HARBOUR

[Graham, Eric, "Saltcoats - a pre-railway port", Scottish Industrial History, Vol 2.1, Autumn 1978, pp14-33. Photocopy in Ayrshire Assorted Articles file]

List 10		Old pier head may incorporate a portion of the harbour works constructed by Robert Cunninghame in 1686. Includes the Maritime Museum, late C18, 2 storey, 3 bay house, rubble built with raised margins. Central door, sash windows. Eaves course, simple cornice. End corniced stacks, slate roof. Rusticated and battlemented look-out bastion at end of pier. Ref: Groome, II, 319. B.
nr		1686, extended 1797 and 1914. House on quay dated 1805.
1SA [1791]	587	Built by Robert Cunninghame of Auchenharvie: took several years and completed c.1700. Repaired since
Hume		Reconstructed 1914. Formed by two natural headlands, imroved by the construction of a rubble L-plan pier, C17 and later, extended in concrete in 1914. The width of the quays is a pointer to the harbour's use for coal shipment rather than for fishing.
3SA, 1951	331	Harbour and Pier reconstructed 1914.

Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol 8, p.609

	15.6.1686	... understanding how profitable and useful ane harbour at Saltcoats ... as weell to strangers as those of the kingdom, and for exporting the native commodities of that country, and especialy coall and salt wherewith it abounds and that Robert Cuningham of Auchinhervie hath already employed and is to employ much money and charges for building of Þe said harbour ... [to be allowed to levy 4d Scots on every pint of ale or beer brewed/sold within the parishes of Stevenston and Ardrossan, for 20 years from the date of this Act.].

Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, vol 9, p.282

	7.6.1693	... understanding that Robert Cuninghame of Auchinharvie hath expended considerably upon building ane harbour, and advancing of trade at Saltcoats ... and eing fully satisfied that the said Robert has in presenting that publick weall greatly prejudged his private fortune, and that it will be much the interest of that place in respect of trade the samen be perfected. Their Majesties revenue of excyse being when the said Robert began the said harbour only £52 Scots quarterly, and now by his industry raised to £17 quarterly, therefore the King and Queens majesties ... taking to their consideration not only the perfecting of the said publick weall for the benefite of trade (it occasioning the repair of forreigne vessells of considerable burther to the place) but that the not prosecuting of the design may hinder some considerable advancement [of the Revenue income, they grant to Cunnninghame the right to all excise duties on ale, beer, aquavita and brandy in the parishes of Ardrossan Stevenston, he paying £117 Scots quarterly for the privilege; the privilege to run till the expiry of the earlier privilege granted in 1686].
1SA [1791]	616	Now too small. 500' long, 24' thick. Consists of a quay and outer wall to shelter boats. This wall runs along ridge of rocks in straight line from NE to SW. Turns a right angle at SW end to form a pier 150', which points north. Capacity for 24 ships. Clay bottom, dry at low tide. 10-12' deep at spring tides. Large enough to load 2 large or 3 small vessels. Vessels have to be hauled to pier end and await spring tides to make room for rest. Propose extending quay, 250' beyond pier, on line of rocks, then turn N and E so it nears pier end leaving opening for vessels to harbour, thus forming an outer harbour for 14 vessels, the water being 15 to 16 feet deep. At present vessels lie for several weeks awaiting tide. Surveyed 26 May 1791 and estimated cost of

improvements said to be £2000. Requires co-operation of Ardrossan on N side of harbour. Survey undertaken as result of statistical enquiry presently underway. If Ardrossan involved cost could be reduced to £1000.

AA 15.8.1805, 4c — Quay-breast and back wall or sea dyke of the outer harbour have been completed. Wall is 354' long, 16' high and has 33' wide quay. The first stone was laid 25 March 1805. [Scots Magazine, lxvii, 1805, 643-644: extends and shelters the inner harbour, which was begun in 1673 and finished c.1680.]

AA, Th 14.6.1821, 4a — Royal Assent given to Saltcoats Harbour Bill 8 June 1821.

ASH, F25.9.1903, 2d (c.1840) — [John Smith's ".. Saltcoats 60 Years Ago]. "... to the days when I have seen as many as 15 ships in Saltcoats harbour - small ships, of course, none being over 200 tons".
"When Mr Cunningham of Seabank in Stevenston came to his estate, he found in rich in coal. In order to get a market in Ireland for the mineral he had to build ships, and for the ships he had to provide a harbour. At great expense the harbour was built, and a railway to take the coals to the quay was laid. .. A storehouse for cargoes was built ... Another house was also built, one end of it being used as a ships-registry office and for the collecting of dues, and the other was for (old sailors, and where they sat and reminisced]

ASH, Sa 23.8.1873, 4e — "Shipment at Saltcoats. Last week the British Dynamite Co loaded their steamer at Saltcoats Quay with 25 tons of dynamite. It was brought to Saltcoats in carts from their works at Stevenston by Mr Andrew Thomson, and it is pleasant to know of even this instance of commercial life in the long deserted harbour. Should the company resolve upon continuing to use the facilities of anchorage and loading, such as they are, it is just possible that their example may be followed by others, and a small trade spring up, greatly to the advantage of the town and neighbourhood".

EG 12618, F 21.11.1913, 1259b1261a — Bill. Saltcoats Harbour. Town Council to acquire, maintain and improve harbour; make alterations, build 'pavilions, shelters, bandstands and buildings for public entertainment', &c. To be acquired from Captain Cuninghame Glencairn Robertson Cuninghame of Auchenharvie.

BI 25/294 October 1914 — Plans for restoration of harbour: **Babtie, Shaw & Morton**, Glasgow.

Scots Magazine, 94/2, November 1970, 192 — The Maritime Museum was opened in June this year in the former harbour masters and customs house of 1805.

LIGHTHOUSE

GM, Th 10.2.1795, 46a — Reference to the 'Saltpans light' in report of a shipping accident.

ASH, F25.9.1903, 2d — [John Smith]. "The only lighthouse .. was an iron erection, on which hung an iron cage lighted with live coal; and the stronger the wind blew the brighter blazed the fire".

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

ACC Planning, A2559 — July 1950. Public Conveniences, Harbour, for Saltcoats T.C.

SALTPANS BATHING PLACE

See Public Buildings.

SHIPBUILDING

AA, Th 2.3.1809, 4a — Ref to ship presently being built by George Erskine & Co., shipbuilders, Saltcoats.

ASH, F25.9.1903, 2d — [John Smith]. "On the braes, where ships were built, Mr Murphy had a large ship-building yard. There Dublin brigs for the coal-trade were

built of oak". [Notes on construction of these brigs - ceremonial of launching - Murphy relocated to Greenock].

DANIEL STEWART, boat builder and spirit merchant, Saltcoats

EG, Tu 27.7.1869, 938a — Sequestrated

EG, F 13.8.1869, 1011ab — Commissioners include Lewis Fullarton, wood merchant, Ardrossan, and James McQuater, wood merchant, Enterline Saw Mills, Tarbolton.

TRANSPORT

BUS SHELTER, High Road

ACC Planning, A1407 — August 1949. Saltcoats T.C.

CANAL

1SA [1791] 592 — Built by Robert Cuninghame of Auchenharvie. Completed 19.9.1772 - first in Scotland. Ditch without locks, wide and deep in parts. 2¼ miles long. Long side branches cut to mouth of every new coal pit. Canal is 12' wide at bottom, with sides inclined at 45°. Water is four feet deep.

ASH, 15.9.1972 — Ran between Saltcoats and Stevenston. Opened to serve c.30 coalpits in the Stevenston area. Robert Reid Cunninghame, who succeeded to Auchenharvie in 1770, in partnership with Patrick Warner of Ardeer. Canal built between coalpits and within 600 yards of the harbour. Little more than an elongated ditch lined with puddled clay and filled by damming the Stevenston Burn at a point near Ardeer Cottage. No locks or reservoirs. 4' deep and 13' wide, narrowing to 9' wide in main branch; could only take boats of 12-15 tons. Ran along where Esplanade Cottages and Blakely Road are at present; then by Canal Crescent to Portland Place whence it went direct to a point opposite gunpowder waggon sidings at the Nylon Plant. There there was a Y-fork and main branch terminated. 3 short branches served pits in area bounded by New Street, Ardeer House and new access road to Ardeer. A tiny weed-choked fraction remains beside remains of Hillside No.1 pit opposite sidings at Gunpowder Plant.

L&A RAILWAY STATION — See Saltcoats North

GSWR

ASH, Sa 25.10.1873, 4e — The railway company are looking to get rid of street crossings and contemplate important changes in Saltcoats. "the change would necessitate the removal of the station to another site, and the construction of a viaduct".
[It looks as if this plan was watered down, but GSWR's proposal to close Raise Road brings much controversy in future papers.]

TT, F 26.11.1897, 1a — A new GSWR Bill will, if passed, give them powers to make a new road, running parallel to the railway, east of Nineyards Street, to make bridges, and to curtail existing railway crossings.

ROADS

ACC, RC 4.4.1955, 39 — Ministry of Transport have agreed to ACC's request that Nineyard Street, Bradshaw Street, Dockhead Street and Hamilton Street be added to the B714, and Vernon Street and Manse Street to the A738.
[I assume this is a straight reversal of their existing status]

SALTCOATS STATION

List 12 — 1894, Renaissance. Station Road: 2 storey 3 bay station house with single storey 10-bay wing to east. Red sandstone. 2 storey block: paired round-arched windows in shallow advanced bays, flanking central pedimented door. Cornice above; cill course and 3 square headed windows to 1st floor. Cornice, parapet above with decorative segmental panels. 1 wall-head stack. West elevation with 2 tall doors, the one to the centre pedimented. 1st floor as on main elevation. 2 doors onto platform. Round arched windows in wing. Corniced stacks, slate roof. Glencairn Road: single storey, 8 bays. Rubble plinth, polished red sandstone above. Cill course, 2 single and 5 pairs of round-arched windows. Door at right with pilasters, shallow pediment and acroteria. Corniced. Stacks, slate roof. Ref: Hume, I, 43. B

Hume — Rebuilt 1894 by the GSWR. A 2-platform through station, with the main office on the up platform, in a 2-storey, 3 by 3 bay Renaissance building with a single storey wing. The down platform building is a long single storey structure in similar style, with bracketted awning and glazed side screens. The platforms are linked by a lattice-girder footbridge.

ASH 6.12.1856 — The Railway Company have fixed on site "at the head of Green Street" for new station house.

ASH 6.6.1857 — Contracts let: mason work - Mr **Black**.

ASH 3.7.1858 — Opened Thursday last. ASH records disquiet at outside stair, &c., and the ugly appearance when seen from Green Street. [KWP 10.7.1858: F.o. 1.7.1858]

AA 11.10.1883 — A beginning was made on Monday with the alterations in connection with the extended station accommodation.

AA 1.5.1884 — Work restarting after delay.

AA 23.7.1885 — GSWR want tenders for station buildings at Saltcoats. Drawings at Engineer's Office, Glasgow.

Railway Magazine, vol.4, January 1899, pp 87-89 — "A Uniquely Decorated Railway Station". Includes photographs, and examples of the verse that Gilmour has arranged in cockle-shells since he became stationmaster in 1890.

TT, F 6.1.1899, 5b — Reference to Mr Gilmour's taste for station decoration: this is now featured in the January 1899 edition of *Railway Magazine*.

BRIDGE

SRC, H&TC 18.10.1984 — Contract for reconstruction of Overbridge 8, Nineyards Street, in connection with Ayr/Glasgow/Ardrossan electrification let to George Leslie Ltd., Barrhead, at £326,346.

BRIDGE

SRC, H&TC 18.10.1984 — Contract for reconstruction of Underbridge 12, Caledonia Road, in connection with Ayr/Glasgow/Ardrossan electrification let to Norwest Holst Ltd., Edinburgh, at £199,406.

SALTCOATS NORTH STATION

ASH F 15.4.1887, 5a — Plans of new L&A Railway Station tabled by Mr Strain, engineer, at meeting of Saltcoats Police Commissioners

KS, Sa 7.6.1924, 3b — Name changed, w.e.f. 2 June 1924, from Saltcoats (CR) to Saltcoats North.

WAGGONWAY

ASH, Sa 28.7.1877, 4c — [1820s]. 'There was then an old railway, one of the oldest in Scotland, from Irvine to Saltcoats and Ardrossan, for conveying coal. The waggons were drawn by horses. At certain hours green open-seated waggons for passenger traffic were run. One day grandmother took us all away by this conveyance for an outing, and not the least memorable

part of the day's proceedings, at least to ravenous young folks, was a visit to a baker's shop in Irvine, where we had scalding hot mutton-pies for lunch'.

INDUSTRY

CHEMICAL WORKS

George Robertson, "Cunninghame", Irvine, 1820

Chemical works at Saltcoats, making magnesia and Epsom salts from the pan-oil (bittern) left over in salt manufacture. Markets in London, Dublin and Glasgow. Set up in 1802 by William Burns.

ASH, Sa 28.7.1877, 4c — ... the old Magnesia Work - one of the oldest in Scotland - which used to stand close by [the Saltpans] has now quite disappeared ..."

COAL

AA, Th 18.4.1822, 4b — For sale, "Steam engines, gins and whole machinery, wood and materials" connected with the coal works of Stainley, Crofthead and Townhead of Saltcoats.

ENGINE HOUSE

List 9 — Engine House in field close to railway. Remains of structure in which was erected reputedly in 1719 the 2nd steam engine that had ever been employed in Scotland. Ref: 2SA, V, 455. B.

Hume — Reputedly built 1719. Most of 1 gable wall and parts of the other 3 walls of a sandstone rubble engine house. Supposed to have been the site of the second **Newcomen** engine in Scotland. The masonry of the gable suggests that the house has been occupied by a rotative engine at some time.

ASH, Sa 28.7.1877, 4c — [c.1820s] ".. we noted, inland, an old ruined gable, covered with ivy, in which ... the very first steam-engine applied to coal pit purposes was erected in Scotland. It still stands there, as an interesting silent memento ..."

GAS WORKS

KH, F 5.6.1846, 4g — William Shearer, manager, died 27.5.1846.

C1851 576 - 3 - 105 — Meikle Yet Lane. Finlay Mitchell, m26, manager of gas works, Falkirk, w,2s, 2v (sister in law + d)

ACC Planning, A5708 — February 1953. Booster House, Saltcoats Gas Works, for Scottish Gas Board.

ROPEWORK

Edinburgh Gazette, 729, Tuesday, 24th June 1800, p.184b

Saltcoats Ropework Co dissolved 1.6.1800. Partners were Robert R Cunninghame, Daniel Dow, Robert Jack, James Crawford, Thomas Bolton, Francis Russell, John Campbell, Hugh Brown, Roger Stewart, Alan Ker, James Ewing jun (as t.l. James Miller), William Brown, David Williamson. The business will continue at Saltcoats under firm of Hugh Brown & Co.

SALT PANS

1SA, [1791] 595 — Erected two years ago - already four others.

AA, Th 12.4.1821, 1e — [Letter from AN INHABITANT OF SALTCOATS re the nuisance caused by the salt works] 'There are Salt-works situated at the south side of the town, close to the harbour, which vomit forth prodigious volumes of smoke, and the ashes of this work are carelessly and loosely thrown down at a small distance from the work. When the south wind beats

highly ... the smoke and ashes are blown up and scattered profusely through the town.'.

AA, Th 25.10.1821, 1e — For sale, remainder of Hugh Currie's lease, which began Martinmas 1813. See Transcript, herewith.

AA, Th 29.11.1821, 1b — Salt Works still for sale. The upset price has been reduced: they "cost nearly £3000 a few years ago."

EG 3138, F 4.7.1823, 416c — Hugh Currie, salt merchant and dealer in salt, Saltcoats. In sequestration: dividend to be paid 31st July 1823.

Pigot, 1837, 277 — Salt manufacturers: William Burns & Sons, Sandylands; Warner and Cunningham, Sandylands.

KWP 10.7.1858 — Carried on "vigourously" by Mr Maxton.

ASH, Sa 2.9.1876, 4d — Salt-pans presently being removed.

ASH, Sa 28.7.1877, 4c — 'The old picturesque Salt-pans, with their square, tower-like chimneys, diminishing in successive layers towards the top, like a telescope, used to be a prominent landmark on the rocky point which forms one horn of the bay that sweeps round to Ardrossan. The walls are fast being demolished;"

TANYARD

ASH, Sa 6.5.1876, 1b — To sell, old-established Tanyard in Raise Street, possessed by late James Anderson.

WATERWORKS

AA 7.8.1884 — **J A Leslie & Reid** are consultant engineers on proposed waterworks for Saltcoats and Stevenston. Proposal is increase size of existing (un-named) reservoir and build a new one at Munnoch.

WINDMILL

ASH, Sa 28.7.1877, 4d — [1820s] 'At the foot of the garden [of Little's house at Castleweerock] was a door in the wall, opening out into the green fields; and there stood the old windmill. It was a roofless ruin; iron stanchions were rusting in the few small window apertures ... one year, long ago, a great storm broke down the pathway and walls of the shore road, round the promontory by the Pans to Ardrossan; and the old windmill was taken down to furnish stones for mending the sea-breach. So it, too, is gone'.

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