

## **COAL MINING IN KINTYRE**

The following notes re coal mining in the Machrihanish/Drumlemble area have been placed in chronological order.

The sources of the information are stated where possible.

Rev. Father Webb of Campbeltown and Mr. Duncan Colville of Machrihanish have provided the major portion of the information herein contained, my contribution has been arranging the notes in sequence and adding the details of the period 1947 - 1967.

D.M. Seaman, M.I.M.E. C.ENG.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATION USES

Rev. Father Webb - Campbeltown

- D.M.S. - David M. Seaman, Machrihanish.
- D.C. - Duncan Colville, Machrihanish.
- McK. - J. H. McKenzie, Librarian, Campbeltown
- A.E.O. - Argyll Estates Office
- A.H. - Argyllshire Herald
- D.&M. - Dick & McKelvie, Solicitors, Campbeltown
- T.L.G. - T. Lindsay Galloway, Mining Engineer
- Kerr. - Local Miner
- C.C. - Campbeltown Courier
- J.S.F. - J.S. Filshill, ex N.C.B. Planning Officer

## COAL MINING IN KINTYRE

### 1494.

King James IV visited Tarbert, Dunaverty and Kilkerran.

### 1498.

Rev. Father Webb, copied from the printed edition of the Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland in the Mitchell Library, following quotations and added his modern rendering.

27.4.1498 "Item the XXVII day of April, giffen to ane cole man to pas in Kintyr to vesy gif coles may be wonnys thare, XVIIIIs".

Given to a coal man to go to KINTYRE, to see if coals can be got there, 18 shillings"

5.5.1498 "Item in Dunbartane, that samym day, to Davisone colzar, to mak werklumys , and to pas in Kintyre. XVIIIIs,

"To Davidson, collier, to make tools and go to Kintyre, 18 shillings."

9.5.1498 "Item to the colzar in Dunbartane, quhen he past to see. IIIIs."

"To the collier in Dumbarton when he embarked by sea, 3 shillings."

D.M.S. The above quotations suggest that James IV instigated a survey after his visit.

### 1633.

James Campbell, Lord Kintyre, granted charter to Archibald McDonald of Sanda.

### 1669.

On April 9 1669, Archiblad Campbell, 9th Earl of Argyll, re-disposed in feu to Ronald McDonald of Sanda, the old church lands of St. Ninian and Ballygrigan, reserving to himself 'all mines, minerals, coals and coal heughs that shall be found within the said lands, it being however lawful for the said Ronald to win coal for his own use."

The following Appendix gives list of Dukes of Argyll.

Fr. Webb According to the Hist.M.S.S. Of 12 Feb, 1626, Charles 1 following resignation of the lands of Kintyre into the hands of James VI, granted charter of said lands to James Campbell, son of Archibald, Earl of Argyll and his heirs under terms of the original charter granted by James VI to Argyll in 1507. Shortly afterwards James Campbell, half brother of Archibald, Lord Lorne, tried to sell the lands but failed.

**1670-76.**

D.C. From Baptismal Register Lowland Church. '....child born to John Maxwell, coal carrier.' '...Hugh Kirkland, oversman, daughter born 1682.'

**1678.**

MCK At this date the coal heughs and Salt Pans were tenanted by John Campbell, Chamberlain to Earl of Argyll and Alex. Forrester, farmer Knockrioch. Tenancy cost £1333. 6. 8. Scots plus 20 bolls of salt.

**1694.**

History of clan Campbell Vol 1 pa64 "...Jas. Stewart leased the Salt pans."

**1701.**

Extract from Town council of Campbeltown Minute books, Vol.1.

In the Table of Dues ordained by the Town council at their meeting on 30 April,1701 the following item occurs under the heading "Shoar dewes" :- "Each barrel Coalls Imported 00-00-04d". The word 'Imported' is not in the same handwriting as the rest of the entry and appears to have been added later, but is probably of a very early date.

**1706.**

Petition raised by Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll re life rent of the coal heughs which had been allowed to fall into ruins.

**1735.**

Extract from the Town Council of Campbeltown Minute Books, Vol1 31.5.1735

'Conveened in Council, Provost Both Baillies Dean (of) Guild Deacon Conveener Water Baillies Two Late Baillies John Arnott Matthew Raeburn James Miller Donald Clark Isaac Berrenger John Fleming late Dean of Guild.

( The two first Minutes of this Meeting ordain dues to be paid on goods brought by land or water from the Point of Carradale to the North and the island of Sanda to the South.)

The third minute is as follows :- 'The Same Day That They Enact that there shall be pd to all Carriers for each Ticket of Coalls brought to the town from Drumlemmill two pence from the fifteenth of May to the first of November and from the first of November to the fifteenth of May two pence half penny for Carrying of each Ticket, And yet upon Examination before any of the Town magistrates, every carrier or Cadger Shall be obliged to Carry coalls & answer to the Leidges at the above rates under the penalty of three Merks Scots toties quoties, And that each Carrier bringing in less yn a Ticket of Coalls and exacting fees for'd, or Selling the Same as a Ticket, Shall be fined in the like sum of Two pounds Scots. Hugh Montgomerie.

( note: Hugh Montgomerie had been Provost for 1734 and was continued for 1735).

1749.

The information herein was obtained from letters in the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. Saltearn Papers Box. 407.

Sir,

You know how the Coalls in Kintyre were wrought since the Duchess of Argyll's death ( d.7.5.1735.) until they came to Machrihanish's hands at Martinmas 1743, and then he wrought them to the rise level free, but the Coalls were bad and small, and had that in possession till Mart. 1746, when all was run out since which time they were waste, and now the pans and farm houses are entirely ruinous; Mr David Dove did survey them and the ground between them and Campbeltown twice, and summer 1745 he was employed to come to Kintyre to make trial for Coalles nearer Campbeltown, the said summer one Mr Rae who designed himself Coall surveyor at Dunfermling, came to this Country on his way for Ireland; I employed him for two days to view the Coalles and the grounds near Campbeltown, he made report that there was Coalles enough to the dip below where they were commonly wrought towards Lochsanish but was afraid they could not be wrought without a fire or wind engine to draw the water; and that there was good grounds to believe that there were Coalles near Campbeltown in several places, particularly in Knockrioch fold, where he fixed upon a spot for making a trial; this is the report you mentioned in your letter, and which was given up to the Sheriff at time of accounting, which must be in his hands or among vouchers for said year, I wrote this to Mr Dove and he ordered me to gather hands and begin trial at the said place, and endeavour to come to the rock before he came here, which I accordingly did by employing eight men for a fortnight in sinking, who went eighteen or twenty feet deep through clay and came upon a bed of small running sand with a good quantity of water, so that whatever was cleared in the daytime, was in great measure filled with sand in the night time the two men were kept constantly at work drawing the water with buckets. Mr Dove came the length of Levenside upon his way where he fell sick and was carried back to Edinburgh, which when I heard I stopped work, but have made no charge yet for this piece of trial, the Rebellion broke out soon thereafter, which put a stop to all business, you know in 1747 Mr Adam was employed to come here next spring to make search, which was prevented by his death. In 1745 Stonefield sent to me some queries that were sent from Edinburgh relating to said Coalles, a copy of which queries and answers then returned I send you herewith, for my Lord Milton's perusal having no more to add I remain, Your humble servant,

Arch. Campbell

Campbeltown 11 September 1749.

I have sent by Stonefield a list of the Councillors of Campbeltown that he and Ugadale might get a 'lease' from his Grace for Magistrates for next Michaelmass, so pray put both in mind of it that it may not be neglected, for I expect we'll meet with opposition this year,'

D.M.S. In the queries and answers letter mentioned above I have noted particularly answer 13 which states:- 'The men are working at present very near the top and in some places within two fathoms of the surface and in the deepest place not above four fathoms, so as the roof is become bad some of it must fall down, but all the land floods may be intercepted by drains above the ground. A collier while the wall was right would cut about 40 tickets round coal for sale and 30 tickets small coal for the pans weekly if close at work. The Panns be a mile from the pit and do for ordinary make about 30 Bolls or 120 Bushells of salt weekly and consumes about 400 tickets of small coal when kept close going but they must be frequently idle especially in winter by reason of fresh water mixed with the brine and bad weather to carry the coals to them.

1752.

Salter Collection in National Library, Edinburgh.

Campbeltown, 13 November 1752. Report touching the Coall in Kintyre to his Grace, Duke of Argyll. That Baillies Wm. McKinlay, Wm. Finlay, Arch. Fleming, Edw. Orr and Dav. Watson, John Campbell, Thos. Fraser subscribers have for several years been concerned in the Coall works and it consists with their knowledge that there is a large body of Coalls still extant in the grounds of Drumlemill where it was formerly wrought, which coal is six feet and a half thick of a free sufficient working Coall, and the work could in the summer season be easily kept free of water by a Gin, but in the winter time it was with difficulty and a great expense the Gin could keep it free.

That the said John Campbell who had oversight of the late Duchess of Argyll's works saw three several shanks made in different places betweixt the wrought Coall and the Sea in each of which was found a body of Coall of the same thickness with the wrought Coall. The last of which shanks near the sea being above a mile distance from the wrought Coall in Drumlemill grounds and he always observed the Coall dip from the shanks to the North east keeping the same thickness, which facts all the Colliers here can attest.

The above named persons are of the opinion that if the springs and rivulets in the hills above the Coall works upon the lands of Kilchivan belonging to Mrs Forrester, the lands of Tirgergus belonging to Torquell McNeil and the lands of Ballegregar (sic) belonging to his Grace were collected together into a (sic) dam or reservoir which might be done at small expense, these might afford a large quantity of water for driving the pumps, and keeping the coal free of water and if there should not be a sufficient quantity in that collection they are sure that if the two rivers joining at Bax can be brought to the Coall works it will be sufficient to keep a machine going all the year.....It was the received opinion for many years that there was another Coall of an extraordinary good quality under the wrought coals striking the same way, which coal was found accordingly by the deceased Neil McNeil of Machryhanish and part of it made use of by the above named Baillie Watson for his distillery who says they are greatly superior to the other coall and several of the other subscribers saw the said under wrought coall.

The people here have not the least doubt that if there was once a sufficient coall work a company may be easily got to take a lease of it from his Grace on reasonable terms and this the rather as Saltcoats coalls is like to give way and a much better harbour here than at Saltcoats Irvine or Air. Alex. Rowat and Dugald Stewart took a levell and found 27 feet of a fall from Drumlemill coall work to the sea.

Sic Subscribetier (as above plus) Wm. Buchanan, Jas. Spalding, Robert Fraser, Alex. Rowat, Dougald Stewart.

1760.

Samuel Mitchell, Wm. Mitchell and Wm. Orr got 38 years lease from Whits. 1760. Lease dated 3rd October 1759 and registered in Books of Session 12 Dec. 1763.

1765.

Extracts from three letters from the Letters Books, Custom House, Campbeltown.

25 September 1765. Letter from Mr James Duncanson, Collector to Mr. George Gardner, board of Customs, Edinburgh. Various matters in letter including this paragraph;- 'Mr McDowall of Crichen has now the sole management of our Salt works, he has been here twenty days past pushing hard for coals, he is a man of substance and is determined to execute his plan properly.'

25 November 1765 Letter from Board to Collector.

'Gentlemen, having received the Collector's letter of the 14th instant desiring an order upon another Collector to pay the salaries of the Salt officers at Campbeltown, and desiring to know whether the said officers are to be continued till the coal and Salt Works shall be set a going, we observe that the collector in his letter of the 14 May last informed us that the Salt Works were soon to be set to work, and that in his letter above referred to no mention is made as to the time of the said works being set to work. And therefore we direct you to enquiry and report to us as particularly and certainly as you can when the Salt Works will be worked.

We are, your Loving Friends,  
Basil Cochran, M.Cardonnel, Jas. Tuder,  
Custom Hou. Edinburgh. 25 November, 1765.

6 December 1765. Letter from Collector to Board.

'Honoured Sirs,

We received your honours letter directing us to enquire and report particularly when the Salt Works at Mary pans will be set a going. In last summer and harvest past Mr McDowall of Crichen made several trials for coals, and employed fifteen men for the purpose till the rainy season obliged him to give up work till Spring next, and then he is determined to Sett vigourously to work, and how soon the Coall is found the Salt will be Sett a going.

This is all the information we can with any certainty give your honours as to the time the Salt works can be worked.

The two Salt Officers are employed at the port when there is occasion for them. We have the honour to be with great respect,

Honours Sirs, J.D. W.B.  
(James Duncanson, Collector;  
William Buchanan, Controller.)

### 1766.

Extract from Letter Books, Custom House, Campbeltown.

7 January 1766. Entry states that Daniel Campbell, officer of the Salt Duty, is employed occasionally as a Landwaiter till the Salt Works shall be set a going.

### 1767.

21.3.1767 Scots Magazine Vol 29 Page 164

'A coal mine has been opened near Campbeltown.'

MCK. Such were the beginnings of the pit shaft at SKEYLOCH just on the March of east and West Drumlemble farms and on the edge of Loch Sannish.

-6-  
1768.

28 June. 1768 Board informed of death of Dan Campbell, extraordinary officer of Salt Duty. Since no salt being produced, no replacement necessary.

1771.

A.E.O. Two letters. (1) Remarks by Arch Campbell Chamberlain, on the Draft of the coal talk of Kintyre. (2) Memorandum by Succoth dealing with a new lease drawn up by Mr Burrel in 1771. In the course of the remarks it mentions that Mr McDowall the leasee takes over the liabilities of the former tacks men...the two Mitchell's and Orr.

Also mentioned...the Sheriff to have exemption from the coal rent for two years...he is now exempt in the same manner by his present tack for 13 years from the payment of £30....this indulgence has been enjoyed for 11 years of that time though the coalworks have never been properly set going and the Saltworks neglected and become ruinous.

D.M.S. It appears that McDowall, sought to extend his present lease for a further period with certain alterations. The Chamberlain advised the Earl against alterations in favour of McDowall.

A further letter by Succoth gives the names of the previous lessees as Wm.Orr, Sam Mitchell and Wm.Mitchell and also mentions that in a letter of 1765 Wm.Orr supposes himself to be the then only surviving lessee.

1773.

A.E.O. 'Chas McDowall, advocate' got lease for 25 years. (I.e.to 1798 but he dies 11 September 1791)

A.E.O. A number of a/c's shewing payment to charters for carrying coal.  
Mr James Jack referred to as Overseer of Coals. (3 loads - 1 cwt)

McK In that year McDowall got Jas. Watt to survey the route for a canal to Campbletown. The coal at this time being taken by pack pony or cart by a road that ran along the foothills and joined the Southend road at Knocknaha. cartloads by Town Council Regs.had to be three to the ton. Cartage was 4d.and coal 6/8d per ton.

1774.

Customs Book. The Collector reported to the Board that on 24 December, Mr Dugald Campbell, Surveyor, had siezed a small open boat with about two tons of coal aboard. The boat was lying at Ardpatrick. The owner pleads he did not know that a Custom House docket was required....Coal had been shipped at Mary pans about a mile from the Coalworks.

30.1.1774 Petition to the Board on behalf of Dougall Buchanan late Salt Watchman for about 14 years till 5.1.1774 when job ceased, on account of poverty given job as tides man.

1783.

Town Council Minute Book. 3.6.1783 Town Council apply for an interdict against Chas. McDowall who had begun to cut a canal next Mill dam.



-7-  
1785.

A.E.O. Petition from Jas.and Wm. Ryburn and John Wilson tenants in Drumlemble re damages to houses and land by McDowall's Coalworks, to Dugald Campbell, Chamberlain.

1788.

A.E.O. Output details May 1788-89. 31,418 loads @ 6 1/2d.  
J.Christie, manager.

1789.

A.E.O. Output details May 1789-90. 40,987loads @ 6 1/2d.  
J.Christie, Manager.

1791.

A.E.O. Output details May 1790-91 34,937 loads. J.Christie, Manager

2.7.1791. Letter from John Christie to Humphry Graham,esq.at Limecraigs.

Sir,

The precise stock on hand at 26th May 1790 was 6,502 loads which I apprehend will in a great measure account for the surplus of sales in the last year above the outputs and as Mr. McDowall paid for this in a former a/c I think it will be unfair to cause him pay for them this year.

N.B. John Christie was overseer to the heirs of Chas. McDowall who died 1791.

Attested a/c of coals wrought for the year ending Whit. 1791.

38,770 loads at 6 1/2d                      £1050. 0. 5d  
1/10 of above                                105. 0. 01/2d

(Sgd). John Christie.

1792.

3rd Examination of the Muniments at Inveraray Castle, by Sir Jas. Ferguson.  
Feb. 25th-Mar.4th 1950 No.29. P28.

List of inhabitants upon the Duke of Argyll's estate in KINTYRE.

<u>Place</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Coalhill	39	41	63	143
Drumlemble	26	34	26	86
Ballygreggan}				
Dailquhason}	<u>17</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>70</u>
Mary Pans}				
	82	99	118	299

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**1794.**

Output May 1794-95. 41,204 loads @6 1/2d. J.Christie overseer to late Mr. McDowall.

Old Statistical Account - Small Cartland 2/7 1/2 (3 to a ton)  
40 carts a day consumed in Campbeltown.

**1796.**

Output May 1796-97 Lordship £45.16.3d

**1797.**

Output May 1797-98 Lordship £44. 6. 6d

22.11.1797 Letter from John Christie to Chamberlain.

'The persons who supplied the horses to the Coalwork refused to do so any longer as they considered they had been unfairly treated. He asks the Chamberlain to intervene and help settle the difference. The pit had been idle for six weeks due to working beam of the engine breaking and a new one had to be got from Greenock. The lease of the farm was due to expire at the term.

1797 Letter from Wm. Kerr to Duncan Stewart, Chamberlain advising him how to word an advert to obtain offers for the sinking of a new pit at Drumlemble. Pit to be about 45 ft. Steam engine to be erected to drive pump having 12" barrel. Pit to be sunk thro' sand and clay at surface which will require Creddling. Size of pit 11ft x 5 1/2 ft.

**1798.**

8.9.1798 Letter from Coal Coy to Jas. Ferries. Request for more farm lands to allow Colliers to have cows milk and grass for horses.

19.3.1798 Report of valuations;-

3 flat canal boats	£69
Water wheel etc.at coalwork	£169.11.0d

Report asked for by John Christie. A note of each of the valuations by Wm. Kerr dated 1802 disputes the valuations.

17.3.1798 Letter from Mr.Ferrier to Chamberlain to allow Coal Coy.to have grass of Ballyreggan farm at same rent as McDowall had paid.

Extract from "Agriculture in Argyll" - Rev. Dr. John Smith p.10

'4,500 tons coal per annum used in Campbeltown '

A.E.O. 22. 3. 1798. Letter from Peter Clark, farmer, tenant of West Drumlemble farm, anent giving up farm to Mr. McDowall and moving to Ballyreggan.

Letter from Chamberlain to Mr Ferrier giving details of change of tenancy.  
Mentioned:- The Coy.not to raise the price to more than 7 1/2d

1799.

13.12.1799. Letter from Mr. Ferrier to Coal Coy.refusing to let them have any more farm land.

(From a letter dated 14.3.1851 A.E.O., New lease was made from 17908-1836)

A.E.O. Details of cash paid Coal Coy. as 3rd and 4th calls upon the Dukes 5 shares....price of coals sent to Inveraray....deduction allowed the Coal Coy. of rent of canal £154.5.3 6/12d. the coals were sent to Inveraray in 'Susanna'....Custom house charge on shipment 15s. 4 6/12d

1800.

By cash paid for 331 tickets of coals sent to Inveraray per the sloop 'Favorite'.

McEwen, master per receipt No.5	£13. 9. 6.
Freight and Custom charges	9. 16. 11 6/12d
	<hr/>
	23. 5. 5 6/12d
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By cash to Donald Campbell of Barbrecks and others for damages sustained by them by cutting the canal thro' their properties £57. 0. 1 6/12d.

1801.

A.E.O Letter from Wm. Kerr, manager to Duncan Stewart, Esq.

'I am desired by the Coal Coy.to acknowledge yours of the 16th Curt.in which they observe that they are charged 9d per load from Whits 1800- Whits 1801, whereas by the minute all coals for export were reduced to 6d preload at the Pitmouth, accordingly the Coal a/c for the said year should be;-

37,489 loads for Home consumption @ 9d	£1405. 16. 9
5,298 loads for export @ 6d	132. 9. 0
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	1538. 5. 9
His Grace the Duke of Argyll 1/10 thereof	153. 19. 6
Rent of Canal	60. 0. 0.
Rent of farm	65. 6. 8
	<hr/>
Total due by Coal Coy.	279. 6. 2
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When the Coy's clerk returns form the Low Country he will pay the a/c, but funds are very low due to expense on new machinery and bringing in the moss...and increase in prices and a demand from Ireland should allow us to pay.

Hope for Duke's indulgence.

(Sgd) Wm. Kerr, Manager.

**1801.**

A.E.O. By cash, paid Andrew Ralston, clerk to Coal Coy. £50 Duke's 5th call upon 5 shares.

Further letters show pits were having troubles with faults - the Coy were being sued for damages by farmers along the Canal route - the partners were split about changing the Manager.

**1802.**

A.E.O. At Campbeltown 13th Dec. 1802. The following members of the Coal Coy. having convened at the desire of Duncan Stewart, Esq. Chamberlain of Kintyre, Messrs. Wm. Harvey, Jr., Dan. Clerk, Wm. Kerr, John Dunlop, Jas. Andrew, Allan Anderson and Arch. Galbraith.

The said D. Stewart, Esq., having laid a letter of the 29th Nov. 1802 from Jas. Ferrier, Esq. the Duke of Argyll's Commissioner before the meeting relative to complaints by the tenants of Tonrioch and Moy of the Company's neglecting to repair Bridges and Aqueducts of the Coal Canal...suggestion was made that Coal Coy carry out necessary repairs and memorial be prepared to decide whether Coy or Duke responsible for expense.

A.E.O. By cash per Canal damages £16. 10. 6d.

**1803.**

A.E.O. By Duke's proportion of the Camp. Coal. Coys. advance payment of their debt at £10 per share (being the 6th call on his Grace) paid their clerk £50.

By cash paid Coal Coy. a premium on improvements of barren land £2. 13. 4d.

**1804.**

A.E.O. Letter from the Coal Coy. to Capt. D. Stewart, Chamberlain.

'In the tack granted to us by His Grace the Duke of Argyll of the West division of Drumlemble and the Coalworks thereon for 38 years from Whits.1798 there is a clause giving us liberty to renounce the said tack at the end of the first seven years on giving at least a years previous premonition. It is therefore now time for us to determine whether or not to take advantage of this liberty previous to which we beg leave to represent to the Duke through you that (during the past 6 years we have sunk the new pits, erected a new fire engine etc. which has cost £3000.

We have been unfortunate principally owing to the pits being sunk in the wrong place...to have any success further expenditure on new plans of operation are necessary...a further clause in the lease to allow a break after five years is requested...the Duke has been paid sufficient lordship as would about pay advance as a partner...we are confident Duke will continue to patronise.)

Sg. Dd. Ferguson; John Campbell Jnr; John Dunlop; Wm. Harvey Jnr; James Andrew.

A.E.O. Output 1804-5. 28,294 loads less 5,596 for pumping engine and 382 for workers.

Net loads for sale 22,316 loads @ 9d.

(Sgd.) Jas. Hogg, Manager.

By cash paid yearly to farmers for damages by coal canal £14. 6. 10 6/12d.

**1805.**

A.E.O. Inventory of the Fire Engine, Machinery, Utensils, Houses and others at Coalworks :-

Steam engine with 34 inch cylinder and 14 feet diam. boiler five years and 9 months worn, 20 fms. 10 inch dia, pumps in the pit, six spare ones on the hill whole and three broken ones, with three ground ropes £251.

The full inventory includes houses, canal boats etc. at a total value of £697. 3. 4d. and is binding on all the partners viz:- Daniel Clerk, John Campbell, Archd. Galbraith, And. Ralston, Wm. Harvey Jnr, Jas. Harvey Baker, John Dunlop, James Andrew, James Park, David Fergusson, Donald Munro, Allan Anderson, Wm. Watson Jnr, and James Harvey all of Campbeltown and Donald Campbell tacksman of Knockrioch.

A.E.O. By cash paid to C.C.Coy, the ascertained value of Deficiencies on the Drumlemble Coalworks recovered by His Grace from the former lessee, £233. 10. 10d.

The Coal Coy. disputes the amount of deficiencies.

By cash paid Wm. Kerr late Overseer at Coalworks for report on state of the Coalworks and finding depth of Durry Loch £6. 10. 6d.

**1806.**

A.E.O. Letters indicate Coal Coy. having troubles with water entering workings - Mr. Hogg manager suggested building dams.

**1807.**

A.E.O. Coal Coy. go Duke to prohibit cutting peats to help promote coal sales.

Duke paid £60 (£12 per share) as his proportion of cost of wreck of Swedish ship "Lars Johan", which Mr. Hogg, Manager, bought for £457. The ship was beached at Machrihanish.

**1809.**

A.E.O. Output May 1809-10. 33,808 loads  $1/10 @ 9 \frac{1}{2}d = £134. 1. 2d.$

(Sgd.) Jas. Hogg, Manager. on behalf of Duke, Colin Matheson.

**1810.**

A.E.O. Output from Whits 1810-11 - Lordship @  $9 \frac{1}{2}d$  per load £107. 16.  $1 \frac{3}{12}d$ . A/c of Augmentations and Deductions showing the difference between the Abstract of Rental 1810 and the sums actually received by the Chamberlain.

Coalworks. The  $1/10$ th part of gross output from Whits 1819 to Whits 1811 @  $9 \frac{1}{2}d$  per load is £107. 16.  $1 \frac{3}{12}d$ . from which deduct the stated rent of £30.

Coal Canal. The rent per lease is stated at £100 but the rent payable by the Coal Coy. for the year ending Whits 1811 on account of gross output of coals amounting to 30,000 loads is £80. 4.  $3 \frac{3}{12}d$ .

**1811.**

A.E.O. Letter dated 27.3.1811 from Committee of Coal Coy. to Dunc. Stewart.

'Sir, We last night received the enclosed report from Mr. Hogg, Manager, respecting the appearance of a Crush taking place among the pillars in the old workings. We consider it our duty to inform you as it may affect the Dukes interests.'

(Sgd) Wm. Watson Jr.; Allan Anderson; Jas. Andrew; Wm. Harvey Jr; Committee of Coal Coy.

Letter dated 7.10.1811 to Dunc. Stewart.

'We beg to remind you that on 22nd April we applied for a third breach of five or seven years in the lease of the Coalworks...use your good offices to get seven years from Whits 1812.

(Sgd) Arch. Galbraith; Jas. Andrew; Wm. Watson; Allen Anderson.

**1812.**

A.E.O. Output - 15,785 loads. 1/10 @ 1/2 1/2d. Sgd. Jas. Hogg, Manager.

**1815.**

A.E.O. Permission granted Coal Coy. to extend Coalree.

From an entry in Customs Letter Books. Coals supplied to Surveyors Waterhouse were measured and priced at:-

Barrels of Coal was 1/6 part of a ton.

Cart of Coals was 1/3 part of a ton.

Price of Coals 1/6d per barrel.

Cartage charge on 2 barrels was 3d.

4 barrels 4d.

4 carts was 1/-d.

**1826.**

A.E.O. Coal output May 1825-26. Gross loads 19,250 each equal to 1 1/2 loads of the measure referred to in the Company's lease. 1/10 part thereof @ 1/3d for 8,552 loads and 1/6d per load for the remainder being £132. 19. 5d. Sgd. Jas. Hogg, Manager.

**1827.**

A.E.O. Output May 1826-27. 17,819 loads.

**1828.**

A.E.O. Output 1827-28. 24,838 loads.

**1829.**

A.E.O. Output 1828-29. 21,056 loads (Sgd) Jas Howie, Manager

-13-

**1830.**

A.E.O. Output 1829-30, 22,263 loads.

**1831.**

A.E.O. Output 1830-31. 28,760 loads. 3,747 @ 1/-, remainder @ 1/2d, = £164. 12. 10d. Sgd. Jas Howie.

**1832.**

A.E.O. Output 1831-32. 23,073 loads.

**1833.**

A.E.O. Output 1832-33. 23,250 loads.

**1834.**

A.E.O. Output 1833-34. 25,743 loads.

**1835.**

A.E.O. Output 1834-35. 14,497 loads. There has been no coal put out since 14th Feb. 1835 in consequence of the pit being filled with water. Sgd. Howie, Manager.

'Smith's views of Campbeltown' - 10,950 tons coal used in Campbeltown.

**1836.**

A.E.O. Output . 14,106 loads. In consequence of the pit being flooded and troubles in the work, no coal was put out till 7th June. Sg. Jas. Howie.

**1837.**

A.E.O. Output 1836-37. 20,711 loads. That in consequence of the colliers having struck work unless they were paid on gross output, it became unnecessary from 19th Nov. last to continue to record the number of loads per fourteen day period.

A.E.O. Excerpt from the Chamberlain's report of Nov. 1837 relative to the Lordship "by lease the Coy are bound to pay annually £30 or at the option of the Duke 1/10 part of the gross produce...at the time of the lease the pit was situated at the end of the Canal and near the Main Road. The new pit is situated 627 yards below the Canal and that additional distance from the Main Road and connected to it by a railway, and upon the side of the Canal is a Depot...follows a report querying the dues being paid.

**1838.**

A.E.O. Output 1837-38. 33,034 loads.

**1839.**

A.E.O. Output Whits 1839 to Mart. 1839- 19,853 loads.

Lordship 1,985 @1/3d = £124.1.7 1/2d.

**1840.**

A.E.O. Memorial from the Coal Coy. to Duke.

'The memorialists as Tacksmen of the Drumlemble Colliery...suffering great loss even after sinking new pit at great expense are deeply in debt...tried exporting to Ireland but due to inferior quality nett returns only 4/4d per ton or 1/11d under pithead price of 6/3d at which rate Lordship is paid...beg for rebate. (Sgd) G. Harvey.

**1841.**

A.E.O. Memorial to Duke seeking permission to sub-let the farm of Drumlemble as Manager has died and his successor may not have knowledge of farming. The farm was leased along with the Coalworks.

**1842.**

A.E.O. Memorial from Coal Coy. to Duke,

(In brief.)

The Committee operating the put are inexperienced and disagree frequently and ask the Duke to permit them to sublet to a Manager who feels he can get better results (Sgd. G. Harvey)

Court of Session case 1842 - over a quarry - Jas. Taylor v. D. Galbraith.

Opinion cited Jas. Howie, Manager of Campbeltown Coal Coy. who died suddenly in 1841. Had been manager for many years.

**1843.**

N.S.A. Nov. 1843. The coal is rather inferior quality not suitable for the distillers who import 30 tons per day from Ayrshire...the Coalwork had always been operated by a Company, but in the present year was let to a single tacksman.

A.E.O. Duke replies memorial of 14.12.1842 on 27.2.1843.

(In brief) Duke agrees to sublet but on the express understanding that Coy. is bound to conditions of lease and if any one year the output falls so that the Lordship is under £230 the Duke shall claim the average rate paid during 1837-1843.

**1844.**

A.E.O. Memo. of visit to Drumlemble Coalworks 7th Dec. 1844.

'We this day visited the Coalworks and found that the Coy. or their sub-tenant had opened a new seam of about 6 to 7 feet of coal...the pit was carefully kept. (Sgd.) John L. Stewart. Chas. Munro.

**1846.**

A.E.O. Robert Climie Surveyor - A/c £15. 3. 7d. for making plans of Drumlemble Coalwork.

Output May 1846-47. 26,305 loads. Colliers still continue to be paid on gross output. (Sgd.) David Lees, Manager.



**1847.**

A.E.O. Memorial of the Campbeltown Coal Coy. to the Duke.

'That the consequence of the main seam in 1845 cropped out to the rise and being bounded on the West by a 45 feet downthrow dyke and no coal having been found at a downthrow dyke to the East, the pit was not in order...Application to remove stoops and when this was granted new pit considerably to the dip was started, but after spending £250, hard rock stopped the sinking...search then made by boring but failed...The manager drove a mine from old pit for removal of pillars and struck seam 3'8" for which we ask permission to work Longwell.'

Duke gave permission while seam comes no nearer than 20 fms from surface.

**1848.**

A.E.O. Lordship 1847-48. £216. 8. 9d.

**1850.**

A.E.O. Output May 1849-50. 33,117 loads. (Sgd.) David Lees, Manager.

**1851.**

A.E.O Letter to Jas. Dalgleish, W.S. Edinburgh from J.L. Stewart Chamberlain, dated 14.3.1851.

'I beg to return your claim for Daniel M. Taggart Esq. of Kilkivan. Copy minute of reference between the Coal Coy and the tenant of Kilkivan in 1841...Copy away by the referees Goold & Smith...Copy of the discharge by John Mitchell to the Coal Coy.

I likewise enclose the lease of the Coal Coy. commencing 1798 and ending 1836. I likewise enclose Climie's plan showing fit falls.

**1853.**

A.E.O. J.L. Stewart's Letterbook.

pg. 80. (1) Letter to John Geddes Esq. Min.Eng. Edinburgh - 'On receipt of your report recommending operations by the Duke for the exploring of the coal field...the Duke requests an estimate of the cost of borings.

pg. 110 (2) To John Gilroy, New Cumnock Ironworks - 'offer to sell part of Clay Mill as scrap metal.

D.M.S. A clay mill making tiles etc. was sited near Loch Sannish and presumably used coal.

p. 118 (3) To John Geddes Esq. M.E - 'complaining about the a/c of Hair, the borer...the men not working a full day.

p. 135 (4) To Jas. Dalgleish W.S. Edinburgh 31.6.1854...request for a more energetic borer than Hair. 'we are hardly justified in allowing matters to remain as they are when the lease so soon expires of the workings'

p. 138 (5) To Den M.Taggart of Kilkivan...request for payment of part of surveyors fee for measuring pit falls. The Coal Coy. had paid their portion.

p. 140 (6) To Jas. Dalgelish Esq. W.S. ... 'I do not think it would be attended with any good advertising the Coalworks for let as no person of Capital would ever take it in its present unexplored state...more particularly as on Friday last I succeeded in running a mine to the Parrot Coal which will probably last for a year or more...I talked with Mr. Watson the Banker and he agreed that nobody would buy but as representing the Coal Coy. he saw no objection to the Duke advertising.'

p. 155 (7) 20th Oct. 1854 to Mr. Peter Steven, Manager, Nitshill Colliery, Glasgow...'In answer to your favour of the 18th I beg to inform you that we cannot say what extent of acres are in the coalfield. All the coal in this County belongs to the Duke of Argyll and it is very probable whoever becomes tenant will have the right of sinking Pits wherever he thinks fit in the neighbourhood of Campbeltown. The present pit is from 40 to 45 fathoms deep and the field is nearly exhausted. The present Company have a lease of the farm along with the pit and keep up the Colliers houses...There is likewise a canal and the selling price at Campbeltown is from 9/- to 9/6d per ton. The output varies from 20 to 45,000 loads, five loads make more than the ton. There is a capital sale for the coals...the Coy at this moment can sell more than they put out...the quality is by no means first rate but it answers the Distillers other needs.

There are several parties anxious to get it and if you intend to become a candidate you cannot be in the ground soon enough.

p. 156 (8) 25th Oct. Letter to Vulcan Foundry, Ayr, requesting engineer to see a steer pump pumping potale up Tomaig. From previous letters this pump had been transferred from the Coalworks. A number of letter re the difficulties experienced in getting the pump to work satisfactorily follow.

p. 175 (9) To Mr. John Galloway, Hurlford, Kilmarnock...an order for 40 tons of the best Hurlford coal...query as to price of house coal...also query about fire coal or chadds...a fine coal with the gum out of it and suitable for steam engineer.

#### 1854.

Output May 1853-54. 31,402 loads. This account is signed by Peter Watson, Clerk...Lees appears to have left the work and Watson is not sure if he is manager or not.

Continuing notes from J. L. Stewart's Letterbook.

p. 177 (10) 26th Dec. 1854 to Jas. Dalgelish, Esq...'Perhaps Mr. Geddes will have informed you are this that out boring operations appear to have come to nothing...at all events one of the bores will have to be relinquished. In the meantime the Coy are working out of the Parrot or I should say a corner of the Parrot to which they ran a mine, but this will not last them long, - they may however run a short mine to another corner of the Parrot which will give coal nearly to Whitsun next.

The Water-way to the bottom of the put is nine feet under the present drawing road and by mining direct North we would arrive upon the Main Seam of coal say 7 feet to the dip - In running this mine however, two months would expire or perhaps three and not only would this take most of out mens time up but the cost would amount to from £40 - £60 more than we could expect to realise from the operations during the two months of our lease still to run.

It would be advisable even should the bores prove successful to the dip, to keep the present working free of water - and that can only be done by having coal sufficient to keep the engine going - I have had a talk with Mr. Peter Watson, the Clerk to the Coalwork on the subject and he appears willing to pay 1/5th of the cost of driving this mine if the Duke pays 4/5ths.'

If you would be as kind as call on Mr. Geddes you can discuss the matter and suggest what the Duke should do. I would like your answer soon as there is a Company meeting on 6th proxima.

p. 199 (11) To Mr. Peter Watson, Clerk to the Coy...Statement of valuation prepared by Mr. Dalgleish the Duke of Argyll's agent...Machinery, £831, Houses £807. Amount due from Duke £457.

'From Mr. Dalgleish - I am led to believe that the Duke will not offer a farthing more and as a partner in the company I consider the offer fair - Will you call a meeting of the Coy to consider the offer so that I can let the colliers know whether the works are to carry on or not - they are now almost starving. - I send the valuations to give to your brother as I will not be at the meeting.

**1855.**

p. 201 (12) 3.7.1855. To R. Stewart of Drumore. 'I am desired to intimate that the Duke intends to discontinue the Canal at Whitsun 1856.'

p.208 (13) 25.8.1855 To the Duke. 'I have a letter from Mr. Dalgleish mentioning correspondence with your Grace re a new tenant for the Coalwork...if the new tenant agrees to sink a new shaft, Mr. Watson and I shall be very glad...but if not Mr. Watson will consider himself harshly dealt with.'

p. 209 (14) 5.9.1855 To Jas. Dalgleish. 'I beg to forward lease between the Duke, Mr. Watson and myself together with valuation of machinery and houses at Campbeltown Colliery. John Baxter who superintends at the Coalwork says present pit is about exhausted. A new shaft will require to be sunk either by landlord or tenant...it is strange that new tenant has never been here.'

p.216 (15) 2.10.1855 To Messrs. Steven, Crookedholm, Kilmarnock. 'Not having heard from you or Mr. Dalgleish since you were here about the lease of the Coalwork...it is now time to inform Mr. Watson and me about any unsold coal in stock at Martinmas...of we will sell ourselves.'

p.219 (16) 23.10.1855 To Mr. Dalgleish. 'I have your proposal in regard to deepening the present pit at Drumlemble. I consider the risk very great as a former manager, Mr. Howie a good many years ago bored but had to plug up due to the hardness and overflow of water - Mr. Geddes made Hair try the same thing and he also failed. Since sinking the pit may fail you may feel it prudent to bind the tenant to sink elsewhere if necessary.

I do not think it is in the Duke's interest to continue the Canal...£30 is paid annually to tenants for damages and this will increase. The Duke's lands are much injured by the canal and the expense of maintaining it is greater than its value. The new tenant will do as the last tenant, Mr. Lees, and deduct the maintenance costs from the Royalties.

A.E.O. A/c May 1834-1855 - 26,171 loads. Sgd. Peter Watson, Clerk.

A/c July 1st - 10th Nov 1855 - 10,907 loads @ 1/7 £863. 9. 0.

1/10th thereof £86. 6. 0.

Sgd. - I Peter Watson, Clerk to Messrs. Stewart & Watson at Drumlemble.

p.221 (17) 9.11.1855 To Jas. Dalgelish W.S. 'I have your letter stating that Mr. Steven has declined to become tenant. Mr. Watson and I feel that we would lose by continuing the work as recently we increased the colliers wages to get a good output. I have placed the manager Mr. Baxter in charge of

my farms at Tomaig and Glenhervie but suggest leaving the undermanager, engineer and pitheadman to keep all in order and to raise coal for the use of the pumping engine.

p.223 (18) 13.11.1855 To Jas. Dalgleish W.S. 'Yesterday Mr. Watson and I took an inventory of the Coalwork and find everything in order, but one rope which needs replaced. The boats are in good order having cost £15 for repairs. The oncost per week for keeping the pit clear will cost £7. Undermanager £1. - Engineer 14/6d - Pitheadman 12/. - Coal for engine £3.10.0. - Oil and tallow 3/- . - Leather 12/- . - Watchman 8/- . Over and above this the men get free coal the hewing of which will require to be paid for. The workmen are anxious to keep their houses on in the hope of the work restarting. They intend going to the Low Country meantime.

p.233 (19) 18.12.1855 To Mr. Smellie, Blackbraes Colliery, by Glasgow. 'I have your letter with offer for the Campbeltown Coalwork and have passed it to Mr. Dalgleish who will consult with Mr. Geddes and communicate with you.

p.234 (20) 19.12.1855 To Jas. Dalgleish -Estimate to sink 5 fathoms deeper in pit. New winding engine £80. - Water engine outlay £30 - Redding out pit bottom £23 - wooden cistern and repairs to pumps £45 - Shanking £40 - sinking £112. 8. 0 - Wood for air course £6. 6. 0 - Repair wood in shank £65. Total £422. 14. 0

#### 1856

18th Nov. 1856. Estimates by D. Mackay of £112. 8. 0 for levelling and filling of canal in Moy lands.

#### 1857

Sale of farms - purchaser to fill in canal.

#### 1858

A.E.O. 16th Sept. 1858. Letter from J.L. Stewart to the Duke.

"...I beg to state that the boring ordered by Mr. Geddes was proceeded with, he having put down bores in several places and if I recollect well to a depth of 360 feet. In that very deep bore he met with several seams of coal, two of them workable particularly the lowest, but the depth was so great, the quality of the coal so inferior and altogether the expense so enormous, that no party was willing to undertake the work unless perhaps the proprietor would be willing to go into half the expense, which your Grace and Mr. Dalgleish thought imprudent. During this time only sufficient coal being worked to keep the pit clear of water. After we failed to find a tenant I reported that a mine could be driven to find an additional supply. The mine cost between £200 and £300 and only a few men were kept in employment...Demand is low, the tenants prefer buying coal outside. Future prospectus:- Another mind could be driven but the area is very faulted and the coal nearly exhausted from this pit.

I was fully aware of the crop out of the coal in Terfergus glen but I differ from Mr. Geddes that it would do to sink a shaft there. Different managers have tried this area and failed. The coal also crops out at Balloch and the last company were of the opinion that coal could be found there but boring proved unsuccessful. In my opinion unless your Grace is prepared to sink a new shaft, or to pay half of the cost on the site where Mr. Geddes found the workable seams. I doubt if the coal works could be let.

A.E.O. J.L. Stewarts statement of account in detail for year 31st Oct. 1858 to 1st Oct. 1859 - Loss £229. 3. 2 3/4d.

8th Sept. 1858. Letter to Duke from Duncan Ferguson. "The report of the coal borings is not in the office and the manager of the coalworks thinks that it must have remained in Mr. Dalgleish's possession, since his negotiation for letting the works to a Mr. Stevens in 1855. Mr Stewart is expected home next week.

15th Sept. 1858. L.J. Stewart to Duke. "The coal company made a loss on their working and would have lost £5000 had I not taken over the management of it. For my exertions they offered me a present which I refused. Mr. Wm. Watson and I held it for a year and we hope we have made a considerable profit but no accounts have been made up.

**1859.**

25th July, 1859. J.L. Stewart to Inspector of Mines.

Report of fatal accident. Donald Kerr with his son Alexander Kerr, Colliers signalled to be taken up the shaft at 7.00 AM in the morning. When about ten fathoms up the shaft Donald Kerr seems to have got entangled with a broken bell wire and dragged out of the bucket. He fell to the bottom and was killed.

31st Oct. 1858 - Oct. 1859. Full statement of income and expenditure for that year for Drumlemble Coal Work. LOSS £229. 3. 2 3/4d.

**1861.**

9th Feb. 1861. Letter from J. L. Stewart to the Duke.

'I find I cannot get coalwork to clear off its debt and I dread t is going deeper. I have today ordered the fortnightly warning to be given to the men and with your Grace's permission I will order the pumps, rails and engine to be brought up and the works closed. Perhaps it might be continued without loss for a month or two, but it is more likely to increase its debt. While we approach the old workings the danger is great and there is now very little coal to rise. May I request your Grace's answer soon so that I may employ the men raising the underground materials during the fortnight.'

**1863.**

A.H. 4.9.1863. We learn that Messrs. Smallie (sic) from the neighbourhood of Falkirk have taken a lease from his Grace the Duke of Argyll for the purpose of boring in the district for minerals. They have commenced operations behind the mansion house of Chiscan estate in search of coals.

A. H. 1.5.1863. News Note - Sale of the whole machinery, gearing etc. at Drumlemble Coal Pit.

**1866.**

No. 1 Kilkivan, is shown as a coal pit on 1866 Ordinance Survey Map with an engine house about 100 feet to the North of it. It is the only pit appearing on 1866 Ordinance Survey Map.

Gig Pit is not shown. It may have been abandoned prior to 1866 but the 1898 Map suggest a canal or railway connection to it, - obviously made after 1866.

**1868.**

A.H. There are several references which suggest a pit at Trodugal.

1st Feb. 1868. - Good house coal at Trodugal pit now selling at 7/6d per ton, tripping 4/6d, dross 2/6d. (No proprietor mentioned.)

**1870.**

A.E.O. 10.2.1870. - To Mr Wylie, Coal Agent, Troon from J.L. Stewart.

'I enclose cheque for £13. 11. 8d. for coals to Devar.'

**1872.**

Official List of Mines. - Drumlemble Colliery, Owners J. Smellie & Son

A.H. 6.4.1872. Adv. - To the Representative of Partners of the old Campbeltown Coal Coy - Stewart of Coll sole surviving partner...

A.H. Adv. Drumlemble Coal Prices.

The prices quoted in adverts each month show rise from 8/4d - 15/- per ton between 15.6.1872 - 28.12.1872.

**1873.**

A.H. Adv. dated 28th Dec. 1872. - Price of coal at Drumlemble 15/- ton. Quality - Local supply is increasing and quality improving. Last summer a cargo of Trodugal Coal shipped to Lorne got 1/- less than Troon coal and the buyer came over and offered to take full output. A cargo sold at Coleraine got 9d. more than Girvan Coal which is sold here at 3/6d more than our own.

A.H. 1st Feb. 1875. Reference to a cargo of Trodugal coal.

Cat. Plan. Abandoned Mines. Argyll & Campbeltown.

**1874.**

Drumlemble, Gig, Kilkivan, Trodugal, Gas 1874.

Kilkivan, Trodugal - Gas, Main, Nine feet underfoot. Several pits are mentioned as having been worked at various times and by a succession of tenants and companies, Kilkivan and Drumlemble appear to mean one or the other.

Gig Pit. On A.E.O. six inch tracing at West Drumlemble, shown as having worked Main seam N.E. and a little on South side of main road.

**1875.**

A.H. Price at Drumlemble pit 9/2d.

28th June, 1875. Argyll C.&C.C. share list will close 30th June.

Capital £50,000 in £5 shares. Provisional Directors - David Smellie, Drumlemble, Colliery proprietor and managing director. Prospectus states: - Drumlemble Colliery to be taken over by Argyll C. & C.C. It is at present working with two shafts sunk to the coal, but due to lack of capital has been unable to exploit the enormous resources. Known seams: - Carrel 2 ft, coal 6 ft. - Coal 9 ft., Coal 6 ft. Leasehold from the Duke is 40,000 acres for 31 years. Possible that more valuable seams lie at lower depths. 20 million tons already proved. It is proposed to sink a new shaft to the dip and run a railway from the Colliery to the harbour. Cost of carting to the docks is 2/6d per ton and by proposed rail 6d per ton. Estimated £30,000 to meet improvements. Boats bringing barley from France will take coal on return. The town has 8,000 inhabitants and 20 distilleries consuming 600 tons per week. The whole district consumes 1,700 tons per week. Coal brought in from Glasgow cost 6/- per ton more. There are 38 workmen's houses and a Manager's house included in the lease.

**1876.**

No.1 Kilkivan Pit. About a furlong down the West Machrihanish road, the workings are dated 1876.

D.&M. Agreement between the Duke and the Argyll C. & C.C. to make a railway from Drumlemble Colliery to Campbeltown.

C.&C. 6th May, 1876. Argyll C.&C.C. is in a flourishing condition. Locomotives and rails expected in June. Sinking a shaft has been completed and 9 feet and 6 feet seams reached. Miners row of houses being built at Drumlemble.

**1878.**

No. 2 Kilkivan. East of low Kilkivan farm, the workings are dated 1878-81. Worked S.E. to join the old Gig pit workings.

Wilson's Guide. Coal work at Kilkivan farm with the new railway from the works into the burgh carried on by the Argyll C.&C.C. David Smellie ex-proprietor now manager.

Kilkeevan Colliery No. 2 Pit. Extract from Mr. Alexander's Report for 1878.

'The pit at which the irruption took place is 27 fathoms deep and was suddenly filled to within 12 fathoms of the surface. The old workings, from which the water flowed, are of considerable extent, but have been abandoned for upwards of 50 years.

Referring to plan which exhibits the workings of two seams of coal, the first six feet seam, coloured blue, lies at 18 fathoms from the surface, and the lower of nine feet seam, coloured red, at 27 fathoms.

At the time of the accident the working was confined to the lower seam. The depth of surface overlying the stratified rocks, lying not far above the sea level, averages 54 ft. of which 40 is principally composed of sand.

Several dislocations traverse this part of the coalfield and the fracture or 'veise' is generally found filled with sand. In mining up to these fractures, or barring them there is frequently a partial discharge of water, which is looked upon as quite an ordinary occurrence.

In May last the place marked 'X' on plan when extended to the dislocation 'a a' relieved some pent-up water, to check which supports were immediately put to the roof and a rough dam constructed backed by a loose building. This had the desired effect of shutting off the water, and the place was supposed to be left in a secure state.

Nothing further was done until the 5th of July, when the Manager had occasion to be in or to pass near to the mine 'X' when he discovered water and sand passing from the front of the dam. On observing this, precautionary measures were taken which were completed before night.

No further discharge was observed up to the time of the disaster, which happened on the afternoon of the following day, 6th when the water which lay in the six feet seam found its way into the mine 'X' by the 'veise' of the dislocation 'a a'.

The pressure of the water, probably equal to 100 feet or thereby, forced away the obstruction at 'X', and made an opening down the veise of the dislocation 25ft. and 4ft. x 10ft. in which it must have rushed with considerable force.

The bottomer, who was employed at the bottom, was so suddenly overtaken that he did not escape and two of the miners working at 'B', the dip most part of the mine, were, I presume, instantly closed in, their bodies being afterwards found near to their working place.

Fortunately the work was nearly over for the day, and five workmen engaged at different parts of the mine escaped by the 'blind' pit.

The appliances for pumping the water and unwatering the mine were kept in constant operation, but the bottom was not reached until the 2nd September, when the body of the bottomer was found, and nearly four weeks elapsed before the bodies of the others were reached.

The works were conducted or guided by an old plan, which is now found to be in error at least 46 fathoms or rather the workings have been extended 46 fathoms beyond the limit shown upon the plan, where it is coloured yellow.

The existence of water in the old workings was well known but it was equally well known that it lay from 25 to 30 ft. above the seam being worked. Since the accident a mine has been driven to prove the actual position of the old waste. This is a very unusual accident, the displacement of at least 25ft. of material, 4ft. x 10ft. more or less consolidated, and could only have happened under special conditions.

The salutary provisions contained in Section 42 of the Statute, which provides that plans of abandoned mines shall be lodged with the Secretary of State within 3 months after the abandonment, will in future, tend to prevent such misfortune.'



**1879.**

A.E.O. 1st March, 1879. Letters to D. McGibbon regarding boring the extent of the field.

C.C. Adv. dated 26.7.1879. Reduction in price of coals. The Argyll Coal and Cannel Coy. Ltd. have now reduced the prices of their coals to the following: - House Coal, 6/8d per ton. 1 Cwt 4 1/2d or delivered in bags 6d. per Cwt.

A.H. 26.7.1879. News Note - A cargo of Drumlemble coals was shipped this week by the schooner 'Julie' for Denmark; several cargoes have been shipped this season for Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Prussia.

**1881.**

T.L.G. The railway was laid down in 1876 to connect Kilkivan pits with depot on West side of Campbeltown. In 1881 these pits became exhausted and the railway was extended to the Drumlemble pits half a mile further to the West.

D.M.S. - Drumlemble here, I presume, means Wimbleton.

Kerr says he was born on the day the Wimbleton Pit struck coal in June 1881. Whether it was sunk by Smellie or Galloway is uncertain as from adverts in the C.C. it appears the ownership passed from C. & C. C. to J. & L. Galloway between 1879 and 1884.

A.E.O. Letter dated 25th July 1881 from David McGibbon, Chamberlain to Messrs. J.L. Galloway.

'Having communicated to the Duke the terms of your offer to Mr. Smellie for a transfer of his lease of Drumlemble Colliery he is willing to agree to the transfer and to fix the rate for carriage of coal by the Railway to Campbeltown at 2/- per ton but otherwise in terms of lease.'

Kilkivan. Main or nine feet.

Letter to D. McGibbon recommending Messrs. J.L. Galloway as suitable tenants.

Wimbleton Pit. Argyll Colliery. Presumably it was No.1 shaft while No.2, the air shaft, had no name.

C.C. 2.7.1881. ...most of the houses were built by the Argyll Coal Coy. when their pit was opened in the district. The coal pits are distant about a mile from the village. One of them has been worked out and is now disused. The line of rails has not been extended yet to the new put but is expected to be done soon. The Company has between 30 and 40 men employed which is considerably less than that employed when No.1 pit was at its best.

A.H. 10.9.1881. John Smellie sells coal pit to J. & L. Galloway.

A.H. 5.11.1881. New seam of coal opened...a mile nearer sea than former one.

D.M.S. Probably Wimbleton.

**1883.**

Letter from Edinburgh Solicitors to D. McGibbon regarding responsibility for surface damage.

**1884.**

C.C. 2.11.1884. Adv. - Argyll Colliery coals 8/- per ton. J. & L. Galloway beg to intimate they are producing a first class quality coal...orders to be left at...(various shops named in town.)

**1888.**

A.E.O. Accounts Whits 1887-88 - 33,034 loads.

**1895.**

A.E.O. Statement of Income and Expenditure: -

May 1895 - 96. Profit £170. 8. 6d.

1896 - 97. Profit £298. 4. 3d.

9,235 tons valued at £3220. 13. 8 1/2d.

**1897.**

Prospectus published by Campbeltown Coal Co. formed to acquire the Argyll Colliery held by J. & L. Galloway. Duke agrees to extend lease for 30 years. Date of entry to be 1.11.1897. Colliery valued 10.1.1898. by Geddes. The Manager to be Gilbert McPherson. Assets taken over 1,300 tons coal, 100 tons fireclay, 4 1/2 miles railway, 2 locomotives and 18 wagons. Seam worked is the nine feet and local consumption estimated at 30,000 tons per year. A bed of fireclay has recently been opened up and it is proposed to mine fireclay during the season the distillers are idle.

A.E.O. Output and Lordship 16th May 1897 to 21st. Oct. 1897.

2,414 tons valued at £861. 10. 2d.

**1902.**

Wimbledon Pit. Argyll Colliery so called after local man won Wimbledon shooting competition.

T.G.L. Paper to Glasgow Assoc. of Students.

No.1 Shaft 5'6" x 11'6". No.2 Shaft 5'6" x 8'6".

Winder - Single cylinder 20" x 4 1/2 ft. stroke. Haulage engine - 15" x 2' stroke geared 4 1/2 to 1.

Two drums.

Rope taken down No.2 pit 10-12 hutobes per rake.

Electric balls and air driven haulage inbye.

Air compressors (1) 24" Steam cyl. 22" dia. 4' stroke. (2) Cpd. 16" x 17" steam cyls. twin 16" dia. stroke 2'.

Fan - Capell single inlet 8' x 2', 165rpm - 20,000 cu.ft. at 3/4' W.G.

Pumps - all underground. (1) High press, duplex double acting 14" cyls. 8 1/2" rams stroke 1 ft. (2) Same but condensing - 20" cyls. Steam expanded from (1) to (2).

Four air driven pumps all duplex double acting raised water 400 yds. with 170' vertical head.

Ventilation - When Kerr first started 'Cube' was in use.

**1905.**

A.E.O. 17.2.1905 and 2.3.1905. 'The Railway Agreement'. C. & C. C. were trying to get lease for undersea coal from the Crown - The Duke wanted a proviso that half of the coal used in pit boilers should be got from his property. Electricity introduced between 1905-06.

**1906.**

A.E.O. From 1906-08 considerable re-organisation - screens were erected by Dunlop the Railway manager necessitating new head frame as hutches had until then been run off at a scaffold only high enough to land them on railway bogies. One generator driven by a Belliss and Morcum vertical engine, the other by a Parson's turbine. A Sulzer pump was put in pit bottom and three M. & P. inbye. Total capacity 550g.

**1907.**

A.E.O. Agreements as to working of fireclay and removal of stoops under golf course.

**1909.**

A.E.O. Fixed rent raised to £300 and a royalty of 4d per ton levied.

**1911.**

A.E.O. Sept. 1911. Proposed arrangements for working undersea coal. Barrier to be left between undersea and landward coal. Workings not to come nearer than 50 fathoms to sea bed. Stoops to be of size approved by neutral mining engineer.

**1913.**

A.E.O. The undersea coal was worked as from April 1913.

**1914.**

A.E.O. May 1914. C.& C.C. give notice to give up lease as from Whits. 1915.

**1915.**

A.E.O. Circular letter sent out by Campbeltown Coal Coy. Ltd. :-

Dear Sir or Madam, We shall be glad if you can see your way to use the local coal in order to assist an industry which has suffered through the war. Nearly one third of our employees have gone to join the flag and those who remain have had very unsteady work through the present dislocation of trade. We trust therefore that you will support as far as you can, local trade, and so help in a practical way to carry out the policy recommended by the Government of keeping all industries going as usual.

Present prices – Selected coal 16/- per ton at depot. Screened 14/-. Nuts 10/-.

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**1917.**

29<sup>th</sup> May 1917. New company? Wm. Watson, Manager.

**1919.**

Sandstone abandoned.

**1921.**

During the strike this year the pit was flooded.

**1923.**

There were apparently new shareholders now.

**1925.**

Scottish Coalfields Report. – There was a fire in the Main seam and due to this main and underfoot were abandoned.

**1926.**

Duke brought action against CCC for arrears of rent. Action failed. Lease terminated Whits. 1927.

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**1927.**

Colliery Year Book. C.C.C. now consists of the Walkers and Kimber, Manager John Armstrong – 79 miners – output 25,000 tons.

**1928.**

June of this year Franco British Co. acquire Argyll Colliery.

C.C. 15.9.1928. At Town Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> Aug. Mr. Maisel asked that gas to be got from the proposed distillation plant be bought by the town.

C.C. 29.9.1928 \_From Br. Oil Trust – In a report to the shareholders – “The testing plant of the Aicher low temp. carbonisation process, which has been erected at the Campbeltown Colliery, has been in operation under the supervision of Mr. Aicher for the last fortnight and the results amply justify confidence.....tests gave yields of between 34 and a half and 74 gals. of crude oil per ton of coal. A large quantity of gas was obtained and a coke of exceptional merit.

**1929.**

Feb. 1929. A test of the coal – 2,350 cu. ft.gas per ton.

June 1929. Franco British re-emerged as Coal Carbonisation Trust. Prospectus mentioned carbonising 1,000 tons per day yielding 11 cwts. coke per ton. Kilkivan abandoned.

**1932.**

Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. Campbeltown and Machrihanish Light Railway to be wound up. (M. of T. order)

**1943.**

The Glasgow Iron & Steel Coy. granted a boring licence 2<sup>nd</sup>. Sept. 1943, to 11<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1944, (later extended to May 1945) to carry out exploratory bores to determine position of two proposed drifts.

**1945.**

Field acquired by Glasgow Iron & Steel Coy.

**1946.**

Following the results of boring, Glasgow Iron & Steel Co. started preparatory work in Feb. 1946 to drive two drifts.

C.C. 29.5.1946 Lady Lithgow, wife of Sir. Jas. Lithgow, yesterday officially declared open the new Colliery of the Glasgow Iron & Steel Co. Ltd. at Machrihanish. Mr. Frank Hodges, Chairman of the Company, speaking at the luncheon which followed spoke of the coming Nationalisation.

C.C. 25.5.1946 "Coal Mining in Kintyre" by a correspondent.....modern mining dates from the pit at Trodighal in 1847 which passed through various hands until a fire in the seam led to its abandonment in 1925. Its owners in 1890-1910 were the Galloways who laid the 27 inch light railway originally for coal, but after 1906 for passengers as well. A matter of interest is that the sandstone above the Main Coal seam was worked during the 1914-18 war for optical purposes and proved excellent material.

C.C. 15.6.1946 A coal mining undertaking by open cast methods which was being promoted by the Government at Machrihanish has now been abandoned. This decision is announced by the Directorate of Open Cast Prod. of the Min. of Fuel & Power in a letter to Mr. Thos. McKelvie, Town Clerk.

**1947.**

Nationalisation July 1947. When the National Coal Board took over in July 1947, the Main Mine had reached 150yds at 1 in 4 and the Companion Mine 103 yards at 1 in 2.5. Mr. John Williamson was appointed Manager and the Colliery operated as part of the Central West Area administered from Robertson Street, Glasgow.

C.C. 15.9.1947 Production proper has begun at Argyll Colliery which the N.C.B. took over from the Glasgow Iron & Steel Co. Ltd. 25 tons per day is being got and increased production is expected.

**1948.**

C.C. 28.2.1948 The "Courier" was officially informed yesterday that a meeting had taken place of Kintyre coal merchants at which it was intimated by Col. H.E. Whitehead, Regional Coal Officer for

Scotland, that supplies of Ayrshire coal which have been discharged at Campbeltown quay for over 100 years will cease this weekend and the area will be supplied from Argyll Colliery.

C.C. Messrs. J.B. Brodie & Coy, C.E. Glasgow, have surveyed between Machrihanish and Campbeltown for the purpose of laying a standard gauge railway for the N.C.B. The erection depends on N.C.B. future policy.

C.C. 6.11.1948 Campbeltown Dean of Guild Court on Wednesday passed plans for the erection of 100 Weir houses to be built by S.S.H.A. for N.C.B.

C.C. 13.11.1948. Town Council granted site for Stocking Yard.

N.C.B. Temporary Plant Project – Scheme suggested to use screening plant from Broomside Colliery for Argyll. – Loading plant at quay to be made up from spare plant at Cowdenbeath Workshops.

### 1949.

Mr. Filshill's Report June 1949. No. 2 West Parkfergus bore down 162 fms. Water in workings 320 g.p.m. Foundations for screening plant laid. Loading Plant at quay completed

Mr. Filshill's report Dec. 1949. No. 2 West Parkfergus bore stopped at 220 fms. Site fired for No. 3 Diamond bore on Aros Farm. Substation nearly completed. The portion of the coal bing which was on fire has been segregated and is being kept watered and under supervision. It was noted in places that oil was being distilled from the coal.

### 1950.

C.C.16.2.1950. The first shipment of coal from Argyll Colliery was undertaken on Tuesday when 250 tons of smalls was shipped to Belfast....a recently installed mechanical boom loader at the quay greatly facilitated the loading of the "Tannamore" of 270 tons gross.

C.C. 30.3.1950 Messrs. McEachren, coal merchants, informs us that on Monday the S.S. "Transig" had taken on 'bunkers'. This is the first ship to do so.

16.2.1950. Mr. Filshill. 150 tons per day present output. Screening plant completed. Sub-station nearly completed. Fan house and drift well forward. Manpower 143.

13.4.1950. Messrs. A.M. Ritchie, J. Park, R. Whyte, of N.C.B. Production. Mr. J. Kennedy and Capt. Cameron of John Kelly Ltd. Messrs. W. McLeod and J.W. Anderson, N.C.B. Marketing.

This party attended at the loading of the S.S. "Corteen" being the first 500 ton ship to be loaded. 537 tons dross and 15 tons bunkers in 5 and three quarter hours.

C.C. 6.7. 1950. 150 miners on strike on Wednesday....all Scotland on strike....2/- claim for oncost workers refused.

C.C. 13.7.1950. Although 60 pits in Scotland still on strike, Argyll decides to restart.

Glasgow Herald 3.8.1950.....an outline of progress and future development at Argyll Colliery given yesterday to the press by Mr. J. S. Filshill....since mining restarted in 1946, ten bores had been sunk....believed seams ran across almost flat basin to Western fringe of Campbeltown....a new mineral railway or aerial ropeway was being considered....output now 250 tons per day...between 1929 when the last pit closed down and 1946 when Argyll Colliery was started had been a period of inactivity.

J.S. Filshill. Glebe Street stocking ground came into operation on 25<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1950. Vacated 15<sup>th</sup> May 1954.

### 1951.

C.C. 5.4.1951. Special meeting of Town Council and representatives of C.I.S.W.O. decided to grant let of Bolgram St. Hall.

C.C. 26.7.1951. The average monthly shipments of Argyll Coal to Ireland is 1500-1800 tons.

C.C. 2.8.1951. A token strike of 240 miners at Argyll Colliery lasting 32 hours, ended on Tuesday night. Claim Mr. Williamson, manager, broke 5 day week agreement.

C.C. 1.11.1951. Emergency Air Service to be available at Renfrew to transport Coatbridge Rescue Brigade in emergency....announced by Sir P. Dollan at meeting of Scottish Advisory Council.

Mr. Filshill. 24.12.1951. Output low due to faults. Proposed Kilkivan coal development. 2 years before main mines can be driven to new area. Side dook area life 6 months. Pumping now 450-500gpm. New pump station and pumps required. Manpower 247. Aros Farm bore in difficult ground at 159 fms. Bore started 11.4.50 and to date cost £2,162, started 12 and three quarter inch dia. Workshops and garage completed. Pithead baths started 3.12.1951. Loading plant at quay has handled 129,563 tons. 10 lorries in use.

C.C. 15.2.1951. Donald Woodcock lost his life and Robert Hamilton injured in an accident at Argyll Colliery. Block of coal fell from face.

### 1952.

J.S.F 20.2.1952 Aros bore down 163 fms. In lava beds. Pithead baths work up to schedule. Some complaints from townspeople re coal dust from stocking yard. Total coal shipped to date from quay plant 141,620 tons. 3 boats per week. 500 tons per day reached on 20.2.1952.

C.C. 1.3.1952. 180 miners on strike at Argyll Colliery over alleged unsafe method of working. H.M. Inspector found it perfectly safe.

C.C. 10.4.1952. First shipment of coal to Rotterdam by Dutch cargo vessel "Nelly". 700 tons of domestic coal loaded.

Bulletin. 12.4.1952. Dutch steamer "Carpo" loaded 660 tons of coal and nuts for Copenhagen....best week in history of Kintyre...3,000 tons loaded, half of which to Holland.

C.C. 22.4.1952. A function to celebrate the official opening of the Miners Welfare Hall in Bolgam St. took place last Tuesday evening when 300 attended.... Mr. Williamson, Chairman....Mr. Prince officially opened.

CC. 8.5.1952. Argyll County Council are to acquire 16 one bedroom houses at Drumlemble....the houses are the 'old miners row' which was occupied by the workers at the old Drumlemble Colliery which ceased operations in 1929.

J.S.F. 21.5.1952. Manpower 264. Aros bore down 178 fms. Total shipped 158,132 tons. Average output 210 tons daily, loss due to water problems.

J.S.F. 16.7.1952. Main mine now 1303 feet beyond Slope Dook. Aros bore 203 fms. Total shipped 168,252 tons. Daily output 247 tons.

### 1953.

C.C. 15.1.1953. Pithead baths opened...dayshift started using baths....cost £29,250.

C.C. 30.7.1953. Mr. Williamson, manager, leaving.

J.S.F. 29.8.1953. Mr. Thom recently appointed. Main mine standing in 40ft downthrow fault, 3,950ft. from surface. Manpower 247. Total shipped 246,566 tons. Shipped from 1.1.53 to 26.9.53, 46,783 tons.

Output 1950 - 65,236 tons and percentage shipped 77.5%					
1951 - 100,033	"	"	"	"	79.7%
1952 - 90,032	"	"	"	"	77.9%
1.1.53-26.9.53 - 60,460	"	"	"	"	75.7%

Still ponds in course of construction. Aros bore recently completed. Data from this bore correlated with previous bores and with faulting proved by workings indicate series of North South faults.

### 1954.

J.S.F Jan. 1954. Manpower 250. Output for 1953, 84,530 tons and 80.4% shipped. The clearing of the area at the Colliery for a stocking ground is well forward. Agreement reached with Mr. Gilchrist, farmer, for additional ground for dirt disposal.

J.S.F. Oct. 1954. Output Jan. to Oct. 79,615 tons. Average 360 tons per day. Pumping 500 gpm. Haulage house for man-riding haulage completed, gear being installed. Glebe St. stocking ground vacated 15<sup>th</sup> May 1954. Stocking ground at Colliery started in use Whits. 1954, area 5000 sq. yds. , capacity at 10ft high is 7000 tons.



1955.

J.S.F. 18.10.1955. manpower 254 + 12 transport. Output Jan. to Oct. , 77,528tons and 80.0% shipped. Total shipped to date 439,049 tons. Average daily output 460 tons.

1956.

Mr. Thom left and I commenced duty as Manager on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Before relating the working position in the years 1956-67, and the circumstances leading to the final closure in 1967 it is necessary to give a brief description of the Geological features of the Machrihanish Coalfield.

The Machrihanish Coalfield is situated on the West side of the Kintyre Peninsula, a few miles from Campbeltown, and occupies a low lying tract of country almost completely covered by superficial materials – raised beach deposits, recent alluvion and sand dunes. Exposures of sedimentary rocks are limited to the interrupted series of shore reefs accessible only at low tides, accordingly, practically all the information regarding the succession and structure within the coalfield is derived from boring and mining operations. The general succession of Carboniferous rocks so far established is as follows:-

Productive Coal Measures..... about 530 ft.  
Millstone grit (mainly volcanic rocks).....about 485 ft.  
Upper Limestone Group.....about 290 ft.  
Limestone Coal Group.....about 390 ft.  
Lateritic clays and Volcanic detritus of variable thickness resting on weathered lavas.

No. 2 West Parkfergus Bore in 1948 gave the following section:-

Coal 2 ft. 4 ins. at 15 fathoms.  
Coal 2 ft. 8 ins. at 21 fathoms.  
Coal 5 ft. 9 ins. at 30 fathoms.  
Coal 5 ft. 11 ins. at 35 fathoms.  
Coal 1 ft. 10 ins. at 40 fathoms.  
Coal 1 ft. 2 ins. at 45 fathoms.  
Coal 1 ft. 0 ins. at 56 fathoms.  
Cannel 1 ft. 8 ins. at 63 fathoms.  
Coal 1 ft. 7 ins. at 64 fathoms.  
Coal 1 ft. 9 ins. at 74 fathoms.  
Coal 1 ft. 7 ins. at 81 fathoms.

The mining in Argyll Colliery has been in the Limestone Coal Group and the series is as follows:-

Index Limestone.....  
Strata..... 42 ft. 0 ins.  
Cannel..... 2 ft. 10 ins.  
Strata..... 72 ft. 0 ins.  
Kilkivan Coal ..... 4'6" to 7 ft.  
Strata..... 24 ft. 0 ins.  
Sandstone ..... 82 ft. 0 ins.  
Blaes ..... 2 ft. 0 ins.

Main Coal ..... 12 ft. 0 ins.  
 Strata ..... 2 ft. 0 ins.  
 Underfoot Coal ..... 4 ft. 0 ins.

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The Main Coal was extensively worked in Argyll Colliery until the fire in 1958 after which the Kilkivan was worked. The Kilkivan seam had been worked over a wide area prior to Argyll Colliery being opened in 1947. The sandstone above the Main Coal had been worked from the Wimbledon Pit principally as a moulding sand although experiments were conducted to investigate its qualities as giness sand. The two surface drifts known as Argyll Colliery are situated 100 yds west of East Trodighal Farm and were driven from the east to pass through a stoop left between the old Kilkivan workings to the south and the flooded workings of the Wimbledon Colliery.

The drifts had been driven three quarters of a mile through stone and coal to a depth of 125 fathoms after which No. 2 level and No. 2 Companion had been driven in coal for a distance of 1 and a half miles opening up a large area of stoop and room workings.

The extent of the workings at this time (1956) created a ventilation problem and it was decided to utilise good roadways in the 1951 Slope Dook area to re route the air circuit. This solved the existing problem but with hindsight it probably contributed to the spontaneous combustion fire which occurred later.

The Colliery produced coal on two shifts with twelve working places manned by three colliers on each place on each shift. The rooms were 14ft wide by 10 ft high supported by 12 ft x 4in x 4 in H section girders on wooden legs.

Manpower was 263 and output 550 tons.

Output for 1956 was 101,815 tons of which 84,801 tons were shipped, mainly to Ireland. The large coal went to Dundalk in the Free State and the dross to Ballylumford power station. Total shipment to date 560,865 tons.

**1957.**

Manpower 267 – Output 99,775 tons of which 91,469 was exported. The local market made regular complaints re quality and puffer loads of round coal from Ayrshire were shipped at about 100 tons per week.

The analysis of the Main coal being worked was:-

Moisture	18%
Ash	12%
Volatile	30%
Fixed Carbon	40%
	100%

B.T.Us

9000

The method of working was Stoop and Room, the coal being blasted out of the solid. Eighteen, four feet holes stemmed with 220 ounces of explosive were used per round. Three men fired two rounds, filled out 35 tons of coal and secured their working place on each shift. The coal was conveyed by a series of chain and belt conveyors from the working face to the screening tables on the surface.

**1958.**

Manpower 273 – output 75,337 tons – Shipments 69,254 tons.

Total Shipments to date, 721,588 tons.

A fire caused by spontaneous combustion started in the Slope Dook area on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September. Strenuous attempts to locate and douse the fire continued until 4<sup>th</sup> October when it was decided that flooding the area was the only remedy. Since the fire was in a region at a considerably higher level than the working places it was necessary to build four seals to contain the input of water in the fire area, and thereby douse the fire. The building of the seals was a massive operation and a full description of the fire and its subsequent control formed the subject of a paper written and delivered by Mr. H. Burt and Mr. J. Lawrie to the Institute of Mining Engineers.

The work of sealing and flooding was completed by 25<sup>th</sup> Nov. when limited working in the Main Coal was resumed.

**1959.**

Manpower 280. – Output 81,320 tons. – Shipments 66,946 tons.

Irish Railways cease taking coal in March. – The cable belt conveyor from the surface to the bottom of the Main Drift, 1280 yards, had the SHOE belting replaced by MOULDED edge belt, which eradicated belt stoppages.

In an attempt to increase output and reduce costs a start was made withdrawing selected stoops. – On Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May Lord and Lady Forbes visited the Colliery.

Due to the proximity of the return airway, partly in coal, to the fire area, it was decided to drive a road in stone to eliminate any danger and to this end a stone hopper and conveyor was erected on the surface.

**1960.**

Manpower 200. – Output 34,186 tons. – Shipments 21,461 tons.

A severe crush on the main roadways commenced in April culminating in a decision to abandon all workings beyond 200 yds. from the mine foot and to concentrate labour force in driving two stone drifts through the West Parkfergus fault. On 18<sup>th</sup> December a new heating to the East of No. 2 Level led to a decision to abandon and flood all the workings to the North of the Main Drift.

**1961.**

Manpower 150. – Output 28,000 tons. – Shipments 24,000 tons.

Due to adverse mining conditions and loss of markets the manpower had been reduced to 200 in 1960 and now a further 50 men were made redundant.

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The development mines going East proved large faults and progress was confined to a narrow area running North between the Parkfergus fault and this fault.

**1962.**

Manpower 140. – Output 46,565 tons. – Shipments 40,000 tons.

This proved to be a frustrating year as each development ran into faulted ground, some faults produced running sand and increased water. Water at the working face in some instances necessitated pumping 150 gallons per minute. It was decided to install a 150 ton underground bunker to economise on surface labour.

On 4<sup>th</sup> December 1450 tons of dross was loaded on the “Ballylaggan” in 9 hours, this being the largest boat ever loaded in Campbeltown.

**1963.**

Manpower 120. – output 30,718 tons.

Complex faulting in the Mid Coal workings made the working very difficult and two stone drifts were driven to re-enter the Main Coal to the West of the present area.

On 5<sup>th</sup> February a snow storm blocked the road to Campbeltown causing the afternoon shift workers to be marooned at the colliery. Mrs Gilchrist of East Trodighal Farm performed wonders in feeding the men for three days until the roads were cleared. The two mechanical shovels at the Colliery were fully employed for two weeks clearing snow.

In March a Halco borer commenced boring operations in an endeavour to prove the many faults which had been exposed.

The Divisional Geologist and Senior Staff visited the Colliery.

**1964**

Manpower 115. – output 31,300 tons.

Mr CJC Ewing, Divisional Geologist submitted his report as follows:- “This note is concerned chiefly with the geological structure of the Mid Coal as proved in the approx. 70 acres worked during the last three years and to compare this with the much larger area worked in the Main Coal since veoting date. The workings in the Main Coal had proved an unbroken area fully a mile North of the main access mines. In general the dips were about trend and decrease in size to the North. They abutted on the East-West Lochsannish fault running South of the workings.

West Parkfergus Fault – The Eastern limit of the Main coal workings was an important dislocation running slightly East of North named the West Parkfergus Fault, which now forms a boundary between the Main and Mid Coal.

It is a complex fault with a disturbed zone from 30ft to 60ft wide and a total throw near the Main access mine of 200ft down to the West.”

Further details were studied but the conclusion was that further working in the Main Seam was hopeless and mines should be driven to re-enter the Main Coal.

Only two working places were available for a long period as development mines were driven.

In October after visit by Mr Shepherd from Nat. Board, decision was made to withdraw from Main and Mid Coal areas and open up Kilkilvan seam near pit bottom.

**1965.**

Manpower 100. – Output 40,000 tons.

Started using BJD slushers in an effort to reduce working costs. Many complaints from domestic consumers re quality, also complaints from industrial users. While the OMS has reached 33 kwts. the proceeds were nil due to the low price received for the poor quality coal.

**1966.**

Manpower 80. – Output 40,000 tons.

Various meetings held and different suggestions put forward but the particular problems at the Colliery allied to the general problems of coal mining in the country made closure inevitable.

**1967.**

The Colliery ceased production on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Underground salvage work was completed and both mines sealed by end of June. Demolition of Surface buildings commenced mid August and completed mid October.

The ground proprietor opted to retain the Baths, Garage, Workshops, Sub-station and Office, and proposes to turn the area into a camping site.

**CONCLUSION.**

From the foregoing notes it is evident that the quality of the coal in the Machrihanish coalfield has always been the main drawback. The coal is suitable for commercial use in boilers designed for its use, but the remoteness of the field from the industrial belt of Scotland raises a transport problem which is unsurmountable. Domestically the coal gives a good heat but leaves a large quantity of white ash.