

## Ayrshire Coal Mining and Ancillary Industries

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In this report a description is given of the geology of the Ayrshire coalfield and details are given of the Colliery Companies and the collieries which were operating from the beginning of the twentieth century up till 1947 when the coal mining industry was nationalised.

The Ayrshire coalfield—with which is associated the Sanquhar district in Dumfriesshire—annually produced in the fifty years prior to Nationalisation a steady output in the region of five million tons per annum. The “winning” of coal is more difficult than in the other coalfields of Scotland. It has been locally much disturbed by volcanic action, and this, together with numerous faults or displacements, causes much unprofitable work. The coalfield may be conveniently divided into the following districts :—

- (1) North Ayrshire, in two parts ;
- (2) Central Ayrshire ;
- (3) South Ayrshire ;
- (4) Sanquhar, Dumfriesshire.

The general succession of Carboniferous rocks throughout Ayrshire is :—

- Barren Red Measures ;
- Productive Coal Measures : upper series of valuable coals ;
- Millstone Grit
- Carboniferous Limestone Series :—
  - Upper Limestone Group
  - Limestone Coal Group : a series of less valuable coals ;
  - Lower Limestone Group.

### North Ayrshire

- (a) North-West of the Dusk Water fault which runs from Ardrossan in a north-easterly direction ; and
- (b) The area between the Dusk Water fault and the Inchgotrick fault which runs in a somewhat similar direction from the sea south of Troon to south of Kilmarnock and Darvel.

(a) The district north-west of the Dusk Water fault contains only the Limestone Coal Group and it is a comparatively poor area so far as coal is concerned.

The Group is about 110 fathoms thick near Kilbirnie and 90 fathoms at Dalry. It contains four workable coal seams, besides one or two blackband and clayband ironstone seams which have been worked out. The coal seams are named the Stone, Main, Smithy and Borestone.

(In the notes which follow relating to colliery companies it should be noted that Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd., and the Dalmellington Iron Company operated as separate companies until 1931, after which date they became Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd.).

The "Name of Company" has been left blank where definite information is not available.

(i) MINES WORKING PRIOR TO 1946

Name of Company.	Name of Pit.	District.	Year of Closure.
<i>Coal Mines—</i>			
James Oliphant. ...	Kersland Nos. 1 & 2	Dalry.	1914
	Highfield No. 2	Dalry.	1926
	Highfield No. 1	Dalry.	1934
Small Mines ...	Auchengree No. 4.	Dalry.	1936
	Giffen No. 1.	Dalry.	1900
	Swinridgemuir.	Dalry.	1926
<i>Ironstone Mines—</i>			
Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd.	Blair Nos. 1 - 10.	Dalry.	1928
Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co.	Birsieknowe.	Beith.	1921
"	Dockra.	Beith.	1918
"	Glengarnock	Kilbirnie.	1914
"	Nos. 6 & 7.		
"	Balgray Nos. 1 - 3.	Beith.	1920

(ii) MINES WORKING AT END 1946

Name of Company.	Name of Pit.	District.
<i>Coal Mines—</i>		
Lochwood Coal Co., Ltd. ...	Lochwood No. 2.	Kilwinning.
Muirhouse Coal Co. ...	Muirhouse.	Dalry.

(b) This district, lying between the Dusk Water fault and the Inchgotrick fault, contains representatives of all the sub-divisions of the Carboniferous sequence from the Barren Red Measures downwards. The latter come to the surface on the coast at Ardeer, at Dregghorn, and between Kilmarnock and Galston. Their greatest thickness here is approximately 50 fathoms and as their name indicates they contain no coal seams. Underneath the Barren Red Measures are the Productive Coal Measures extending from Saltcoats in the west to Newmilns in the east, and known as the Irvine Valley coalfield. For many years approximately 50% of the Ayrshire output was produced by this district, but by the time the mines came under National ownership in 1947 only a few small pits and mines remained; including two pits producing chiefly fireclay used in the manufacture of bricks and sanitary ware. How this area, during the last fifty years has changed from a prosperous coal producing area to a very small one is shown by the following list of closures of pits.

(i) MINES WORKING PRIOR TO 1946

Name of Company.	Name of Pit.	District.	Year of Closure.
<i>Coal Mines—</i>			
Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd. (Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd., after 1931).	Ladyha Nos. 1 & 2.	Kilwinning.	1934
"	Bogend.	"	1930
"	Moncur Nos. 4 & 6.	"	1931
"	Redburn Nos. 1 & 2.	"	1930
"	Misk No. 1.	"	1929
"	Eglinton No. 1.	Irvine.	1930
"	Bogside No. 1.	"	1929
"	Bartonholm No. 1.	"	1928
"	Craig Nos. 1 & 2, 3 & 4	Drybridge.	1930
"	Portland Nos. 5, 6, 7.	Hurlford.	1918
"	Maxwood.	Galston.	1933
"	Loudoun No. 3.	"	1932
Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co., Ltd.	Auchenharvie Nos. 1 - 5.	Saltcoats.	1915
"	Ardeer Nos. 1 & 2.	Stevenston.	1921
"	Ardeer Nos. 3 & 4.	Stevenston.	1924
A. Finnie & Son. (J. & R. Howie after 1920).	Fergushill Nos. 22 - 31.	Kilwinning.	1921
"	Springhill Nos. 1 - 4.	Springside.	1927
"	Cauldhame.	Springside.	1918



J. & R. Howie, Ltd.	Busbiehead Nos. 2, 3, Crosshouse. & 8.		1928
"	Greenhill.	Kilmaurs.	1930
"	Altonhill.	Kilmarnock.	1912
"	Woodhill Nos. 13 & 14.	Kilmarnock.	1928
"	Skerrington Nos. 12 - 20.	Hurlford.	1903
"	Chapelhill Nos. 1 - 16.	Hurlford.	1918.
A. Kenneth & Sons, Ltd.	Montgomeryfield Nos. 1 & 2.	Dreghorn.	1938
"	Springside Nos. 10 & 11.	Springside.	1913
"	Shewalton Nos. 1, 2 & 7.	Drybridge.	1932
Bourtreesill Coal Co., Ltd.	Capringstone Nos. 6, 7 & 8.	Dreghorn.	1924
"	Broomlands No. 8.	Dreghorn.	1928
Balgray Bauxite Co.	Fergushill North Nos. 1 - 3.	Crosshouse.	1935
"	Newtonhead Nos. 3 & 4.	Springside.	1938
Southhook Potteries, Ltd.	Southhook Nos. 1 - 4.	Crosshouse.	1930
"	Paddocklaw Nos. 1 - 3.	Dreghorn.	1930
"	Bonnyton Nos. 2 - 8.	Dreghorn.	1914
"	Overton Nos. 1 - 3.	Dreghorn.	1930
"	Warwickhill No. 5.	Dreghorn.	1930
Portland Colliery Co., Ltd.	Wellington Nos. 4 & 6.	Kilmarnock.	1935
"	Kirkstyle Nos. 1 & 5.	Kilmarnock.	1933
Barleith Coal Co., Ltd. (latterly Dallas Coal Co., Ltd.).	Barleith Nos. 1, 2 & 4.	Hurlford.	1930
Burnbank & Grougar Coal Co., Ltd. (Gauchalland Coal Co. until 1921).	Holmes Nos. 2 & 4.	Galston.	1928
"	Goatfoot No. 1.	Galston.	1922
"	Titchfield (formerly Portland No. 8).	Galston.	1928
"	Gauchalland Nos. 2, 4 & 7.	Galston.	1932
"	Burnbank.	Galston.	1932
"	Waterside (formerly Loudoun No. 1)	Galston.	1932
"	Maxwood Nos. 1 - 3.	Galston.	1933

Caprington & Auchlochan Collieries, Ltd.	Caprington Nos. 41 & 42.	Gatehead.	1911
"	Fairlie Nos. 3 & 4.	Kilmarnock.	1914
"	Windyedge Nos. 1 & 2.	Kilmarnock.	1927
"	Annandale Nos. 1, 9 & 11.	Kilmarnock.	1935
Dallas Coal Co.	Dallas Nos. 1 & 2.	Riccarton.	1935
Newhouse Coal Co.	Newhouse.	Kilmarnock.	1931
Newmilns Coal Co.	Lanfine.	Newmilns.	1934
Piersland Coal Co.	Piersland.	Newmilns.	1935
Walkers (Glasgow), Ltd.	Shipmill No. 2.	Irvine.	1926
James Allan, Dreghorn.	Perceton Nos. 1 - 17, Wardend.	Irvine.	1909
Kilmaurs Collieries, Ltd.		Kilmaurs.	1921
Lylestone Quarry Co., Ltd.	Lylestone.	Kilwinning.	1918
	Blacksyke No. 5.	Riccarton.	1931
	Cranberry Nos. 2 & 3.	Kilwinning.	1932
	Border No. 1 and Glebe No. 1.	Ardrossan.	1927
	Dubbs.	Kilwinning.	1938
Small Mines.	Smithstone.	Kilwinning.	1936
	Doura Nos. 1 & 2.	Kilwinning.	1915
	Drummuir Nos. 3 & 4.	Dreghorn.	1902
	Goldcraig.	Kilwinning.	1927
	Gouknest.	Stewarton.	1903
	Inchgotrick.	Riccarton.	1923
	Wardneuk.	Kilmarnock.	1930

## (ii) MINES WORKING AT END OF 1946

## Coal Mines—

Name of Company.	Name of Pit.	District.
A. Kenneth & Sons.	Newfield Nos. 1 - 3.	Gatehead.
"	Shewalton Nos. 3-6, 8-9.	Dreghorn.
"	Warrix.	Irvine.
Balgray Bauxite Co.	Fardalehill.	Kilmarnock.
Robt. Semple & Co.	Fortacre.	Drybridge.

## Fireclay Mines—

J. & R. Howie, Ltd.	Busbiehead.	Crosshouse.
"	Muirside.	Springside.
Southhook Potteries, Ltd.	Southhook.	Springside.

This list contains about seventy collieries, which were worked and closed in the period between 1900 and 1946.

Over the whole district eleven or twelve different seams can be recognised, varying in thickness from about 18 ins. to about 8 ft., where several seams come together to form the well-known Hurlford Main coal.

The upper coal measures are practically exhausted, and it is doubtful whether seams of coal in the Limestone Coal Group are anywhere workable. At several points in the Kilmarnock and Galston area bores have been put down, but under the Millstone Grit (here composed mainly of lavas) any of the lower coals encountered have proved to be of poor quality. Only one colliery, at Wardend between Kilmaurs and Stewarton, worked coal in the Limestone Measures some years ago, but after erecting an oil producing plant, which was not a success, the project was abandoned.

### Central Ayrshire

The large tract of country stretching southwards from the line of the Inchgotrick Fault to Dalmellington and New Cumnock is much the most important region as regards the number and extent of the workable seams. Throughout this region folding and faulting have combined to produce a series of separate mining fields each with its own special structural and stratigraphical problems. In the north the main structural units are the wide Mauchline Basin, and, to the east, the much smaller compressed and faulted basin of the Muirkirk field. In the Mauchline Basin the succession of rock-groups is:—

Permian.	{ Mauchline Red Sandstone Group.
	{ Volcanic Group (lavas, etc.).
Carboniferous.	{ Barren Red Measures.
	{ Productive Coal Measures.

The Permian rocks cover an area of some 30 square miles in the centre of the basin and from below them the Barren Red Measures rise to the surface to form an encircling fringe of varying width upon which most of the collieries working the underlying coals of the Productive Coal Measures are situated. It is worth noting that the greatest thickness of Permian rocks so far proved is some 1,650 ft., while the Barren Red Measures may reach a thickness of about 1,500 ft.

Further south the main structural features are the series of North-East-South-West lines of fracture or faulting, between

which the Carboniferous rocks have been folded into broad basin-shaped areas. One of these areas lies between Dalmellington and Rankinston.

Both Productive Coal Measures and Limestone Coal Group are represented in the Central Ayrshire succession. The former, however, is by far the more important from an economic point of view, and certainly contains the vast bulk of the available reserves. It may be noted that the number of workable seams present increases towards Dalmellington and New Cumnock. At Dalmellington, for example, there are nineteen seams of 2 ft., or more.

The Limestone Coal Group coals are very variable in their development. They have long been worked in the Muirkirk field, but westwards towards Sorn and Cronberry there is a marked attenuation of the whole group. Coals of the same age are also present in a much faulted strip of the Carboniferous Limestone Series in the Doon Valley near Patna. There is, however, a large area in Central Ayrshire where the Carboniferous Limestone Series is, so far as is known, poorly developed or even locally absent.

### (i) MINES WORKING PRIOR TO 1946

		Year of	
Name of Company.	Name of Pit.	District.	Closure.
<i>Ironstone Mines—</i>			
Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd. (Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd., after 1931).	Berryhill No. 3.	Auchinleck.	1925
	Common Nos. 14, 15.	Auchinleck.	1925
Dalmellington Iron Co., Ltd. (Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd. after 1931).	Corby Craigs.	Dallmellington.	1919
"	Bowhill Nos. 1 - 3.	Rankinston.	1913
Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co., Ltd.	Rankinston Nos. 1 & 2.	Rankinston.	1913



## Coal Mines—

Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd. (Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd., after 1931).	Barglachan Nos. 1 & 2.	Auchinleck.	1924
"	Berryhill No. 2.	Auchinleck.	1925
"	Burnockhill Nos. 1 & 2.	Ochiltree.	1928
"	Common Nos. 6, 7, 8, 11, 16.	Auchinleck.	1925
"	Gilmilnsroft Nos. 1-4.	Auchinleck.	1925
"	Glengyron Nos. 1 & 2.	Cumnock.	1909
"	Grasshill Nos. 1 & 2.	Glenbuck.	1933
"	Hindsward No. 1.	Cumnock.	1925
"	Knockterra No. 1.	Cumnock.	1914
"	Lightshaw Nos. 1-4.	Muirkirk.	1918
Cairntable Gas Coal Co. Ltd.	Auldhouseburn Nos. 1 & 2.	Muirkirk.	1911
"	Davie.	Glenbuck.	1906
"	Kerse Nos. 1 & 2.	Patna.	1915
Dalmellington Iron Co., Ltd. (Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd., after 1931).	Benbain Nos. 1 - 3.	Dalmellington.	1924
"	Craigmark Nos. 2 - 4.	Dalmellington.	1923
"	Clawfin No. 1.	Dalmellington.	1928
"	Drumgrange No. 10.	Dalmellington.	1904
"	Drumsmudden No. 1.	Ochiltree.	1904
"	Sundrum Nos. 2, 3 & 4.	Coylton.	1933
Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co., Ltd.	Rankinston No. 3.	Patna.	1935
A. G. Moore & Co., Ltd.	Shieldmains Nos. 1-5.	Coylton.	1928
"	Shieldmains Nos. 10 - 13.	Coylton.	1928
"	Hannahston Nos. 5 - 8.	Coylton.	1929
"	Barbeth No. 9.	Coylton.	1928
"	Duchray.	Coylton.	1929

New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd.	Afton No. 2.	New Cumnock.	1914
"	Rigfoot No. 1.	New Cumnock.	1908
"	South Boig.	New Cumnock.	1910
"	Lanemark Nos. 1 & 2.	New Cumnock.	1910
Polquhairn Coal Co., Ltd.	Mansefield Nos. 2 & 3.	New Cumnock.	1913
Jas. L. Shankland.	Grieveshill.	New Cumnock.	1913
Dalgain Coal Co.	Dalgain.	Sorn.	1929
"	South Logan.	Auchinleck.	1935
Garallan Coal Co.	Garallan Nos. 1 & 2.	Cumnock.	1927
United Collieries, Ltd.	Trabboch Nos. 1 & 2.	Trabboch.	1908
	Polquhirter.	New Cumnock.	1935
	Penbreck.	Muirkirk.	1937
Small Mines.	North Boig Nos. 1-4.	New Cumnock.	1924
	Corsehill.	Coylton.	1924

## (ii) MINES WORKING AT END OF 1946

Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd.	Beoch Nos. 3 & 4.	Dalmellington.
"	Bogton.	Dalmellington.
"	Bowhill.	Rankinston.
"	Chalmerston.	Dalmellington.
"	Houldsworth.	Patna.
"	Littlemill.	Rankinston.
"	Pennyvenie 2, 3 & 5.	Dalmellington.
"	Pennyvenie No. 4.	Dalmellington.
"	Auchincruive 1, 2 & 3.	Annbank.
"	Auchincruive 4 & 5.	Prestwick.
"	Ayr Nos. 1 & 2.	Annbank.
"	Enterkine Nos. 9 & 10.	Annbank.
"	Tofts Nos. 1 & 2.	Annbank.
"	Barony Nos. 1 & 2.	Auchinleck.
"	Cronberry Moor.	Cronberry.
"	Highhouse Nos. 1 & 2.	Auchinleck.
"	Kames Nos. 1 & 2.	Muirkirk.
"	Lugar Mine.	Lugar.
"	Mauchline Nos. 1 - 4.	Mauchline.
"	Whitehill Nos. 1 & 2.	Cumnock.
"	Whitehill Nos. 3 & 4.	Cumnock.

New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd.	Afton No. 1.	New Cumnock.
"	Bank Nos. 1, 2 & 6.	New Cumnock.
"	Knockshinnoch.	New Cumnock.
"	Seaforth.	New Cumnock.
Wm. Nicol, Ltd. Owned by New Cumnock Collieries after 1940.	Coalburn.	New Cumnock.
Polquhairn Coal Co., Ltd.	Greenhill.	Rankinston.
"	Polquhairn.	Rankinston.
Garallan Brick & Tile Co., Ltd.	Garallan.	Cumnock.
A. G. Moore & Co., Ltd.	Shieldmains Nos. 6, 7, 8, 12 & 14.	Drongan.
Nith Valley Coal Co., Ltd.	Bridgend.	New Cumnock.

#### Notes on Mines and Companies in Central Ayrshire

The Mines in Glenbuck and Muirkirk worked the seams of the Limestone Coal Group which are five or six in number converging into one thick seam in the Cronberry Moor district.

The Muirkirk mines and the mines around Lugar and Cronberry were operated primarily to supply coal to the ironworks at Muirkirk and Lugar and a system of private railways was operated between the collieries and the respective works.

Mauchline Colliery was originally sunk by Caprington and Auchlochan Collieries, Ltd., in 1925, but on the company going into liquidation it was taken over by Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd., in 1935. The pits in this area together with the Auchinleck and Cumnock area are working coals in the Productive Coal Measures.

Littlemill Colliery was originally operated by the Coylton Coal Co., Ltd., but their interests were acquired by Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd., in 1937. The Annbank and Auchincruive pits were worked by Geo. Taylor & Co. until 1916, when their interests passed to Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd. This district as well as the Littlemill and Drongan district worked coals in the Productive Coal Measures.

The Doon valley pits from Patna to Dalmellington were solely worked by the Dalmellington Iron Co., Ltd. until 1931, when the company became part of Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd. With the exception of Houldsworth and Drumgrange which worked the Patna Thick seam of the Limestone Coal Group the pits worked the Productive Coal Measures.

The New Cumnock area is similar to the Dalmellington area in that the Productive Coal Measures are well developed and contain numerous seams. Many colliery companies operated here at one time. Prior to 1908 there were the Lanemark Coal Co., Ltd., New Bank Coal Co., Polquhairn Coal Co., Ltd., and Wm. Nicol, Ltd., which was previously known as the Cumnock Pottery Co. The Lanemark and New Bank Companies were operated after 1908 by a new company known as the New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd.

#### South Ayrshire

The only remaining coal in Ayrshire is the small Dailly coalfield in the Girvan valley, extending from a point south of Kilkerran Railway Station to near Killochan, measuring about seven miles in length by one mile in width. The seams, six in all, in the Limestone Coal Group, have been worked in succession by Killochan Coal Co., South Ayrshire Collieries Ltd., and South Ayrshire Collieries (1928) Ltd. South Ayrshire Collieries worked the coal from Maxwell and Killochan Pits about two miles apart. The same company also worked Romilly Colliery which was closed in 1907.

#### Sanquhar Coalfield, Dumfriesshire

Although this coalfield is not in Ayrshire, it is generally included with that county. It is in the Nith Valley, extending from four miles north of Kirkconnel to Sanquhar, a distance of between seven and eight miles, and varies in width from one to three miles. There are five seams in all, ranging from 20 ins., to 54 ins., in thickness, in the Productive Coal Measure series. The Productive Coal Measures in this area are laid down on Silurian rocks and consequently no further coals exist below the present working seams. The collieries working are at Fauldhead Nos. 1 - 4, at Kirkconnel, and Gateside Nos. 1 & 2, and Tower Mine near Sanquhar. They were originally owned by J. T. McConnel, Esq., who in 1903 formed them into a Limited Liability Company, under the name of Sanquhar and Kirkconnel Collieries, Ltd. In 1931 the company was incorporated in Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd.

#### Opencast Mining

In 1943 the Ministry of Fuel and Power embarked on a prospecting programme for coal areas which could be worked by opencast methods in order to augment war-time coal production. Between 1944 and 1946 a number of sites were worked in the Sanquhar Coalfield, at New Cumnock, near Cumnock, and in the Cronberry to Muirkirk districts.



## Manpower

Prior to the First World War when production of coal reached its zenith in Scotland as well as Great Britain there were 14,500 miners in Ayrshire and the Sanquhar coalfields. At the end of 1946, in spite of the manpower in the country having declined to around sixty per cent of the 1913 total, the Ayrshire and Sanquhar total was 12,500. The numbers residing in North Ayrshire had declined considerably but there had been a substantial increase in some of the towns or villages in South Ayrshire, i.e., in Prestwick, Mauchline, Cumnock, New Cumnock, Kirkconnel, Dalmellington and Patna.

## Nationalisation of the Coal Mines

The following list shows the Coal Companies in Ayrshire whose mines were taken over by the National Coal Board on 1st January, 1947, in accordance with the terms of the Coal Industry Act of 1946 :—

Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd.  
New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd.  
Wm. Nicol, Ltd.  
South Ayrshire Collieries (1928), Ltd.  
A. G. Moore & Co., Ltd.  
A. Kenneth & Sons, Ltd.  
Polquhairs Coal Co., Ltd.

The Companies granted licences to continue working were :—

Muirhouse Coal Co.  
Southhook Potteries Ltd. (fireclay).  
J. & R. Howie, Ltd. (fireclay).  
Lochwood Coal Co., Ltd.  
Balgray Bauxite Co.  
R. Semple & Co.  
Garallan Brick & Tile Co., Ltd.  
Nith Valley Coal Co., Ltd.

## Miners' Welfare

In 1920 a Miners' Welfare Commission was set up in London with branches throughout the mining districts in England, Scotland, and Wales. In Ayrshire a Committee was formed of an equal number of Owners' and Miners' representatives, known as the Ayrshire District Welfare Committee. Much good work has been carried out since then to the benefit of the miners and their families.

By means of grants from the Central Committee in London and gifts from coalowners, Kirkmichael House, a large country mansion some ten miles from Ayr, was bought. It was furnished and equipped and by 1923 was opened as a Convalescent Home for Miners requiring a period of rest after illness or accident. A few years later, about 1927, a large house in Wood Road, Troon, was acquired by the late Mr. R. L. Angus, of Ladykirk, and presented to the Ayrshire Welfare Committee in memory of his father, the late Mr. Robert Angus. It was extended, furnished and equipped as a Convalescent Home for the Wives and Daughters of Miners in Ayrshire. The running expenses of the Homes were partly defrayed by weekly contributions by the workmen—1d. per week for each home, increased latterly to 1½d. per week.

Other activities undertaken by the Ayrshire Welfare Committee were the provision of Pithead Baths, Canteens at Pits, and Grants to Mining Students taking Day Classes at the Royal Technical College.

## Mutual Insurance

The Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897 made it compulsory for employers in the coal trade and other industries to pay compensation to injured workmen or in the event of a fatal accident to pay compensation to the dependants of the deceased. The members of the Ayrshire Coal-Owners' Association formed an Association which became known as the Ayrshire Employers' Mutual Insurance Association, Ltd. They insured their workers in the Coal Mines and other Ancillary works such as Iron and Steel Works, Brick and Pottery Works and certain Quarries; and a series of later Acts extended the range of compensation.

When the mines were nationalised on the 1st January, 1947, the Ayrshire Employers' Mutual Insurance intimated to their members that on 31st December, 1946, insurance would cease. At meetings held a few weeks before nationalisation it was agreed between the Ministry of Fuel and Power, the National Coal Board and the Mining Association of Great Britain (acting for the Coal-owners in Britain) that the National Coal Board would take over and operate all the liabilities of the former owners at the vesting date.

## Control of Selling of Coal

Owing to the depression which existed in the Coal Trade in 1930 a quota system and co-operative selling scheme were introduced in Ayrshire under the Coal Mines Act, 1930. Another part of this



scheme was the Amalgamation of Colliery Companies into larger units, and although a good deal in this connection had been done voluntarily in Ayrshire, no action had been taken throughout the country on a compulsory basis, and the war suspended operations in this direction. After the war nationalisation of the industry put an end to private enterprise and further amalgamations.

### Rescue Work

In terms of the Coal Mines Act, 1911, it became compulsory to establish Rescue Stations at different places in the coal fields to train miners in the use of self-contained Rescue Apparatus. The Ayrshire Coalowners' Association decided to have a Station at Kilmarnock, known as a Central Rescue Station, and a Sub-Station at Auchinleck. An old Foundry was bought in Kilmarnock and by 1913 it was converted into what became known as Kilmarnock Mines Rescue Station. It was fully equipped with all the self-contained breathing apparatus, rescue cars and other appliances, ready to go at a moment's notice on receiving a call for assistance. Three men were in constant attendance. It was also their duty to train selected men from the different collieries in the use of the apparatus and to give them proficiency training four times a year, alternately at the Mine and Rescue Station. Auchinleck Sub-Station was built and contained a car with self-contained breathing apparatus ready at any time to answer a call for assistance. On the Nationalisation of the Coal Mines on the 1st January, 1947, these stations were acquired from the Ayrshire Coalowners' Association by the National Coal Board and vested in the Board in terms of the Coal Industry Act, 1946.

### The Ayrshire Coalowners' Association

The Collieries and Ancillary Works through their respective owners were members of the Ayrshire Coalowners' Association or Ayrshire Employers' Mutual Insurance Association, Ltd., or both. There is no record of when the Coalowners' Association was formed, but the earliest minute available was of a meeting held in November, 1889. In June, 1898, the Ayrshire Employers' Mutual Insurance Association, Ltd., was formed and registered as a Limited Liability Company. The Coalowners' Association finally wound up on the 7th April, 1955, and the Insurance Association on the 16th October, 1957, after protracted negotiations with the Ministry of Fuel and Power and the National Coal Board.

The Chairmen and Secretaries of the Association were :—

#### Chairmen—

- 1889-1894 Mr. Horne.
- 1894-1918 Mr. James B. Thorneycroft—Director of Eglinton Iron Co., later Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd.
- 1918-1949 Mr. Robert L. Angus—Director of Wm. Baird & Co., later Chairman of Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd.
- 1949-1952 Mr. James W. Tweedie—Managing Director of Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd.
- 1952-1957 Mr. J. W. Andrew—Director of Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd.

#### Secretaries—

- 1889-1895 Mr. Hutton.
- 1895-1940 Mr. James Borland.
- 1940-1946 Mr. George Fingland.
- 1946-1957 Mr. James Lohoar.

### Blast Furnaces

The production of coal besides receiving a great stimulus from the introduction of the locomotive also benefited greatly by the discovery of large stratified deposits of Blackband and Clayband Ironstone interbedded in the strata of the coal seams. The first furnaces in Ayrshire were at Glenbuck and Muirkirk and these started operations about 1786. In 1838 Blair Iron Works were established in Dalry, and in 1844 Bairds from Gartsherrie in Lanarkshire took a mineral lease at Kilwinning and under the name of the Eglinton Iron Company commenced to work coal in the area and by 1846 had erected furnaces and were producing pig iron. In 1853 they acquired Blair Iron Works and reconditioned them and by 1859 had extended the furnaces at Kilwinning to eight.

Lugar Iron Works, originally started in 1845 by Sir James Boswell of Auchinleck, were acquired in 1856 by the Eglinton Iron Company, which erected new works. Five furnaces were built and started operations in 1866. Muirkirk Iron Works were also acquired by the Eglinton Iron Company in 1856.

Portland Iron Works which had been working intermittently since 1846 were acquired in 1864 by the Eglinton Iron Company and were carried on successfully until 1890.



Eglinton Iron Company, which later became part of Wm. Baird & Co., Ltd., carried on the furnaces at Kilwinning, Muirkirk and Lugar. The Iron Works at Kilwinning and Muirkirk did not re-start after the national coal strike in 1921, being ultimately dismantled. Lugar Iron Works resumed some time after the strike finished, but after working spasmodically until 1928 were closed and dismantled.

Other Companies operating blast furnaces in Ayrshire were Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co., Ltd., Dalmellington Iron Co., Ltd., and Nithsdale Iron Co., later acquired by the Bank Coal Co., and abandoned many years ago. The blast furnaces at Glengarnock were operated by Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co., Ltd., in conjunction with their steel works and in 1916 were acquired by David Colville, Ltd., along with the steel works. Ardeer Iron Works, which also belonged to Glengarnock Iron & Steel Co., Ltd., after 1916 came under the management of Merry & Cuninghame, Ltd., but along with other furnaces closed down in 1921 and were dismantled. Dalmellington Iron Co., Ltd., erected blast furnaces at Waterside, Dunaskin, about 1850, and these were carried on successfully until 1921 when owing to economic conditions they were dismantled.

### Brick and Pottery Works

In the process of getting coal it is usual to extract a quantity of other rocks. Some may be stowed in the area from which the coal has been extracted, but in the thinner seams large quantities are taken to the surface, forming the characteristic "bings." In the case of those bings where blaes and fireclay predominate it has been possible to set up brickworks and convert these materials into bricks to be used for building purposes.

In proximity to certain coal seams, seams of fireclay have been found adjoining the coal and both have been worked together, and by careful selection the fireclay is prepared, either moulded into facing bricks or moulded and fired to make high-class sanitary ware. In the Kilmarnock district, where there is abundance of this particular fireclay, forming the pavement of the coal seams, the manufacture of sanitary ware has been a notable product for about 100 years. The firms presently operating are Southhook Potteries, Ltd., J. & R. Howie, Ltd., J. & M. Craig, Ltd., and Bourtreehill Coal Co., Ltd., Dreghorn, the last of which has been since 1938 a subsidiary of Southhook Potteries, Ltd. Facing bricks were produced by Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd., at Buccleuch Brickworks, Sanquhar, and by New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd., at Afton Terra Cotta Works, New Cumnock. The former was taken

over by the National Coal Board; the latter is still operated by New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd.

On Nationalisation of the Mines it became optional whether the brick works producing common brick vested in the National Coal Board or not. The brick works belonging to Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd., were taken over by the Board and those belonging to A. Kenneth & Sons, Ltd., remained under their present owners.

The following are the Brickworks belonging to Bairds & Dalmellington, Ltd., which were taken over by the Board :—

<i>Name of Brickworks.</i>	<i>Vicinity.</i>
Waterside Brickworks ... ..	Waterside, Dalmellington.
Littlemill Brickwork ... ..	Rankinston
Annbank Brickwork ... ..	Annbank
Fauldhead Brickworks ... ..	Kirkconnel

The following Brickworks belonging to A. Kenneth & Sons, Dreghorn, did not vest in the National Coal Board :—

<i>Name of Brickworks.</i>	<i>Vicinity.</i>
Montgomeryfield Brickworks	Dreghorn
Annandale Brickworks ... ..	Dreghorn
Subsidiary of A. Kenneth & Sons—	
Broadlie Brick Co., Ltd.,	
Broadlie Brickworks ... ..	Dalry.

Afton Terra Cotta Brickwork belonging to New Cumnock Collieries, Ltd., did not vest in the Board, as already stated, but the Bank Brickwork at Bank passed to the National Coal Board.

### Acknowledgments

These notes have necessarily had to be kept brief and because of this, and other reasons, omissions or errors may have occurred. Additions and/or amendments might be sent to the Society.

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