

PARISH OF CARRIDEN

Rev. Mr George Ellis

Situation, Extent, Soil, &c. - The parish of Carriden (1), pronounced Carrin, is situated in the county of Linlithgow, or West Lothian, about 18 miles west from Edinburgh, on the south side of the Frith of Forth, is in the presbytery of Linlithgow, and synod of Lothian and Tweeddale. It is about 1 mile in breadth from north to south, and about 2 miles in length from east to west; bounded by Abercorn on the east, Borrowstounness on the west, and Linlithgow on the south. The soil is rather of a light kind, and agrees better with a rainy than a dry season: The climate, in general, however, is dry and healthy. The land is all arable, and produces grain, grass, and vegetables of every kind. It is let out to small tenants generally, most of whom are poor, and live poorly, at 30, 40, or 50 shillings per acre. The greatest part of it is inclosed.

Coal – This parish is full of coal, for which there is a great demand. It likewise abounds in free-stone. The coal is of a fine quality, and is the only fuel used in the parish. It is carried to London, to the northmost parts of Scotland, to Holland, Germany, and the Baltic. It sells at a higher price on the hill, and to the country people who live near, and therefore must use it, than any coal in Scotland. It lies very deep; this may be one cause of its high price. There are above 100 carts employed in the coal works, to drive coals to the sea and salt pans.

Grange Colliery.

Great	Chows	Culm
15,700	4,300	5,100 tons produced yearly
6,137	2,380	600 tons of which exported.

Colliers 35

Coal mines 2

Fire-engines 2

The great coal sold, per cart, which contains 900 weight, at 3s. 6d.

The chows, or smaller coal, at 2s. 9d.

The culm, or panwood, at 1s. 9d.

Salt pans 5

Bushels of salt made yearly 16,200

There is another colliery in the parish, which yields more coal and salt than that mentioned above.

Population – This parish contains, at an average, between 1400 and 1500 souls. Perhaps the eighth part of the people are seceders. Each marriage, at an average, produces 6 children. Many of the inhabitants attained to 70, 80, and 90 years of age. There are 4 heritors, none of whom reside in the parish. The alterations here, and in the neighbourhood, with regard to the dress and manner of living of the people, are very great.

Villages – There are 4 villages in the parish: Grangepans, Bridgeness, Bonhardpans, and Blackness. Most of the shipping that is now in Borrowstounness formerly belonged to Grangepans: But, since a good pier and harbour was erected in Borrowstounness, most of the ships lie there. The trade along the south side of the Forth is much decayed. It is gone to Grangemouth, which is 4 miles up the Frith from

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Borrowstounness, and the entry into the great canal. At present Borrowstounness has little trade but what arises from the coal and salt works.

Wages – Servants wages are very high here. A servant man, who would have been satisfied, 40 years ago, with L.1:5:0 half yearly, now gets L.3 or L.4 half yearly, and sometimes more. A servant maid, who got 10 or 11 shillings per half year, 40 or 50 years ago, now gets 30, 40, and sometimes 50 shillings in the half year. A day-labourer gets 1s. or 1s. 2d, a day, who was formerly hired for 5d. in winter, and 7d. in summer, per day. The price of provisions has risen in proportion.

Stipend – The stipend is precisely 8 chalders of victual, or L.800 Scots. The glebe is 5 Scots acres, valued at 30 shillings per acre. The Duke of Hamilton is patron. This living would have supported a family 50 years ago better than L.120 Sterling could do here now.

Eminent Men – The only eminent person born in this parish was Colonel James Gardner, killed at the unfortunate battle of Prestonpans in 1745, whose remarkable conversion, with many interesting particulars of a life and character, no less eminent for natural endowments than for the practice of every Christian virtue, are detailed in the well known memoirs of him published by his friend Dr Doddridge.

Antiquities – That celebrated Roman work called *Graham's Dyke*, terminates in this parish, it is said, at a place called Waltown. About 50 years ago, in digging up stones to build a park dyke, axes, pots, and several vases, evidently Roman, were found, and sent to the Advocates Library at Edinburgh, where they still are. In this parish stands the ancient fort, or garrison, of Blackness, one of the oldest forts in Scotland, and one of the four that is to be kept in repair by the articles of Union. It has a governor, lieutenant-governor, 2 gunners, 1 sergeant, 2 corporals, and 12 or 15 privates. It is built in the form of a ship.

(1) The name is certainly of Celtic original. In that language, *caer* signifies a post or station; and, as it is situated at the eastern extremity of Graham's dyke, the Romans doubtless, had a considerable station here. As to the latter part, it may be derived from *readan*, a reed, or *reidhe*, plain, open; the post among the reeds, the port in the plain.