

Place-names in and around the Fleet Valley

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Vennies Hill

Vennies Hill, now in the possession of the National Trust for Scotland, and the neighbouring lane distinctively spelt Vinnies, present a problem of very late documentation, as they do not appear even on the 1st edition OS map. On the face of it, 'Vennie' looks to be a personal name, most likely Vinny, a short form for Vincent, but I don't know if anyone of that name can be identified.

However, Knockvennie Bridge over the Urr Water between Parton and Kirkpatrick Durham, with Knockvennie (otherwise Glenlair) Smithy, are presumably named from the small hill nearby on the Parton side, probably **cnoc a'bhainne* 'hill of the milk', a conveniently accessible place where cows could be brought for milking. The same could be said of Vennies Hill, one wonders if a similar Gaelic name has been reinterpreted. Ven Law, close to the town of Peebles, may have a similar origin.

The name Planetree Park, now used for the lane up Vinnies Hill probably referred originally to a 'park' in the sense of an enclosure for cattle, though it was subsequently used as the name of a house, and there is still a Planetree Cottage. A *planetree* in Scots is a sycamore.