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THE MINING OF THE RURAL DISTRICTS OF CAMPSIE AND KILPATRICK.

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SYNOPSIS

The Campsie and Kilpatrick districts, rural areas to the north of Glasgow, were two very old mining areas, geologically similar and both economically dependant on agriculture and a range of small industries. The exploitation of these districts for coal and also limestone, shared much in common. But there were notable differences and this article sets out to illustrate them. (See Figures 1 and 2).

The Kilpatrick district was probably the older area of working, and provides some of the earliest mining references in the general area of Glasgow. There is probably little wonder in this as the deep stream beds of the area provided easily traceable sections of workable deposits. The coal seams lay in close proximity to the local limestone and sandstone, which provided building material, all were easily quarried at outcrop. The early exploitation of coal is shown in the transfer of tenancies and land rights in the district from c1550. The estate records of Hamilton of Barns provide many such examples. Firstly, there was a charter of alienation by Hugh Crawford of Kilbirnie and Drumry in favour of Andrew Hamilton, Captain of Dumbarton Castle and Agnes Crawford his spouse, of the lands of Hutches on and Hole, with the coal seams, in Kilpatrick, dated 12 March 1550.¹ A similar document exists dated 20 September 1550.² The coal could have found use for ordnance work at Dumbarton Castle. Thirdly, there was a precept of resignation by Andrew Hamilton of Cochno empowering an unidentified person, but probably a tacksman, to resign the lands of Hutcheson and Hole with the coal seams into the hands of Hugh Crawford of Kilbirnie, for granting to Andrew Hamilton's son Thomas.³ The fourth item is an extract of retour of Claud Hamilton, as heir to his father Andrew Hamilton of Cochno, the lands of Hutches on and Hole with the coal seams, dated 26 May 1573.⁴ These clues suggest that mining was being carried on by a small group of owner occupiers to supply local demand, with some leasing of individual work faces.

The early history of Campsie mining is equally tenuous, where local names hint at the early origins of mining, for example the "Collier's Acre" near Barraston, dated to about 1671. The Barony Courts of the area date many workings to the 1730-40s. In August 1735, Hugh Stewart brought a case before Sir William Fleming of Ferm, to the effect that certain individuals were working the "lime craig of Sculliongour" for their own ends and to Stewart's loss. The case was found for Stewart and the defendants had to pay a:

"penalty of £12 Scots for each chalder they shall exceed the ten chalder mentioned yearly each of them ..."

The Barony Courts were a form of feudal jurisdiction granted under the charters of the old Earls of Lennox and held sway over land rights, quotas and privileges, rather jealousy.

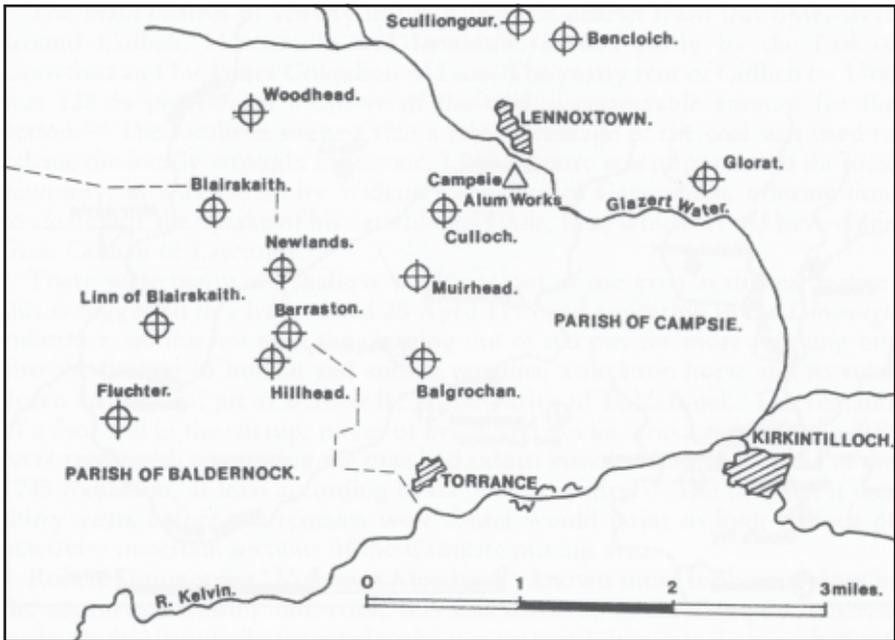


Fig 1.

LOCATION MAP OF THE CAMPSIE DISTRICT MINES, c1800

Key.

	centres of habitation.
	principal coal and limestone mining sites.
	the Campsie Alum Works, Lennoxtown.
	parish boundary.

Source.

SKILLEN, Brian *The Mines & Minerals of Campsie*. 1985.

Lennox Estate Papers. Deposited Feu and Mineral Plans.

S.R.A. TLX. First Statistical Account. XV "Parish of Campsie" 1795.

It may be mentioned that Hugh Stewart was a Glasgow merchant with a number of investments, including the Silvercraigs Weaving Factory. It became a common practice for local merchants to expand in to mining, both as a form of guaranteeing fuel supplies and as an investment in what was becoming an increasingly lucrative trade. Lennoxtown was also an important weaving centre from an early period, hence Stewart's multiple interests.

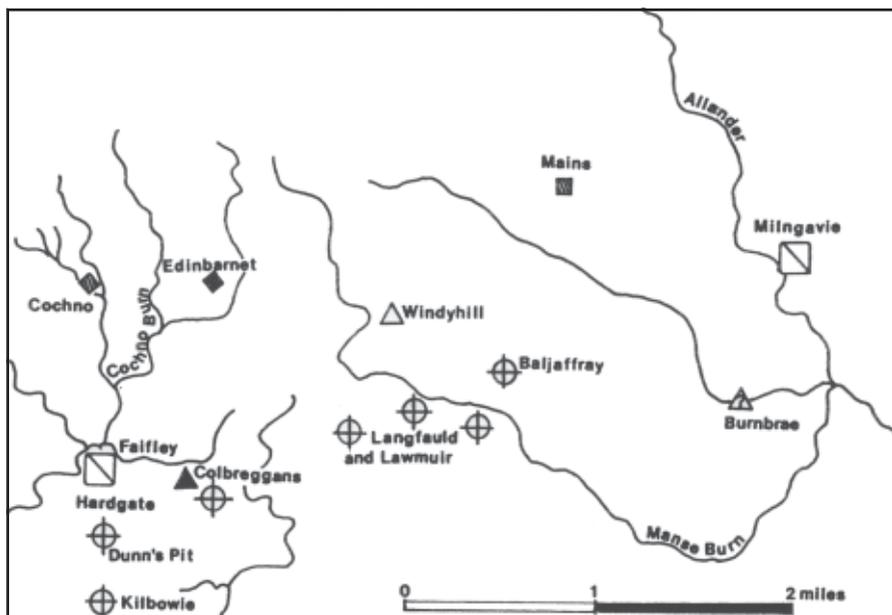


Figure 2.

LOCATION MAP OF MINING IN THE KILPATRICK DISTRICT

Key.

- Centres of habitation and industries.
- ▨ Local estate houses.
- △ Locations where minerals may have been quarried.
- ▲ Quarries often with additional mineral workings.
- ⊕ General area of coal and lime workings.

Note. Colbreggans was worked for both coal and sandstone. The white gritty sandstones were quarried and a coal occurring about 20 feet below was mined from shallow shafts. The location of Dunn's principal colliery south of Hardgate is conjectural.

Source. Based on maps of the British Geological Survey.

CLOUGH, C.T. et alia *Geology of the Glasgow District*. 1925.

The Barony Courts also controlled coal movements, a percentage of coal went to the estate houses. A hearing before John Rankine of Kilwinet, 16 January 1744, states that 12 loads of coal were to pass weekly to Woodhead House, 8 from Drumlourich mine and 4 from Sculliongour, and were to be delivered on Thursday of each week. A penalty of 20/- Scots was imposed where demand was not met.⁵

The main centres of activity in the Kilpatrick district from this time, were around Cullich, Hutchinson and Lawmuir, owned partly by the Earl of Crawford and Sir James Colquhoun of Luss. The yearly rent of Cullich by 1760 was £28 5s per annum inclusive of the coal, a respectable amount for the period.⁶ The localities suggest that a fair percentage of the coal was used to calcine the locally wrought limestone. Lime manure was important to the local economy, as was shown by William Colquhoun of Garscadden, offering lime to encourage the uptake of his agricultural lands, lime which would have come from Cullich or Lawmuir.⁷

There were many old shallow workings out of use even at this early date, this is suggested in a letter dated 25 April 1775 and appearing in the *Edinburgh Advertiser*, noting not only the cleaning out of old pits for more working but also the finding of human and animal remains, a skeleton horse and its rider down an old coal pit at Bardowie, in the Parish of Baldernock. The remains of a foot still in the stirrup, pieces of bridle and saddle, also a sword and a dirk were recovered, suggesting the man had ridden into the shaft at the time of the 1745 Rebellion, at least according to the old weaponry.⁸ The fact that it was thirty years before the remains were found would point to long periods of inactivity in certain sections of the Campsie mining area.

Robert Dunmore, a “Virginian Merchant”, known more for his activities in the cotton and muslin industries, was also involved in the Campsie minerals trade. Probably initially attracted to the area for textile interests, he was involved in mining about Baldernock by 1790. By 1792 he had also the lease of several small mines across the district.⁹ Lapslie in the *First Statistical Account* credits Dunmore as having civilised the local mining with the introduction of horse gins for raising coal.¹⁰ Dunmore’s activities were, however, directed more to the Kilsyth area, where his local agent James Patrick also seems to have had some control of the works about Campsie. In 1794 these seem to have been Neuck, Bankier and Boyds Burn, run both from Kilsyth and from Dumore’s Glasgow base by James Jack.¹¹

Mining about Campsie took a step forward, evidenced by the leasing of Barraston in 1799.¹² There the coal and limestone works was described “as lately set agoing” and the ironstone in the adjoining lands of Shank was also mentioned. The name Shank itself suggests that there were already mine workings in the area. Mining in the area of Balquharrage also receives mention at this time, and land adverts for neighbouring Strathblane mention the proximity of coal for domestic use.¹³ Mining in the Campsie district had become well established by the end of the 18th. century, and the mention of local ironstone shows that landowners were ready to respond to the desires of the infant iron industry for its raw material.

This conclusion stems from the policies of the Campsie landowners such as Lennox and Kincaid, whose actions mirrored the tendency to total exploitation, thus encouraging many concessionaires in the local mining industry. This was not the case in the individualist policies of the Kilpatrick district, though it was equally outgoing with coal carted to market in the Parish of Kilmaranoch, near Drymen.¹⁴ Similarly, the mining company of Colin Buchanan Company worked Watehills, near Faifley, and sold their coals down the River Clyde,

shipping them from Dalmuir. Their enterprise was a microcosm of the western expansion of the Glasgow coal trade. Colin Buchanan & Company delivered coals at Dalmuir Quay at 2/- per cart for cash in hand. Coals for the Leven and Loch Lomond were taken by lighter from Dalmuir to the nearest landing places. The price of delivery per cart at Buchanan and Glenfalloch was 3/7d; from Luss down the loch side to the mouth of the River Leven it was 3/4d; and along the River Leven it was 2/10d. The coal supplied to Loch Lomond and the immediate area, was brought by lighter up the River Leven, remaining 24 hours at the landing places. The customers came and collected their coal orders, and were charged a 1d. per cart extra on each day's delay in clearing "port" or landing stage.¹⁵ That Colin Buchanan was able to set out selling restrictions points to his domination of the local market, and the general sparsity of other fuels. A possible reason for Buchanan's domination of the local market was that coal from the Kilpatrick district was used in great quantity for calcining at limeworks on Loch Lomond at Arden; also at Camiseskan on the Firth of Clyde; at Cairmon; at Cardross; and the Murroch Glen and Merkins north of the town of Dumbarton. These all worked local "bog limestone" a poor but exploitable relation of the better quality limestones about Kilpatrick and Campsie. There being no coals in the area, attempts were made to calcine the limestone with peat. But, peat could only be cut in dry weather, in the summer months, and was thus very limited in supply. Coal though more expensive than peat was more economic in use, due to the poor weather and the high cost of working in the rain and hauling along impassable roads, thus coal was turned to for fuel and could be shipped to the proximity of most of the lime works.¹⁶

In the Kilpatrick district due to perhaps to the geological concentration of pit heads, the mines were the monopoly of a few individuals. The great geological spread of Campsie mining saw many lessees attracted both by the low rates of leases and likely profit, and from the immediacy of markets both in the printfields and the local domestic hearths. Leases in whole or in part were readily taken; part leases were auctioned as original lessees retired from the scene for many reasons, but their places were soon filled as is shown from the period newspaper advertisements. This can be illustrated with the Copperas Works at Barraston, erected on lease about 1805 for 18 years, the remaining years were auctioned in Glasgow on 21 September 1808.¹⁷ Auction details also evidence the extent of Campsie mineral sales, with 50 acres of the Bankier Estate being auctioned in 1812 solely for minerals exploitation.¹⁸ The minerals of such areas were often worked by more than one partnership and Bankier Coal & Limestone Works was carried on by John Wilson & Sons, whilst the ironstone was worked by John Stewart and James Wilson, in 1813.¹⁹ Messrs Stewart and Wilson carried on the Bankier workings 'till c1817, when with James Wilson's death and the sequestration of Stewart's estate, Bankier was once again on the auction circuit.²⁰

Public auction favoured the land owners where minerals were good enough to tempt a competitive spirit on the auction room floor, and thus higher prices. But this spirit of competition surrendered control to a few coal masters across the area, instead of the dozen or more small holders' workings of the previous century.

The 19th. century mineral lessees were generally experienced mineral masters, such as Robert Paterson of the Westmuir Colliery, Glasgow;²¹ or John Loughrey a local man of considerable personal experience.²² John Loughrey appeared on the scene in 1812; in company with a man named Hume, Loughrey took the lease of the Millfauld Colliery and the Kincaid Coal & Limestone Works, from John Kincaid in that year.²³ The coal was used both on the Kincaid printfield and to calcine the locally mined limestone, which was spread on the Kincaid farm lands. It was a very successful enterprise and Kincaid as landlord benefitted from his minerals leases both in their bringing in money on the open market, and their additional use as fuel and manure on his own lands at no great outlay. Kincaid's influence on the minerals exploitation of the Campsie district was considerable, the uniting of the Kincaid and Lennox Families by marriage increased his hold. Loughrey became his agent for minerals in the Campsie district, a loyalty which helped enforce Kincaid's grip still further.²⁴

The other mineral concessionaires were merchants and local land holders of various names and experience, working either individually or in partnerships. The individuals included Alexander Aitken at Glorat;²⁵ small partneries such as Messrs Brown and Wilson, working Sculliongour, or Messrs McLeod jr. and Andrew Young at Balgrochan. Robert Wilson, a Balgrochan farmer joined with George Brown of Westertown of Glorat, a landowner, to trade as coal and lime masters, their partnery was dissolved in 1817.²⁶ McLeod and Young may have taken over some of Wilson and Brown's investments. In turn their company worked successfully for a number of years. It would also appear to have had some masonic connections in Glasgow, principally through a Thomas Wilson, who acted as their Glasgow agent.²⁷ Many minerals masters had farming connections, on account of the use of coal to calcine the locally wrought lime, used for manuring. James and John Bulloch both had farming investments at Newlands, in the Parish of Campsie, and in the Duntocher area of the Kilpatrick district. The Duntocher area was an important mining area and it is likely that the Bullochs may well have acquired some of their mining knowledge there. James disappeared off the scene, but John after a spate of financial bother in 1820 appears to have re-established himself and worked Glorat for a number of years. There John Bulloch took up the lease of the Derry Colliery until his death in 1830. He was killed in a shaft accident, falling from the pit bucket to be impaled on an iron hook projecting from the shaft wall. He hung there 'till his cheek bone gave way, and falling further died from shock and loss of blood.²⁸ The mines of Campsie were unforforging of the simplest error, that Bulloch fell from a pit bucket shows how primitive lifting gear could be, secondly the "hands-on" work experience of some of the coal masters hints at how small these workings really were. Many local minerals masters were directly involved with their few employees at pit face.

These small holders in the minerals trade included the Plough Lairds of Balgrochan. A farming group enjoying ancient land rights and privileges, they leased the coal and limestone across the Plough Lands, together with the copperas ores in the lands of Carleston and Easter and Wester Balgrochan, and included William Maitland, John Angus and William Downie.²⁹ Maitland was

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also involved in mining around Newlands and Muirhead,³⁰ and the Maitlands as a family were dominant in the Campsie minerals trade for many years.

Minerals ownership principally lay with the Kincaid Lennox faction, and also with the Stirling Family of Glorat, though it was not confined solely to the area, for Barraston was owned by John and William Henry of Dalry c1800,³¹ and then by Hugh Brown of Saltcoats.³² All coal, limestone, copperas, and brick clay, was separately leased. The locality of copperas or pyritic shales, introduced another important industry to the area. The alum industry was an important part of Campsie; its importance as an eotechnic mordant for vegetable dyes, created a demand for it. The abandonment of the Renfrewshire alum shales, at a comparatively early date, as no longer profitable, increased the importance of the Campsie workings. The Hurlet & Campsie Alum Company's legal claims on the pyritic shales occurring in the mines, covered the whole area. The active pursuance of their interest provided many records of the vanished mining of this district.³³

The principal mineral proprietors of the Kilpatrick district were by the nature of the local geology confined to the Parish of New Kilpatrick, with the notable exception of William Dunn of Duntocher, and possibly Buchanan of Auchentorlie who may have had proprietorial rights to the minerals below his lands.³⁴ In the Parish of New Kilpatrick, the principal families of Douglas of Mains, Colquhoun of Garscadden and Killermont, Campbell of Succouth, and to a much lesser extent Glassford of Dougalstane all had some interest in minerals under their lands. Glassford's involvement is based on the tenuous evidence of his yearly distribution of considerable amounts of coal to the poor of the local parishes,³⁵ and some trials to the south west of Milngavie.³⁶ With so many landlords one might have expected many lessees much as in Campsie, rather it was the reverse with a few seemingly with cross border estate agreements.

The principal lessee of the district was William Atkinson, who worked his way up from the ranks having been an agent for the major 18th. century coal and limestone entrepreneur Messrs Glassford.³⁷ William Atkinson took over Glassford's empire assuming the lease of both Baljaffray and Lawmuir, and also Colbreggans owned by Sir Archibald Edmonstone. Atkinson also held the benefits of lease of the minerals of John Douglas of Mains, and worked the area to considerable profit.³⁸ Success tempts others and even the few absentee landlords showed more interest in the local mineral wealth once it became obvious. David Turner who resided in Greenock, and owned land in Kilbowie tried to promote it for mineral exploitation at this time.³⁹ Atkinson dominated the scene and overstretched his resources. It is probable that arson and machine wrecking was the first real blow, which was compounded by a fad for engine building which strained Atkinson's resources too far and he ended in bankruptcy in 1816.⁴⁰ His bankruptcy is of interest in that it introduced the lawyer Henry Gordon to the scene as one of the trustees. Gordon as a nephew to Glassford of Dougalstane, got the latter estate on the transfer of rights from the Glassford Family,⁴¹ and it may be that he acquired considerable mineral connections, if only in terms of assuring their legality.

In the aftermath of Atkinson's demise, the progress of mining slowed, but by 1823 Baljaffray was once again active.⁴² The mineral wealth of the Mains

Estate continued and was tenanted by Alexander and George Dalgleish, with John Douglas of Mains as proprietor retaining an interest. In December 1823, the Mains Estate was offered for lease, though the Dalgleishs remained 'till c1825(43) and after; for it was not until their Langfaulds Coal & Lime Works had been declared in favour of their trustees, that they had gone.⁴⁴

The other minerals master at this time was an industrialist named William Dunn, who held a wide range of investments mainly in the cotton and farming industries. Dunn held the Faifley, Hardgate and Milton Mills, by purchase from the Faifley Spinning Company, whose main mill at Faifley was steam powered; both Duntocher and Milton were in due course steam powered too creating a steady demand for fuel. Dunn held about 2,000 acres of an estate in the area, where again coal must have been in demand for he used it to calcine lime used both on his farms and sold locally. His foray into the brick trade would also have required coal for brick-burning, as would the Dalnottar Iron Works, also part of his empire. It was therefore little wonder that he took such an active interest in mining in the locality so as to fuel his diverse industrial interests.⁴⁵

This high level of need was the common factor between the Campsie and Kilpatrick districts and as a result there was little competition as there was opportunity for all, unlike the cut-throat existence of some other areas. Outside influence was minimal occurring only in shortfalls where industrial and domestic needs together exceeded local coal supply, as in the Kilpatrick district where domestic demand had to be satisfied from collieries near to Glasgow, mainly from Jordanhill and Knightswood.

Industrial demands encouraged self sufficiency, as is seen in the collapse of the Irish limestone industry in Kilpatrick. Irish limestone was brought over to Dunglass in sloops in the early 19th. century and calcined in kilns next the River Clyde. The cessation of the trade came as local Garscadden limestone was exploited, for it could be processed and supplied far more cheaply than its Irish counterpart.⁴⁶ In turn this allowed the Kilpatrick district to become more competitive with other limestone producing areas such as Campsie and brought the coal and lime merchants to the fore. Recognising the potential many merchants were attracted to the trade, so too many men of farming origin, this in its turn increased coal demand for calcination. Hence the basically internal nature of mining to these areas both for fuel and raw material for lime works, for bleachfields, mills and printfields and then the infant chemical industry on the linking of copperas and alum ores to the textile and dye manufacturers, all in their turn created a need for fuel, and the minerals masters joined readily in local industrialisation for it assured their own profits.

These profits were of course linked to geological opportunity and it was a quirk of creation that also influenced ownership in the two districts. The Campsie minerals for all their local geological problems of faulting were easy to get at and were therefore attractive to small investors. The Kilpatrick district was not so opportunistic, local geology confined exploitation. The Hurlet seams in the Hardgate area showed many scattered traces of workings but were then lost sight of under the till westward of Hardgate, emerging again at Milton. The Hurlet limestone itself carried some coal, which was a lucky boon to its local working. But the seams were heavily faulted towards Langmuir, with a

down throw fault towards Hardgate. These were geological conditions that needed some degree of planning and experience; only toward Windyhill and Craighead Knowes were there easy crop workings. It may be noted that some of the earliest workings of the district were about that area. Westward mining necessitated greater initial investment which probably disenfranchised the potential local minerals masters. Therefore mining became dominated by monied industrialists, at least initially until a local mining infrastructure could be completed. How strong this infrastructure became is shown in how even the wands from the scrub woodland about Garscadden were utilised for coal basket making in preference to basket purchasing in Glasgow.⁴⁷

Both areas were microcosms of the Scottish mining districts as a whole, their mining existing to guarantee fuel supplies to communities on the doorstep of the industrial revolution. Just how important the coal mining could be, can be finally demonstrated in the response when snow blocked the roads up the strath in 1795. Drifts of 4-7 ft. of snow cut off the inhabitants of the Blane Valley and in a few days the villages of Balfron and Strathblane were dangerously low in fuel. Coal supplies came from the pits about Lennoxton and the whole district turned out in a great communal effort to dig through the snows to the coal pits.⁴⁸

The interest of the Campsie and Kilpatrick areas is that they provide insights into the industrial and rural economies in days gone by.

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