GENERAL

Hume — Opened 1848 by the Dalmellington Iron Co. The much reduced remains of a typical mid C19 iron-smelting works. The most notable surviving structure is the Italianate blowing engine house, with round headed windows, dated 1847, now part of a brickworks. The single storey ashlar locomotive repair workshops, probably contemporary, are still in use. The slaghill, though reduced by recent excavation, is still a landmark.

KJ 15.4.1847 — It is reported that the proprietors of these works intend erecting houses for their workmen adjacent to the mines. We hope that the cases of disease at public works, reported in the newspapers, will cause the proprietors to see that the site chosen is properly drained, and the houses, when built, of sufficient size and well ventilated.

AA 25.11.1847 — Messrs Houldsworth's ironworks about to be commenced.

KJ 21.9.1848 — We understand that these works commenced active operations on Monday last. One of the furnaces, on that day, was blown in the presence of a large assemblage of neighbouring gentlemen. Eight tons of metal were cast on Wednesday, and the machinery is reckoned to be in good working order. The old people of the district, "new-fangled", look upon the lurid reflection of the belts of flame upon the evening sky with awe and admiration.

Imp Gaz, 1854, v1, p.352 — 3 large furnaces, with another 8 to be built soon. Railway under construction to carry products to Ayr.

ACC Planning, A369 — November 1948. Storage huts, Dunaskin, for National Coal Board.

Hume, SVBWG Excur, Ayr, 1988 — Now property of DDCT.

Nr — Officially opened as a museum 11th July 1993.

AMMONIA, PITCH and TAR PRODUCTION

CO 3/8/1/2, County Council 1893-95, 159-160, Report of Walter E Archer, Inspector of Salmon Fisheries of Scotland

Report on pollution of the Doon, 16.10.1893 and 2.12 1893. A. Gavin said that DICo had begun manufacture of ammonia, pitch and tar in January 1893, but recognising poisonous nature of waste liquid had erected evaporating works and settling ponds. The lower embankment had been accidentally breached in October, and they had subsequently built iron tanks.

POLLUTION

CO 3/8/1/2, County Council 1893-95, 159-160, Report of Walter E Archer, Inspector of Salmon Fisheries of Scotland

Report on pollution of the Doon, 16.10.1893 and 2.12 1893. A. Gavin said that DICo had begun manufacture of ammonia, pitch and tar in January 1893, but recognising poisonous nature of waste liquid had erected evaporating works and settling ponds. The lower embankment had been accidentally breached in October, and they had subsequently built iron tanks.

GH, Th 22.11.1900, 4g. Evidence to Royal Commission on Salmon Fisheries (Lord Elgin)

Evidence of W. Macrorie. The Doon had been poisoned 5 times in last 30 years by DICo Ammonia Works. Major episodes in 1870 and 1892, with smaller events in 1878, 1887 and 1890. In 1892, Lord Ailsa, under threat of legal action, had secured £450 compensation (= 2 years rent of the fishing at Doon mouth), from DICo.

DUNASKIN WASHER

ACC Planning, A6946 — February 1954. Sanitary Accommodation, Dunaskin Washery, for National Coal Board.

ENGINE HOUSE

List 22 — Dated 1847, doubled in size 1865 in similar Italianate manner. Ashlar built with channelled quoins and polished dressings. West elevation: 2 architraved doors with shallow block pediments to both sections; side elevations with pair of tall round-arched windows to outer bays (now partially blocked) and blank central bay. Bracketed cornice to each elevation, parapet raised over central side elevation bays. Various later alterations. The Houldsworth ironworks first planned for Dalmellington 1846, engine house opened 1847 - engine from Murdoch & Aitken of Glasgow (now gone). New village planned 1850. Railway 1856. Ref: D L Smith, DICO, 1967. B

nr — Attributed to **Alexander Kirkland** on stylistic grounds by Ronnie Robertson (Moray DC, b. Patna. Address 11/98: 88 South College Street, Elgin)

FURNACE BANK

KWP 17.1.1857 — " ... and currently building 2 additional furnaces."

AP, F 14.1.1949, 6abc — Photos of collapse, last Sunday (9th Jan 1949) of part of old Furnace Bank.

AP, F 14.1.1949, 9cd — A 200 ft section, collapsed about 12.15 a.m., Sunday, demolishing a wooden hut, usually occupied by James Dinwoodie, works manager. On site at the time were James Logan, kilnburner, 14 Truff Hill, and William Ireland, watchman, 97 Doonbank Crescent, Patna. The brickworks employ about 50, and makes about 200,000 bricks per week.

GAS WORKS

KWP 17.1.1857 — " ... also nearly finished a gas work ..."

LOCO SHED

ACC Plans C451 — 1964, NCB Civil Engineering Dept.

OFFICES

ACC Planning, 4744 — September 1947. Offices, Dunaskin Works, for National Coal Board.

ACC Planning, A543 — December 1949. Additions and alterations, Offices, Dunaskin, for N.C.B.

ACC Planning, A1068 — May 1949. Store, Dunaskin, for National Coal Board.

ACC Planning, A19190 — January 1950. Cloak room, strong room and accommodation for Chief Planner, Dunaskin, for National Coal Board.

EAC Planning, 12/0111/PP — February 2012. Proposed conversion to house. **Ross McKay**, Maybole, architect, for Mr & Mrs J Speirs.

ARDOON HOUSE, 440086

List 25 — Possibly by William Burn and David Bryce, and built by 1857 (on 1st Ed OS). Assymetrical 2 storey villa-type house with simple Jacobean detailing, moulded skews run horizontally over angles, openings with margins and splayed ingoes; bays gabled or with gabled 1st floor dormer heads; single and mullioned windows. Snecked ashlar, polished dressings, prominent string course between floors, sash windows, stacks inset over bases, slate roofs. 3 bay main front with advanced centre entrance bay. Basically L-plan, detailing continued on flanks, rendered rear walls, including square (? staircase) bay in re-entrant angle (like a Scots C17 house) with a bell cast roof integrated with main roof; also long and low service range. Seemingly built in

conjunction with the nearby Ironworks which began operations in 1846 as the Berbeth Works, later the Dalmellington Iron Co. B

KWP 1.10.1864, 5d — Married, Neuchatêl, 19.9.1864, John W Bulkeley of Ardoon - Clara, daughter of late Matthew Dearman, Nottingham.

AA, Th 15.12.1881, 5f — Died, Everton, Liverpool, 9.12.1881, Clara, wife of John Hay Bulkeley, formerly of Ardoon, Dunaskin.

AA, Th 6.4.1882, 8f — Died, 95 Cedar Grove, Lodge Lane, Liverpool, 3.4.1882, in 58th year, John Way Bulkeley, for nearly 30 years cashier to DICo.

AP, F 178.2.1949, 7c — Ref to Mrs A.M. Stewart, Ardoon

BOWLING GREEN
CLUB HOUSE

ACC Planning, A5460 — December 1952. Alterations, Bowling Club House, for National Coal Board.

INSTITUTE

List 26 — John B Wilson, Glasgow, 1904. Single storey, irregular plan, Freestyle workmen's institute. Red engineering brick, harl, pink and ashlar and ashlar string course and porch arch, steeply pitched green slate roof, terracotta ridge tiles. Brick walls to within approximately 1 metre of wallhead, stepped string/lintel course with segmental headed, brick voussoired windows rising to harled wallheads and gables, multi-pane timber frames with some large panes to bottom; bracketted eaves, moulded bargeboards, jettied gablehead, ridge stacks with terracotta cans, 2 large squat ventilators with shallow domed deep eaved roofs and decorative finials. W elevation: wide depressed arch to centre leading to open porch and tripartite doorpiece, gabled bay to right with 5-light windows, window to left, lower bay to far left with window and single shouldered stack rising through eaves. S elevation: gable to centre with later opening at ground floor, window above, 2 windows to left, 3 windows to right. E Gable: outshot to centre, window to left and right. North elevation: irregular; principal part to centre, large gable to left, smaller gable to right with advanced lower piended bay, various windows; bay recessed to far left with 3 windows. Interior: not fully inspected; principal hall gutted as workshop/store. Ref: AO 6.5.1904. B.

CO3/12/1/3 — BBC 7.7.1903 — Workmens Institute, W, for DICo; **John B Wilson**, Glasgow. Approved BBC 18.8.1903

B 21.5.1904 — Opened 29.4.1904.

AP, F 18.2.1949, 7c — Ref to whist drive here, with call for greater use.

AP, F 7.10.1966, 5abc — Waterside Church hall is about to be leased by Jersey-Kapwood Ltd for training purposes while their new factory in Dalmellington is built (qv). The Church Hall began life as the Institute in 1904, and closed as such in 1956.

WELFARE BUILDING

ACC Planning, A9486 — December 1955. Welfare Building, Dunaskin Brickworks, for National Coal Board.

WATERSIDE VILLAGE

Imp Gaz, 1854, v1, p351 — Village erected in connection with DICo, established 1847.

KWP 17.1.1857 — 44 new houses completed in last few weeks ..

CO3/12/1/2 — WorksC 3.7.1900 — Cottage, W, for DICo.

BBC 6.11.1900 — Cottage, Dunaskin, for DICo.

CO3/12/1/4 — BBC 2.5.1905 — Houses, W, for DICo.

CO3/12/1/5 — BBC 2.6.1908 — House, W, for DICo; Alex Gillespie.

	BBC 7.6.1910	20 houses, D parish (where?), for DIco; Alex Gillespie.
CO3/12/1/6	BBC 7.4.1914	10 3A houses, W, for DiCo; Alex Gillespie.
	BBC 5.5.1914	5 houses, W, for GSWR; William Melville, St Enoch.
AA 4.6.1914		The GSWR have made a start with the erection of 4 cottages on a site adjoining the present railway cottage, for the use of their employees at Waterside Station.
CO3/12/1/8	BBC 26.10.1920	Double cottage, W, for DICo.
ACC, PHC 3.12.1936		Demolition Order. 71 houses, 1-76/77 Waterside, property of Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd.
ACC Planning, A2799		October 1950. 6 houses, Dunaskin, for N.C.B. 3 blocks of 2 - 1 block Type A, 2 blocks Type B. Not built.
AP, F 2.6.2017, 24 (1917)		[100 years ago]. Mrs Swallow, picture House, Dunaskin, sets off for France after a wire tells her that husband John, a private in the Scots Guards, is dangerously ill from a gunshot wound. Mr Swallow was a cinema operator prior to enlisting.

BOWLING GREEN, 439084

CHAPEL ROW
SAC, AA Health Committee 3.7.1962
1-10. Housing Improvement Grants approved. N.C.B. Improvement of each house to cost £494 18s 9d, and grant is 50% (£247 9s 4d per house)

CLOVER PARK COTTAGE, 435088
DOONLEA, 435089
DRUMGRANGE ROW
AP 6.8.1943 Row of 16 houses destroyed by fire, Tuesday. c.100 years old.
GLENVIEW, 437086
HILLHEAD, 436087
NEW COTTAGES
SAC, ACC Health Committee 3.7.1962
13-23. Housing Improvement Grants approved. N.C.B. Improvement of each house to cost £506 14s 9d and grant is 50% (£253 7s 4d per house)

TRUFF HILL
AP, F 14.1.1949, 9cd Ref to James Logan, kilnburner, Dunaskin, of 14 Truff Hill.
WATERSIDE STORE
AA, Th 5.12.1968, 11 To close. Article, by James Harvey. Pt 1.
AA, Th 12.12.1968, 11 Pt 2.
AA, Th 2.1.1969, 18cde Photograph; more names for earlier photographs.

DALMELLINGTON

CO3/12/1/3	BBC 7.4.1903	16 houses, D, for DICo; **John B Wilson**, Glasgow.
	BBC 7.7.1903	Houses, D, for DICo; **John B Wilson**, Glasgow
CO3/12/1/5	BBC 3.5.1910	20 houses, D, for DICo; Alex Gillespie.
AA 14.7.1910		A start has been made with the erection of 40 workmens houses near the old hospital for DICo. David Kirkland, builder, Ayr, is the contractor. 7 are also in course of erection at Clawfin for workers at Pennyvenie Mines.
AA 4.6.1914		As previously mentioned [not found] the DICo are erecting ten cottages further up the Dalmellington Road (from Waterside), and a start was made with other 12 at Pennyvenie last week. Mr William Hunter, Ayr, is the contractor for those of the Dalmellington Iron Co.

OTHER VILLAGES

Moore	The DICo built the following villages on the moors in Dalmellington Parish. Between the 1850s and 1870s they built Craigmark (the earliest 100 houses), Lethamhill (148), Burnfoothill (97) and Dunaskin (237). In the 1870s they built Benquhat (84) houses and, in 1912, when Pennyvenie no.4 was opened, they built Pennyvenie (c 70 houses).
nr	There is an artcicle on life at Lethamhill in Scots Magazine, September 1966.

PEOPLE

See also accounts of 2nd Waterside Reunion, 1960, herewith.

COMPANY

Partners in DICo, 1868 [Sasine Ref]

	James MURRAY, cotton spinner, Manchester - William Thomas HOULDSWORTH, now of Trinity College, Cambridge - Joseph Henry HOULDSWORTH, merchant, Glasgow - Thomas HOULDSWORTH of Farnsfield, merchant, Glasgow.
Partners, 1874 (Smith, DICo,58)	James MURRAY (12), Joseph H HOULDSWORTH (6), Thomas HOULDSWORTH (6), William T HOULDSWORTH (6), John HUNTER (1)
Thomas HOULDSWORTH	Died in February 1876

Dalmellington Iron Co Ltd, formed 1876

--	James MURRAY was a relative by marriage of the Houldsworths. By the time of his death in the mid 1890s he had the controlling share of the business. This passed to his son, James H Murray, but he died shortly afterwards and in 1895 JHM's widow married a London solicitor, (later Sir) William B M BIRD, who thereby inherited the shares and the controlling interest. (Smith, DICo, 72)
c.1895	Charles STODDART, furnace expect, Stanton, Notts, and Dr Robert T MOORE, mining engineer, joined board. Stoddart became Chairman. (Smith, DICo, 72)
December 1906	J H HOULDSWORTH resigned. (Smith, DICo, 81)

Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd, as first formed in July 1931

	Sir William B M BIRD, London (chairman); Dr Robert T MOORE, Glasgow, James A CLARKE, Annbank, Charles KER, CA, Glasgow; David COOPER, Glasgow.
E, 28.6.1946, 598a	New director, John W ANDREW

CHAIRMAN

Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd

July 1931 -	Sir William B.M. BIRD
- †	R.L. ANGUS
(†Angus) - † (4.3.1952)	James William TWEEDIE. (Obit in AA, Th 6.3.1952, 8e; AP, F 7.3.1952, 12f: AP in People file)

James William TWEEDIE	Chairman, Bairds & Dalmellington Ltd. Son of the headmaster at Darnconner School, Auchinleck. Died, aged 66, at Glasgow office, 4 March 1952. Lived at Shalimar, Ayr. [AA, Th 6.3.1952, 8e]

STAFF

SECRETARY

1876-1906	Alexander GAVIN (1835-1920)

GENERAL MANAGER, later MANAGING DIRECTOR

-1886	John HUNTER. (died 19th January 1886) (Rose from being a blacksmith in Muirkirk, and was married to Agnes, daughter of Rev Robert Stirling. Trustees were James Hamilton, manager, Coltness and Patrick Stirling CE Doncaster and (pre-deceased) James Hunter of Glenapp). Lived at Burnfoot House.
AA, Th 21.1.1886, 5b	67. manager, 40+ years. Size of the works increased greatly after opening of Dalmellington railway, and now employs about a 1000 men. "he was much liked by all about the works, who recognised that along with a strong will he had a kind heart, and an earnest desire to promote the good of all." Chair of School Board, &c., and on County Road Board. wife, family.
1886-1906	James P WALKER (Smith, DICo, 82) Obituary in AA, Th 20.6.1912 4h: Son of William Walker of Bellsbank. With DICo from 1874 (in drawing office). Retired to Sleaford, Racecourse Road, Ayr: photocopy of obituary with Sleaford file.
1906-1919	Alexander GAVIN
1919-	William DALRYMPLE (Smith, DICo, 87)
Bairds & Dalmellington	
1931 -	James W. TWEEDIE (later chairman)

FURNACE MANAGER

1873-1901	David LARMER (1835-1907). Had been Traffic Manager, 1857-1873.

GENERAL MINING MANAGER

1884-1901	David SMITH (1830-1913). See D L Smith, DICo, 248.
1901-1918	William SMITH (1868-1918), son-in-law of above. See D L Smith, DICo, 248.

BRICKWORKS MANAGER

Fl.1949	James DINWOODIE

Henry William BOSWELL	Born 2.2.1876 Aberdeen, Died 14.4.1960. Worked as Accountant, DICo, from 1896 to 1947. He lived at Barley Park Cottage. Long obituary in AP 22.4.1960.
John Way BULKELEY	Cashier for nearly 30 years. Died, in 58th year, 3.4.1882. (i.e. c.1824 - 1882). For refs see Ardoon.

AYRSHIRE RAILWAY PRESERVATION GROUP

HORIZIONTAL ENGINE

SRC, W&S 8.12.1981, 66	Agree to donate Crossley Horizontal Cylinder Engine (from Afton Treatment Works) to Ayrshire Railway Preservation Group.

© Rob Close 2026