantyreproject.com The Blantyre History Archives.

The photograph also shows the new brick works, mine entrances (Blantyreferme No's 4 and 5) and Haughhead Colliery bing in the background. The latter colliery was connected to Broomhouse Colliery on the other side of the Clyde and the grandfather of co-author Joe Cunningham was a shaftsman at Haughhead for a short period of time. Blantyreferme No's 4 and 5 did not last long, but the clay reserves available to the brick works were removed by opencast methods for several years into the 1960's.

Another interesting fact relating to Blantyreferme No's 1 and 2 was an occurrence of cases of Weil's Disease (spread by rats' urine) underground which coincided with the construction of a new pithead following a fire caused by welding operations in 1951.

The colliery had 2 travelling bar picking tables and a Dickson and Mann coal washer. It had baths and a canteen, but no medical services. All electricity was bought from the public supply.

The long-standing future for this colliery was assured by the abandonment of flooded workings accessed from Bothwell Castle No's 3 and 4 Collieries. Much of this coal was worked from Blantyreferme No.1 and 2.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Scotsman 6 Sept 1928 – Early yesterday morning while James M'Mahon, miner, who resided a Caldervale Rows Uddingston, was in the act of setting a jib tree to shift the position of the coal-cutting machine in Blantyre Ferme Colliery, Uddingston, a fall took place from the roof, and he was buried in the debris. On being extricated and brought to the surface life, was found to be extinct.

Scotsman 10 April 1930 – As a result of the flooding of Messrs A G and Moore &Co's No 2 Pit, Blantyre Ferme, Newton, about 200 men will be thrown Idle. Pumping is still being carried on, but it is stated that is not having any great effect on the rise of the water. Two Inspectors of Mines made an examination of the pit yesterday. The flooding occurred on Monday afternoon and the men at work had to make a hurried dash to safety. The situation yesterday showed no signs of improvement, and knots of idle miners were assembled at different places in the vicinity. Water was still rising in the workings of the colliery and only four pumps were working compared with a total of eight. This of itself has considerably increased the volume of water in the mine and there is no hope of reaching the submerged pumps. Very little plant was saved and taken to the surface and all the coal cutting machines and miners tools were left behind when the men rushed to make a hurried dash to safety. The accident took place in the upper coal seam, and the miners engaged where at work fully three quarters of a mile away from the pit shaft. The coal was being worked in the direction of the old Hallside Colliery, and it is generally believed that the rush of water came from those old workings. Fortunately, the 300 men employed at the colliery have been able to register at the Labour Exchanges. The owners Messrs A G Moore & Co Ltd, are faced with a serious problem - either to install as soon as possible powerful pumping plant in the mine to clear out the water, or closed down the colliery altogether. The mine has an output of fully 300 tonnes per day and was reopened about five years ago after being closed down at the expiry of the lease in 1921 by Messrs James Dunlop & Co Ltd, Clyde Iron Works, Tollcross, who worked it for many years as a Newton No 1 Colliery. About half a dozen employees are engaged watching the situation

Friday 13th of August 1937 - five men were gassed. Two of the injured who got to the pithead were taken to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, where they then became unconscious and in a serious condition. They were H. Power and J. Young, both living in Uddingston. Upon detection of the gas, the alarm was raised and men rushed to the top of the pit. There were still five below who had been overcome. Assistance was sent down, and Power and Young were brought up. They were found to have received injuries to their bodies, and suffered from gassing. Police and ambulance men stood by waiting for the other men being brought to the surface. Over 200 men who were due to descend for what was known as the "back shift" were unable to go down the shaft and were temporarily thrown idle. The others were brought to the surface unaffected (Ref 55).

Scotsman 4 October 1938 – Electrocution of Two Men (Dick Jones and McHugh) at Blantyreferme Colliery – Messers A G Moore & Co, coal owners, 124 Saint Vincent St, Glasgow; William Kerr Christie, "Thirwell," Sheepburn Rd, Uddingston; James McCann, 69 Old Mill Rd, Uddingston; and William Mitchell sen, 2

Montgomery Place, Newton, Cambuslang, are charged as owners, manager, electrician, and assistant electrician respectively, with failing to comply at Blantyreferme Colliery on March the 11th with the Coal Mines Regulations, in that they used a multicore cable not protected by a metallic covering, between a gate-end switch and a fuse box. They are also charged with failing to install the incoming cable where it joined up to the gate-end switch and fuse box, so that it was mechanically protected. The manager and under manager William Kerr Christie and Alexander Ross, 12 Lusshill Terrace, Broomhouse, are also charged with failing to observe the regulations, in that they failed to provide a stock block or other contrivance at the top of an incline in the ell coal seam on which the haulage was worked by gravity. Pleas of not guilty where intimated yesterday and Sheriff Brown fixed the trial for 28th November.

Glasgow Herald, 20th July 1950 - THIRTY men, trapped in Blantyreferme Colliery, near Uddingston, yesterday by a fire at the pithead, escaped into an adjoining pit after making their way two and a half miles underground. One of the men was an engineer who had volunteered to go down the pit to warn those below, although he knew he might not get out again.

The fire began about 8am and, spreading rapidly, soon enveloped the superstructure at the pithead. It involved both shafts at Nos. 1 and 2 pits, and occurred after an explosion thought to have been caused by sparks igniting oxygen cylinders. Engineers who were dismantling an old steam engine were the first to discover the fire and the immediate concern was how to warn the men below, who were on maintenance work.

Thomas Russell (58), an engineer, Green St, Bothwell, said he would go down the mine. Jumping on to the cage, he descended the shaft and warned an under-manager, Alexander Ross, 12 Luashill Terrace, Broomhouse, who was already investigating a smell of burning. Ross gathered all the men working in the pit, and a plan of escape was discussed. It was remembered that workings at Newton Colliery had come close to their own, and the wall between was thin and had an air hole through.

“We felt we had every chance if we made our way there,” Ross explained afterwards. “I felt sure the NCB officials would realise we would do this and start rescue operations from there.” There was no panic of any kind, and the men, accompanied by Russell, set off on a two and a half mile walk to the Newton Pit.

When they arrived they heard the rescue men on the other side of the dividing wall. A passage 6ft long and 15 inches high was cleared by blasting and shovelling and the 30 men crawled through, five and a half hours after the fire began.

“We decided to make for the Newton end, where we thought there was a connecting road," said Russell. “I wasn’t too sure, but there was no other way.”

The flames at Blantyreferme pithead could be seen for miles, and the surface plant of the pit was completely destroyed. Detachments from several fire brigades fought the blaze, and fire engines came from Rutherglen, Cambuslang, Hamilton, Bellshill and Motherwell.

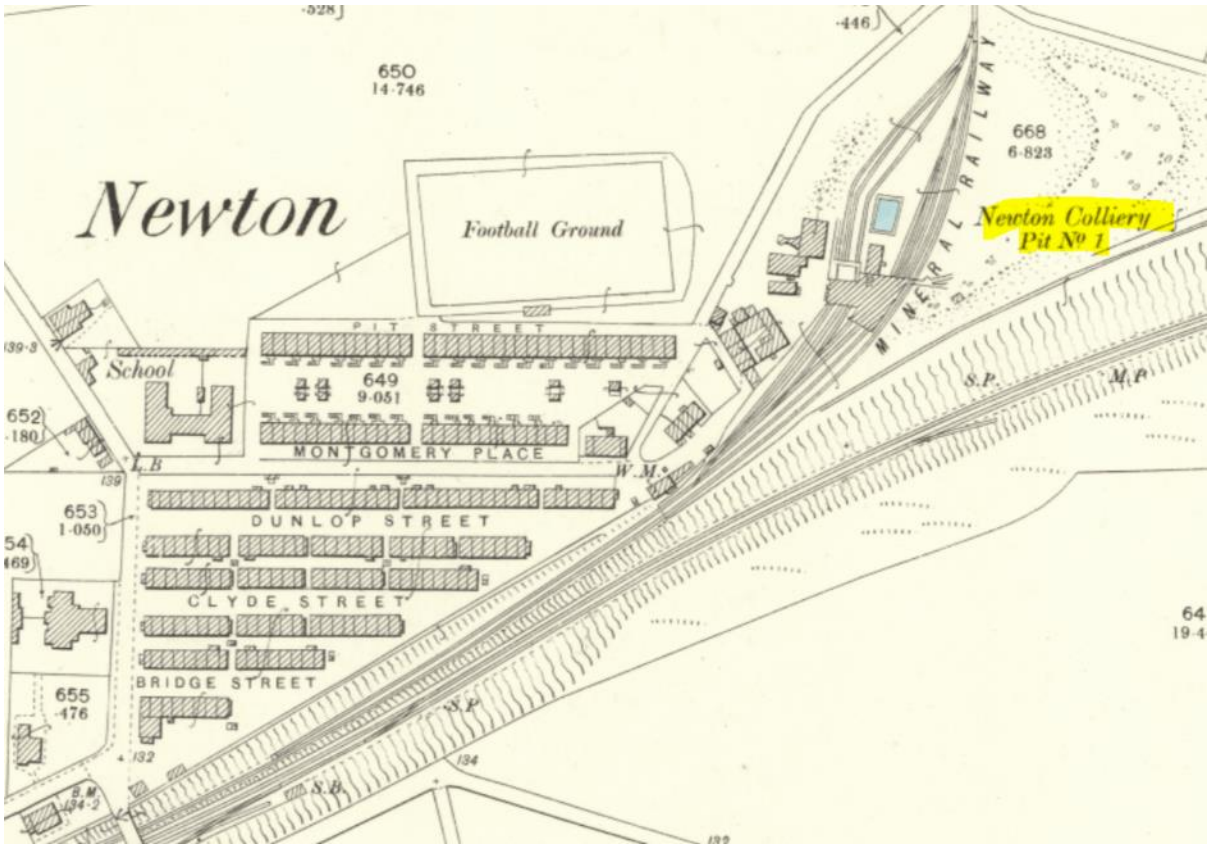
The water supply presented a difficulty owing to the distance from the Clyde, but another supply was obtained from a pit pond. The pit, which has been idle for about a fortnight, was expected to be working again on Monday. Owing to the fire damage it is expected there will be a considerable delay.

The fire has caused Blantyreferme 1 and 2 Colliery to be struck off the list of pits taking part in the strike of oncost workers. In the ordinary course of events those men not required for repairing the damage done to surface installations will receive seven days’ notice terminating their employment with the Coal Board. A meeting is in course of arrangement at which the men will be offered alternative employment principally in the developing areas in the Lothians, Fife, and Ayrshire.

The number of men still affected by the strike was thus reduced to some 3000 and the loss of output of over 3500 toms. (Ref **Error! Reference source not found.**).

Blantyreferme 3 Colliery, Newton 1850 - 1964

Blantyreferme No.3 Colliery, originally Newton 1 pit, or the Auld Pit, was sunk by J. Dunlop in 1850. It was taken over by A & G Moore & Co from 1925 to 1946. Following nationalisation of the coal industry in 1947 it was operated by the National Coal Board until 1964. By that time it was the oldest colliery still working in the Cambuslang area.



1896 Ordnance Survey Map showing Newton No 1 pit, later to become Blantyreferme No 3 Colliery, Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland.

Photograph showing Blantyreferme No. 3 Colliery in the 1930s, courtesy of Blantyre Project, www.blantyreproject.com The Blantyre History Archives.

The colliery comprised one shaft, originally 249m deep, with coal winding from 165m and a further 24m to pumping level. Ventilation was served by upcast ventilation located at Blantyreferme No.2 Pit at Uddingston,

Co-author Joe Cunningham was a National Coal Board surveyor and worked at Blantyreferme No 3 during the latter days of this colliery. Much of the information in this section is from his personal records and recollections.

He recalls that, from the pit shaft, all the seams (eleven in total) were accessed down to the Lower Drumgray, by a series of long drift mines driven at a slope of 1 in 2.5 to the working seams. In the latter years, face and road conveyors were used with coal drawn up the haulage drifts by endless rope haulage to the pit bottom. This was the only local colliery to adopt total coal face mechanisation when the Coal Plough was introduced in 1963. This machine ploughed coal from the face using hydraulic pressure to keep its cutting edge against the coal. The coal was delivered onto a metal 'panzer' face conveyor of steel construction, then to a roadway belt conveyor system prior to final delivery into tubs, which were hauled to the pit bottom.

There was a proposal to fully amalgamate the Blantyreferme Collieries in the 1950's with coal winding at Blantyreferme No.1 but this was never implemented and the colliery closed on economic grounds, in August 1964, because pumping costs overcame all economic advantages achieved by face mechanisation.

An intake airway was driven from Blantyreferme No.3 to Bardykes, after a shaft collapse there in 1948 which destroyed Bardykes No.2 Pit completely and brought about closure there for 10 months while the airway was driven.

The peak workforce was 430 and in 1948 the output averaged 300 tons per day, 82,000 tons per annum.

Coal screening used a two-bar type with coal washed at Blantyreferme No. 1. There were baths for 396 men, a canteen, a first-aid room. All AC electricity was supplied by the Clyde Valley Power Company.

Blantyreferme was also known for its adjacent brickworks (on the site of Haughead colliery on the Blantyre Farm Road) which operated between 1924 and 1974 and was supplied by a drift mine sunk to extract fireclay.

Blantyreferme (Haughead) Bing and Brickworks 1960s, courtesy of Blantyre Project, www.blantyreproject.com The Blantyre History Archives.

NEWSPAPER RECORDS OF ACCIDENTS AND OTHER EVENTS

Scotsman 7 January 1929 – In the main coal seam Duncan Connor came into contact with electric current and was killed instantaneously. H resided at 9 Clyde Street, Newton, and leaves a widow and child. Thomas Lochrie, 25 Clyde Street, Newton, was also affected, but after medical attention recovered consciousness, and was removed home suffering from shock. When intimation of the accident was conveyed to Dr Anne Mitchell, Newton, she proceeded at once to the colliery, descended into the mine and walked half a mile through the workings to the scene of the accident. Artificial respiration was tried for three hours by Dr Mitchell, in an attempt to revive Connor but without success.

Scotsman 23 February 1933 – Early yesterday morning at Blantyreferme Colliery No 3, a miner named Philip McArdle (60) was caught by runaway hutches. Deceased was a widower, resided at 20 Castle Chimmins Road, Halfway.

Scotsman 6th January 1937 – A fireman was found suffocated in Blantyreferme Colliery No 3, Newton, Cambuslang, yesterday morning. He was James Brown, 49 years of age, who resided at 583 Coatbridge Road,

Bargeddie, and he leaves a wife and one child. It appears that Brown, who was employed on the back shift, was engaged with one of the foreman, erecting a screen in the virgin coal section, when the foreman felt himself being overcome. Both men made a rush for safety. The foreman managed, although nearly overcome, to reach fresher air, but his companion must have collapsed immediately. Desperate efforts were made as the day shift men arrived to rescue Brown, but these were frustrated and an urgent summons was sent for the Miners Rescue Brigade at Coatbridge. The Brigade arrived very quickly, and after descending the mine located Brown but he was dead. The colliery is owned by A G Moore & Co Ltd, and employs about 300 miners. The men remained idle yesterday.

Whilst 300 miners dashed to the safety of the surface after firedamp had been discovered in the colliery, one man failed to respond to the alarm signal and was tragically suffocated. He was James Brown, of Bargeddie, who left a wife and one child. Coatbridge rescue brigade descended into the mine and found Brown's body. Work in No. 3 pit in the colliery was suspended.

Scotsman 2 April 1937 – Alexander Walker (18) a miner, 61 Overton Street, Cambuslang, was fatally injured yesterday in Blantyre Ferme No 3 Colliery.

Scotsman 29 November 1938 – At the Sheriff Court charges were brought against A G Moore coalowners for an electrocution of two miners on 11 March. The charge was that they used multicore cable not protected by a metallic covering and failing to see that the armoured covering of a cable was properly secured to the switch box. Dick Jones and McHugh were electrocuted.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Colin Findlay, BSc, CEng, FIMechE, MSaRS, started as a mechanical engineering trainee with British Steel in 1972. He left Clydebridge steelworks as Plate Mill and Shearline Engineer in 1981. He then joined YARD Consulting Engineers, subsequently Mott MacDonald Consulting Engineers. He retired in 2011, having worked on numerous projects in the UK and abroad. In 2000 he started writing a history of the Scottish steel industry which developed into a website https://cfindlay17.wixsite.com/clydebridge . He has also researched local, industrial and coal mining history.

Robert McDonald, BSc, MSc, FCIPD, FRSA, worked as a Directed Practical Trainee in Fife and progressed to become a Chartered Mining Engineer, and Fellow of the Institution of Mining Engineers, with the National Coal Board. He also obtained a Colliery Manager's Certificate (Certificate of Competency, Coal Mines Act 1911). He left the coal mining industry in 1967, seeing the signs of decline following the discovery of oil in the North Sea, holding the post of Area Ventilation Engineer for the North Derbyshire Area. He then followed a career in further education, retiring as an Assistant Director of Education for Strathclyde Regional Council.

Joseph Cunningham BSc, PhD, CEng, MIMMM, started work as an Apprentice Surveyor with the NCB in 1954. He qualified in 1959 after working principally in the Clyde Valley sub Area, and spent 1959 as the surveyor responsible for tunnels, drivages and the new shaft sinking at Cardowan Colliery. He obtained a Colliery Manager's Certificate 1964, while studying Mining Engineering at Strathclyde University and working at Bedlay Colliery. He left the industry in 1967, and spent one year at Ravenscraig Steelworks before ultimately reaching the position of Chief Engineer and Head of Technical Services for a Division of Courtaulds Limited. However, he still retains a strong interest in the coal Industry as a customer of the NCB and being responsible for the efficient operation of coal fired equipment.

APPENDIX 2 - RUTHERGLEN TOWN COUNCIL – MARCH 1890 MEETING

Rutherglen Reformer Friday 14 March 1890

On Monday night the usual monthly meeting of the Town Council and Police Commissioners was held within their- chambers. Provost Mitchell presided. There were also present – Ballies Lang and Baird; Dean of Guild Todd, Treasurer Macalpine,

Councillors Lang, Love, Mitchell, Smart, Macdonald, Brown, Shaughnessy, Edmiston, Morrow, Warrington, Munn, Givens, and Stewart; together with Mr George Gray; town clerk, and Mr J. J. Craig, master of works.

The Town Clerk read the minutes of last meeting of Council, as well as those of subs sequent committee meetings, all of which were confirmed.

The Finance Committee reported having passed for payment accounts amounting: to £36 4s 1d for Town Council, and £35 16s 9d for Police Commissioners. Total; £72 0s 10d. The Town Clerk read a letter from Mr Murray Dunlop, writer, Glasgow, in reply to the communication desiring to know the names of his clients who offered to lease the minerals at High Crosshill. The following is a copy of the letter.

I am instructed by Messrs John Abercrombie, wine and spirit merchant, Flemington, and Wm. Brackenridge, grain merchant, Hamilton, to offer to take on lease from the Corporation of Rutherglen, the coals and other minerals in the lands belonging to the Corporation, and referred to in Mr M'Creath's report, and that, on the

terms mentioned in said report, with the exception that the period for boring is to be six months from the date of lease. This time, you will observe, is even less than that suggested by Mr M'Creath.

Mr Gray also read the following petition sent from the feuars of High Crosshill, and signed by them:-

“We, the undersigned feuars, and occupiers in High Crosshill, having learned there is a proposal before your Council to institute borings for coal in this district, with a view to commencing mining operations, most strongly protest against thig proposed action on your part, as invasion of our rights, of which you are the natural guardians.

The lands of High Crosshill have always been regarded as a feuing subject, and when first put into the market, the advertisement bore that the minerals had been worked out, and intending feuars would not be disturbed by mining operations. When taking out our feus, we had no conception that coal mining, so effectually destructive of the amenities of our dwelling-houses, would be undertaken or authorised by you, our superiors, and positively declare, had we anticipated this, we would not have become feuars. We appeal to you in these circumstances to consider our position, and strongly urge, you are bound to honour either to relinquish the proposal of mining, or, should you decide to carry it on, to buy up our interests in our ground and holdings. Unless some arrangement is made to our satisfaction, you may expect our determined opposition to the plan; but we trust this representation may influence you to consider and protect the interests of your own feuars in one or other of the ways suggested.”

The petition was signed by ten of the feuars.

There seemed no attempt to open up a discussion on the matter, and Treasurer Macalpine asked if there was to be no motion, or if the matter was to be laid aside.

Mr Shaughnessy – Not so fast. There is something to be said on the matter. It is not likely we are going to abandon the subject now, after spending so much on receiving the report which appeared in the “Reformer.” Is it the case that such an advertisement appeared?

Mr Gray read from the minute book the following instructions for the advertisement referred to, and which had appeared in the Glasgow newspapers:—

"VILLA GROUND TO BE FEUED AT RUTHERGLEN.

There will be sold þy public roup, within the Town Hall of Rutherglen on Wednesday, 27th March inst. [1872] At 2 o'clock afternoon, those two lots of the lands of Crosshill, situated within the Burgh of Rutherglen on the elevated ground of the north slope of Cathkin hills, commanding views of the fine scenery in the neighbourhood. They adjoin each other, and are numbered 47 and 48 of the fueuing plan of Cathkin hill, and bounded on the west by the turnpike road from Rutherglen to Kilbride and on the South by the Blairbeth Road, leading to, Castlemilk, by established good roads there is easy access to them. Lot 47 contains 3 roods and 3 poles, and lot 48 2 roods and 21 poles, or thereby. The coal was worked out of these lands upwards of 50 years ago, and the lots are not exposed to the annoyance of coal workings in their immediate neighbourhood. There are for sale a number of similar lots immediately adjoining the above. The price will be converted into a feu-duty at 5 per cent, and John Gardner, King Street, Rutherglen will shew the lands, and further particulars may be learned on application to Samuel Baker, Provost of Rutherglen, or George Crawford, 111 Brunswick Street, Glasgow.

Town Clerk stated that he had not known of this advertisement, although he knew there was something contained, in the minutes that warranted without fear those who had feued the ground. For himself, he never would have erected a house on the burgh lands if he had anticipated mining operations.

Mr Shaughnessy recommended legal advice be asked on the question raised by the Town Clerk. It was unfortunate they had not known of the advertisement, but all the same it did not bind them against leasing the coal. It was ridiculous to think that because they sold the minerals they were to be held responsible not to take the coal. They would not damage one of the feus.

Mr Warrington thought the feuars were entitled compensation should the Corporation accept the offer now made by Mr Murray Dunlop's clients. He recommended that the matter be continued for consideration at a future meeting. It would be too hurried to decide at this meeting this question, seeing the information they had before them.

Mr MacDonald asked why the corporation took up a different position with reference to the Crosshill feus when they never considered the feus in Sheriff Park. Nothing had been said of the feus at this part of the burgh lands.

Mr Mcalpine said the question with reference to Sheriff Park was widely different from that of Crosshill. In the one case they had distinctly stated there would be no mining as the coal had all been worked out 50 years before. He read a copy of the advertisement –which had appeared in the public press at the time. That advertisement distinctly warranted the feuars building without fear.

He was as much in favour of free taxation as anybody, but he wished before this fair play and honesty to the feuars. He objected entirely to working the coal if it injured those who had taken feus, especially when they were led to believe that there would be no mining operations.

Mr Munn—Hear, hear.

Mr Givens thought that the goal could be worked out without much annoyance to the feuars. It was all very well to talk out loud about dishonour, but it would be greater dishonour to the public were they to consider the petition only of the feuars. He suggested that the whole matter be enquired into, and see if they had the power to lease the minerals. He would certainly have moved in favour of letting the lease, but since this advertisement had come up, he would not do so. They could, however, obtain advice on the matter.

Mr Smart would not be held bound by anything that had been done by their predecessors. Referring to the information given to Messrs Moore & M'Creath, he thought it was not very precise. If they got an offer for the coal, they were bound to accept it in the interest of the ratepayers, and if their predecessors had spoken untruly it was -no fault of theirs. They had now found out in one or two cases that all had not been done well by their predecessors.

Mr Munn said that when first considered he was in favour of letting the coal, but matters had very much changed since then. Along with others he felt they were morally bound to protect the interests of the feuars at Crosshill. He would not object to getting the opinon of counsel; but be thought that it was quite clear, without such opinion, that they were morally bound to their bargain, as contained in the advertisement.

Mr Brown understood that the shank of the pit would not be placed, between two cottages, but that plenty of space would be allowed. There would no interference with the present feus. What might be done by individuals ought to be done by a corporation for the interests of the rate payers.

Mr Shaughnessy explained at some length the terms of Mr M'Creath's report, and the price that would be paid for the proposed lease of the minerals.

Some further discussion took place on the damage that would be done to the surface of the lands and also to the properties on the same.

Mr Shaughnessy - You have no need to put a pit near anyone's house. I would certainly object to such a thing, and instructions would be given to those in charge of the engineering to avoid this.

After a short conversation, Mr Shaughnessy moved that "We take the opinion of Counsel whether we are the owners of the minerals in High Crossbill, with the exception of the minerals of the feuars, which by their contract, belong to them; and whether, looking to the terms of an advertisement, dated 1872, we are precluded from- disposing of the minerals, subject only to whatever physical -damage may be caused thereby to the surface of the ground feued and buildings thereon." In moving the motion he would not on any account consent to interfere with any of the houses. Whoever leased the ground would be required not to injure in any way the property already raised.

Mr Smart seconded the motion.

Mr Shaughnessy again explained in reply to a question that they would not injure the ground under any of the feus.

Mr Smart held that the ground and the minerals underneath belonged to the corporation, and they were quite entitled to do what they thought would yield the largest profit to the ratepayers of the burgh.

Mr Warrington moved that they do not ask counsel with reference to the ownership of the coal, which he held was already known to them.

Dean of Guild Todd asked Mr Shaughnessy to withdraw the first part of the motion proposed by him, on the ground that, this part was needless.

Mr Shaughnessy stated that the first part was only introductory to the second. He, however, withdrew it.

Mr Macalpine seconded Mr Warrington's motion, on the ground that the Council might not even accept the opinion of Counsel.

Mr-Munn moved "That having heard the public advertisement read regarding the feuing at High Crosshill; dated March 1872 and having also heard the Town Clerk's opinion that it may bring this Council into legal difficulties, we go, no further into the matter."

Mr M. Lang seconded Mr Munn's amendment.

Mr Warrington, with the leave of his seconder; withdrew his motion, in favour of Mr Munn's.

Mr Edmiston said that had he known of the existence of such an advertisement as that read, he would never have consented to asking even for the engineer's report. Now that he knew of it, he objected to takin counsel or doing anything else in the matter. The, vote was then taken, with the following result:-

For Mr Munn's amendment - Provost Mitchell, Ballie Baird, Treasurer Macalpine, Councillors Edmiston, Munn, M.Lang, L Mitchell and Warrington – 8.

For Mr Shaughnessy's motion – Dean of Guild Todd, Councillors Shaughnessy, Morrow, Macdonald, Givens, Brown, Smart, Stewart and Love -9.

(Baille Lang was absent at the time of the vote).

The motion was declared carried.

The Town Clerk was instructed to employ Mr John A Spence, writer, Glasgow, to prepare the necessary memorial for the opinion of the Dean of the Faculty of Advocats, Mr J B Balfour, he desiring to be excused doing so in respect that he is a fuer of Crosshill, and concurs in the protest. He further stated that he fueued his ground in terms of a building plan showing the whole ground of High Crosshill covered with villas and that he never would have built his house if he had anticipated coal workings there, or in his neighbourhood.

On the motion of Mr Edmiston, it was resolved that it was expedient that the boundaries of this royal burgh should be extended to the whole Parliamentary limits thereof, as the said limits are defined by the Act 2 and 3 William IV, cap 65, so as to include the two districts of Farme and Shawfield, in so far as the same are within the said limits.

The matter was remitted for consideration.

APPENDIX 3 - PIT PONIES

By Mr J. B. Hamilton, M.R.C.V.S.

Article from - MINING INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND TRANSACTIONS Vol. XI 1889-90.

Within a radius of six miles of Hamilton, there are, according to a rough calculation, about 2,000 ponies and horses used under- ground, the value of which will amount to about £20,000, and require an annual expenditure of £50,000 for their upkeep, &c.

These animals are drawn from nearly all parts of Northern Europe and each presents a general distinct type of form and character. The Highlands of Scotland in time past furnished the greater part of the animals required; but at present those available and suitable from these districts are very few, and, consequently, dear. This scarcity is owing partly to the draining of former years, but mostly to the greatly diminished area under cultivation by crofters and small farmers, who were the principal breeders and workers of the " Highland sheltie." Inbreeding has also deteriorated the size, stamina, and power of endurance of this species. I should say there is not one good Highland pitter now for ten there were a dozen years ago, and this is the opinion of those dealing in the trade.

The Shetlander is a most diminutive creature, varying in height from 9 hands (36 inches) to 12 hands (48 inches). I do not know that they have ever been largely used for draining coal in the Hamilton district The supply is now very scant, and the demand from America being very great, the price is almost prohibitory for pits. A fairly good four-year-old Shetland horse pony, say 10 hands, is worth £16 at the present time.

The Icelanders are a most useful class of ponies, and I think I am safe in saying they pull nearly 50 per cent, of all coal drawn in the smaller seams around Hamilton. Their heights vary from 11 to 12½ hands. They make good pitters, as their temper, being rather sluggish but withal honest, adapts them for the frequent lifts they have to take slowly and steadily when starting their loads. The supply of ponies of this breed is also gradually diminishing, owing to emigration of the people from this most inhospitable region, and also owing to the large and ever-increasing quantity of ponies which are becoming absorbed into pits here and in the North of England.

The Scottish Highlands, Shetland, and Iceland were the principal sources from which the supplies of ponies were got, but, owing to the causes enumerated, the supply has greatly diminished, and consequently other countries had to be tried.

Russian and Hungarian ponies have been imported at Hull and London in large quantities for some years, and many of them have been purchased for pit work. They are not, however, in my opinion, adapted for this class of work, being generally very deficient in the loins, where the greatest strain in pulling hutches comes. Their height is from 13 to 14½ hands.

Norway and Sweden within the last year or two have supplied a considerable number of ponies to this country, mainly through the enterprise of Leith firms. The ponies of this breed are generally possessed of a most remarkably pliant and docile temper, and when carefully selected have proved splendid pitters. They vary in height from 12½ to 14½ hands and average, 13½. There seem to be two pretty distinct breeds of them - those which are mostly found in the lowland districts, and make good trappers; and the other, which are obtained from the more hilly districts, and are generally smaller in size, and with very small ears, and have wonderful development of the muscles in the loins and thighs.

A few of the most salient points in the formation of a good pit pony or horse may be here noted. In the first place, the general character and temper can be seen in the face of a pony as well as in a man. Select one with a good broad forehead and a mild eye, if a little sluggish, a good deep chest to allow of plenty of room for lung play, a longish body, and barrel well ribbed home, broad muscular loins, and well-developed thighs. That the latter conditions are the most important in the structure of a pit pony is easily understood, when we consider that the act of pulling is like bending the body in the shape of a bow, and the long muscles of the loins, the gluteal muscles of the haunches, and the semi- membranoses and tendonoses of the thighs have to straighten the curvature caused by the weight of the load.

There are many other points, of course, which it is necessary to have in pit as in other animals, but I have merely touched on those, without which, I consider it is impossible to have the foundation of good pitters.

They ought of course all to be sound in a practical sense. No pony should be put into a pit under three years, and aged animals (over 10 or 12) which have been used for running with a light trap do not, in my opinion or experience, make satisfactory workers, as the duties are so different from those to which they have been accustomed. I have heard many opinions as to sex. Some say mares become troublesome. Others have experience totally opposite to that. My own opinion is that mares are not affected by the climatic conditions in pits, as the temperature being equable, the animal economy quickly accommodates itself to it. I wonder some coalmaster does not go in totally for mares, as they can usually be bought cheaper than the males, and are on the whole better workers and wearers.

Having then selected the animal, we have to consider how he may be best prepared for the work he is to perform.

Seventy per cent, of ponies bought for pits come straight from their native districts, and in most cases have never acquired a taste for grain of any sort. These are the animals which generally come to learn their duties best, as they are invariably sound, and have not been taught any tricks, and they also more readily acquire that gradual increase of pressure when starting the hutches which ponies that have been driven much in light vehicles seldom learn.

The best method of teaching them to eat grain is to mix a little with plenty of cut hay, and gradually increase the quantity as they partake of it. This should always be done on the surface, but as soon as they commence to the feeding they should be taken underground. I have seen many animals spoiled through being kept standing on the hill, and fed up on a diet for which their digestive apparatus was quite unprepared. Of course, there are exceptional circumstances, which would modify this very much, as in connection with some collieries there are farms where the pony can be worked and exercised, but as a rule unless this can be done regularly they are much better below. It is here that the " tug of war *' begins, for as soon as ever an animal reaches the bottom

it seems to be expected to commence full work right away, and to do that work with all the sagacity of a veteran. Conduct such as this is very mistaken zeal, and becomes expensive to the owner. Besides the dangers attendant on its inexperience, there are those which arise from overheating, and various internal disorders, the result of exhaustion. What I would suggest is that the pony should be taken quietly to the stall or box, and allowed to remain in it for a day at least to accustom it to the darkness, &c Then, if necessary, have it clipped, allowing the hair to remain on the legs to protect them from water and injuries. After remaining in the stable until it has become somewhat accustomed to its surroundings, and is feeding all right, the pony should get work for an hour or two daily, beginning with an empty hutch, and gradually extending its time and increasing the weight until it can do a whole day's work.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Interested readers can find further information on the following websites.

1. The National Library of Scotland's map images can be viewed at http://maps.nls.uk/ . This is an extremely valuable resource for anyone interested in history. Georeferenced maps allow the viewer to compare locations between old and modern maps. They also identify the location of long-gone collieries and their communities.
2. The National Library of Scotland provides access to eResources for registered users at https://auth.nls.uk/eresources/browse/access_type/2,5 This gives access to the British Library newspaper 19th cent. Archive.
3. The Coal Authority has an interactive map viewer that identifies the location of mine shafts, coal outcrops and areas mined at http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/coalauthority/home.html .
4. http://www.scottishmining.co.uk/ contains a wealth of information on the history of mining in Scotland.
5. http://www.blantyreproject.com/ provides a history of Blantyre and its mining heritage.
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7. Edward Boyle's http://edwardboyle.com/EB/Cambuslang/Cambuslang.html website with photographs of old Cambuslang.
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12. Facebook groups on Auld Rutherglen and on Auld Cambuslang.
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The books: "A History of The Mining Industry of Central Lanarkshire, 1762 – 1946", published 2011 and "A Review of Mine Management in Scotland 1800 – 1960", both by Dr George M. Maxwell, Emeritus Professor of Mining and Petroleum Engineering, University of Strathclyde, are available at a number of libraries and in the North Lanarkshire Heritage Centre, Motherwell.

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A HISTORY OF COAL MINING IN RUTHERGLEN AND CAMBUSLANG

Colin Findlay, Bob McDonald, Joe Cunningham

Photograph: Govan No5 Pit, Rutherglen

This is a history of coal mining in the Rutherglen and Cambuslang areas. The authors were volunteers on a Heritage Lottery project undertaken by South Lanarkshire Council between 2014 and 2017, named Pits Ponies People and Stories.

Although there is much written evidence of the social and working conditions of coal mining communities over the centuries, evidence of the mining science and technology, used in the Rutherglen and Cambuslang area, was not so readily available.

This book provides a record of facts and references for any future researchers on the coal mining industry which once played a major role in the development of Rutherglen and Cambuslang.