

Some Place-names in and around the Fleet Valley

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Kainton

Maxwell lists a place of this name in Girthon, though it appears on no OS maps and I can find no other trace of it. There is a small town named Kainton on the Yorke Peninsula in South Australia, it is tempting to speculate whether the inhabitants of this place in the Fleet Valley migrated and took the name with them.

Maxwell says Cain ‘is a frequent surname in Galloway’. It is also common on the Isle of Man, where it is the Manx equivalent of (Mac or Ó) Catháin or Cadhain; there are five farms on the island named Ballacain, **balley ‘ic Cain*. Cain in Galloway would have a similar origin, and Kainton would be an English or Scots formation with *-toun* added to that surname.

Kaugh Moss

An area of boggy ground at the far northern tip of Girthon parish, between the Rig of Drumwhar and Knocknevis, where the Pullaugh Burn flowed down towards Clatteringshaws Loch (the drainage is now much modified by engineering for the hydro-electric works).

Kaugh or *kauch* is a Scots word for trouble and anxiety, as Mactaggart puts it, ‘To be in a *kauch*, to be in an extreme flutter, not knowing which way to turn; over head and ears in business’. It may be from Gaelic *cath* ‘battle’, and might conceivably have that sense in this place-name, but it more probably just warns of an area best avoided.

Kendown

Cenn (modern Gaelic *ceann*) is ‘a head’, and, like its Brittonic cognate *penn*, occurs commonly in hill-names, most typically for a height towards the end of a ridge, a headland. Glenkens is probably **gleann nan ceannas* ‘glen of the headlands’, the loch name, and alternative name for the river Dee, being taekn from the name of the glen.

Kendown Wood overlooks the Sandgreen road from the north-west beyond the turning to Rainton. It obviously preserves the name of the hill on which it is located, at the south-west end of a ridge, **cenn donn*, ‘dark brown hill’ (*donn* is pronounced approximately ‘down’).

Kenlum

The fine conical hill, on a southerly spur between The Water of Fleet and the Arkland Burn, dominating the view from Gatehouse up the Fleet Valley, is pretty surely **cenn laoim*, and may well have had the meaning ‘beacon head’. *Laom* has quite a wide range of senses relating to fire, blazing and burning; it is the origin of Scots *lum* ‘chimney’, and is from an early Celtic word present in the name of Ben Lomond, after which the Loch is named by English and Scots speakers. Although only just over 1000 feet, Kenlum is such a prominent and widely-visible eminence, it is very likely to have been used for signal fires.

A ruined dwelling is marked as Kendlum in Rerrick parish below the south-eastern ridge of Bengairn. That forms a good *cenn*, but the site itself is not close to any summit, the name may have been transferred from some more prominent point on the Bengairn massif, where again beacons could have been lit.

Kennel

‘Kennel’ is marked on the 1st edition OS map on the Cally estate to the north of the walled garden, and there was a Kennel Cottage here in the 1881 Census. The Kennel was adjacent to the Cow Park, but fallow deer had been kept on the estate by Alexander Murray III until his death in 1845, presumably it housed deer-hounds.

Kildarroch

Kyldarach in Borgue parish by 1456, appears as *Kildarrack* in ruins on the 1st edition OS map, though Bridge End of Kildarroch survives (now just Bridge End). It was Gaelic **coille darach* ‘oak wood’, see Bardarroch above.

Kilfern Hill

Overlooking the early route of the Old Military Road to the east of Irelandton Moor, in Twynholm parish, Kilfern Hill is surely Gaelic **coille feàrna*, ‘alder wood’, with its initial ‘f’ unaffected by the preceding feminine noun (see Killern below)

Killern

Killern, with Killern Burn, Mill and Cottage, is on a tributary of the Pulcree Burn to the west of Rusko. The name is recorded in 1575 as *Killerne*, in 1611 *Kilaren*, and on Blaeu’s map it is *Killorin*. The last may have suggested a Gaelic church name, **cill Odhráin*, ‘church of St. Oran’, but there is no evidence for any cult of that saint of Iona in Galloway (nor of any of his fourteen saintly namesakes in Ireland); *cill*, though reasonably common in Wigtownshire, is interestingly rare as the word for ‘a church’ in the Stewartry (see Kirkandrews etc. below); and there is no reason to think there was ever a church or chapel here.

The first element might have alternatively been Gaelic *cùl* ‘back’: Maxwell interprets Kilhern in New Luce, Wigtownshire, as **cùl-chuirn* ‘hill-back of the cairn’, as there was indeed a massive cairn there, but our Killern had no more than a modest burnt mound in the vicinity. Culhorn in Inch, Wigtownshire, might (as suggest by MacQueen) be **cùl--airrain* (modern Gaelic *earrain*), which he interprets as ‘corner of the portion’. Killearn in Stirlingshire was *Kynerine* circa 1250, and that has been interpreted (though not by the most recent scholarly study) as **cenn-airrain* ‘head of a portion of land’. The history of our Killern might be similar; at any rate the second element could be the same word. Recent scholarship has confirmed that *earrain* were associated with ‘assarting’, taking in former wasteland for pasture or cultivation, initially by monastic houses (especially the Cistercians, allocating them either to their lay brethren or to lay tenants), or with later changes in use and tenure of portions of monastic and other estates. This element is found occasionally throughout Gaelic-speaking Scotland and in the Isle of Man (though not, it seems, in Ireland), but there are striking concentrations in two areas: in Menteith and neighbouring parts of the upper Forth valley, and in south-west Scotland, most of all in the Glenkens, lower Dee and Urr catchments (there are some 25 possible examples in Kirkcudbrightshire, including nine in Crossmichael parish and six in Balmaclellan, along with two or three in Wigtownshire, three or four in the south of Carrick, and two in Dumfriesshire).

Another Gaelic word that could potentially reduce to ‘-ern’ would be *fhearann*, with the initial letter ‘softened’ after a feminine noun. The primary meaning is just ‘land’, but it used for landholdings. It is more common in the far north of Scotland, though Farranlure in Inch, Wigtownshire, and Ballanarran in Rushen, Isle of Man, might involve this element; if so, they suggest the anglicised form would be ‘-arran’.

A further possibility for the second element would be early Gaelic *Ereann* (modern Eireann) ‘of Ireland’; compare other place-names implying settlers from Ireland, including Irelandton above, along with Gaelic-named Earn Water in Renfrewshire and several ‘Earn’ names in the Highlands: possible examples include Loch and River Earn with Strathearn in Perthshire, Auldearn in Nairnshire, the River Findhorn, with *Inveren* at its the mouth and Cullerne and Earnhill nearby, in Moray, and Deveron in Banffshire, though *earrain* might be present in some of these.

But perhaps the most probable first element here is *coille*, ‘wood’, and, while that could combine with the qualifying elements already discussed, **coille àirne* ‘sloe wood’, or **coille fheàrna* ‘alder wood’ would seem most likely; *àirne* does not seem a popular element in Gaelic place-names, perhaps the blackthorn, Scots *slae*, is simply too common, though the word may also refer to damsons or bullace plums, which would be more noteworthy; *fheàrna* would again have had the initial f ‘softened’ after the feminine noun *coille* as if it were an adjective, in contrast to Kilfern above.

Maxwell lists a *Killeran* in Girthon parish, but I have not been able to find any record of this. Killern in Anwoth is *Killeron* in the 1881 Census, one wonders if Maxwell's entry is a mistake.

Killiegowan

Killigoune in 1604, *Killigawin* on Blaeu's map, and spelt many other ways since, the name refers primarily to Killiegowan Wood, as the first element is certainly *coille*. The second part is ambiguous, it could be either *-gobhainn* 'of the blacksmith', or *-gamhainn* 'of stirks (yearling bullocks or heifers)'. Both these Gaelic words sounded similar to, and in place-names were equated with, the unrelated Scots word *gowan* 'daisy (or other common wild flower)'. There would certainly have been one or more smithies in Anwoth along the major route through the Boreland gap, needing ample supplies of wood for furnaces and making tool-handles, though woodland pasture was important for livestock rearing too, so either origin is possible.

Kiln Hill and Kiln House

Kilns for drying grain were an essential part of arable farming in the wetter parts of Scotland. Kiln Hill above Barlay is one of ten Kiln Hills in the Stewartry, and a Kiln House is listed in the 1851 Anwoth Census between Skyreburn and Mill House, though it is not marked on the 1st edition OS map (1854) and presumably no longer exists.

Kinganton

Kinganton is marked as a ruin to the east of Barlocco farm on the 1st edition OS map. Kingan is still a Kirkcudbrightshire surname, recorded in 1689 (Black locates the holder in 'Large', presumably one of the places named Larg, in Kirkmabreck or Minnigaff), along with *Kingam* 1679 (in Kirkcudbright) and *Kinging* 1684 (in Senwick). Kinganton presumably belonged to someone of that name. Reaney's *Oxford Dictionary of English Surnames* associates it with the parish and barony of Kinghorn in Fife, but records for that place-name and as a Fife surname hardly justify any assumption that the Stewartry family were from there. Black's *Surnames of Scotland* derives it from 'Irish O'Cuineain, descendant of Culinean (an attenuated form of Conan)', which is more plausible, allowing that 'Culinean' is probably a typographic error for *Cuinean*, and that that is a variant, not 'an attenuated form', of Conán; the latter is a name with a long and complicated history, related to Welsh Cynan. Indeed, it is possible that Cynan, transmitted as a personal name from Cumbric via Gaelic into Scots, is behind Kingan.

Kings Laggan

Lying in a hollow below the heid-dyke, between the south-western edge of Kenlum Hill and its neighbour Doon Hill, on an un-named tributary (another Laggan Burn?) flowing into the Black Burn and thence the Skyreburn, the farm (and former copper mine) overlooks the Old Military Road as it climbs up to the Corse of Slakes. Gaelic *lagán* is 'a hollow', a common element in place-names in the region (see Laggan below). 'Kings' was no doubt added to distinguish this place from the other Laggan, as well as Lagganmullan (linked to Kings Laggan by a narrow lane), in Anwoth parish. It indicates that, at some time after Gaelic had given way to Scots and English, it was crown property, but I know of no historical documentation relating to this.

Kirk Burn

The Kirk Burn forms part of a complex series of watercourses, along with Townhead Burn, Enrick Burn, Boreland Burn that eventually feed into Goat Strand and so Knockbren Bay. These were substantially modified to serve the various mills and early industrial activities, especially at Enrick. Below Enrick it runs in a straight channel alongside the road to the old parish Kirk and Clauchan of Girthon.

Kirkandrews (and Kirkandrews Balmaghie)

In Galloway, Dumfriesshire and Cumberland there are several place-names, many of them being parish-names, with 'Kirk-' as the first element and the name of a saint as the second (there are at least a dozen in the Stewartry). 'Kirk' is of course the Anglo-Scandinavian word, from Old Norse *kirkja*, that passed into Scots and northern English as the usual word for a church (both Old English *cirice* and Old Norse *kirkja* go back ultimately to Greek *kyriakon* 'house of the Lord'). Consequently, these names have often been assumed to be English, Scots, or possibly Norse, in origin.

But there is a problem: the order of the elements is Celtic, names in any of those Germanic-family languages regularly have the generic element in second position, the qualifying element first – why is not *Andrewskirk?

There has been much debate about this question among place-name scholars, but the view currently accepted by most is based on extensive study of name-formation in comparable bilingual situations, which shows that the best clue to the language in which a name was formed is not the origin of the individual elements but the structure of the name. So in these cases, we are probably looking at Celtic formations, even though neither ‘Kirk-’ nor (in many cases) the saint’s name are Celtic in origin. Names like Kirkandrews were most likely given by Gaelic speakers (many of them probably bilingual in Gaelic and either Norse, Northumbrian English, or Older Scots) who had adopted *kirk*, in preference to the more general *cill*, as their word for a church (perhaps specifically for an important church, such that may well have become a parish church as the parish system developed, mainly through the twelfth century).

Other ‘Kirk- + saint’s name’ formations discussed below are Kirkbride, Kirkcudbright and Kirkmabreck. In the Stewartry, there are also the parishes of Kirkbean, Kirkgunzeon, and the two Kirkpatrick, Durham and Irongray, and half a dozen non-parochial names. Wigtownshire likewise has eight parish-names of this type, there are two in Carrick, four in Dumfriesshire, and four in Cumberland. A similar formation, again attributable to Gaelic speakers, is found on the Isle of Man, where eleven of the seventeen parish-names are formed with ‘Kirk’ plus a saint’s name, and two others are named Kirk Christ; these are generally spelt as two separate words, but the formation is similarly Celtic, i.e. Manx, rather than Norse.

The coastal settlement and parish of Kirkandrews (at various times carved out from, and reunited with, the parish of Borgue) was known in mediaeval times as Kirkandrews Purton to distinguish it from the other parish church in the Stewartry dedicated to St. Andrew, Kirkandrews Balmaghie, and from the two parishes of Kirkandrews (in Eskdale and upon Eden) in Cumberland (also Kirk Andreas on the Isle of Man). It was *Kirkandres* in 1296, *Kirkandris* 1426. Kirkandrews Balmaghie is recorded earlier, as *Kirkandrees* 1172-4, *Kirkandres* 1240-50. Returning to the origin of the name in the mouths of Gaelic speakers, it should be noted that in both these cases, as at St. Andrews, the –s is probably not a possessive (not Andrew’s) but a reflection of the Gaelic form *Androis*, ultimately from the Greek *Andreas*.

Purtoun (*Purten* c1275, *Porton* 1335x6, *Purtoun* 1413) was pretty certainly the earlier name for the settlement. The descriptive element is Old English *port* (from Latin *portūs*). **Port-tūn* here is ‘harbour-farm’, the reference is obviously to a landing-place in one of the three coves in Kirkandrews Bay, and it raises the interesting possibility of a trading-place associated with the Castle Haven ‘galleried dun’, still functioning as such well into the time of Northumbrian rule. The proximity of the early Christian site on Ardwall Isle should also not be overlooked

Andrew is, of course, the apostle, brother of St Peter. According to the 12th century foundation legends of the cathedral of St Andrews, relics of the saint were brought to the place formerly known as *Kinrymond* (a Gaelicised version of Pictish **penn ri monad*, ‘head or end of the king’s upland or muir’) during the reign of the Pictish King Unuist I (c729-61), though there is no certain evidence of there being a cult of St Andrews there until the late eleventh century. The see of St Andrews became the leading bishopric of the Kingdom of Scots, and so Andrew became the country’s patron saint. It is possible that Kirkandrews was at some time associated with, the see of St. Andrews, but there is no evidence for this.

Earlier than the earliest date for the arrival of relics of St Andrew in Fife, his cult (and no doubt some relics of the saint) was established at another bishop’s seat, of great importance in the Kingdom of Northumbria, namely Hexham. The monastery there was established by the formidable Bishop Wilfrid in 671-3, a time in his stormy career when he was Bishop of York. The dedication to St Andrew would have been no casual choice, the cathedral in York was dedicated to St Peter (signalling its allegiance to Rome when this was still a matter of controversy), the brother saints were frequently paired in dedications of associated churches. With which point in mind it is interesting to observe that, during the time of Northumbrian rule, the monastery at Whithorn was known as *Locus Petri Apostoli*, as the ‘Peter’ stone there announces. This hints at the possibility that the dedication of Kirkandrews Purton may go back to

the time of Northumbrian rule, and that the church (perhaps along with the monastic site on Ardwall isle) had some familial link with the monastery at Whithorn, and, together with Whithorn, some special association with Hexham and York. Kirkandrews Balmaghie, on the other hand, was at one time annexed to Iona, a rival monastic family to Hexham.

Kirkbride

Kirkbride farm in Anwoth parish stands on the lane from Lagganmullan to Kings Laggan on the Old Military Road. Between it and the Skyreburn lies an intriguing group of features that suggest, as the 1st edition OS map declares, an ancient church and graveyard, with the adjacent Ladys Well. As the Ordnance surveyor rightly noted, it is only a 'supposed site', but the earthworks (a circular banked area beside a rectangular enclosure), along with the settlement-name, are consistent with this possibility. Though separated from Anwoth Kirk by Ardwall Hill, it is hardly remote from the parish centre, in mediaeval times it could have scarcely have been needed as a chapel-of-ease, but there is no historical record of it.

There is another Kirkbride, on the opposite side of Cairnharrow in Kirkmabreck parish north-west of Carsluith, with Kirkbride Burn (crossed by Kirkbride Old and New Bridges on the 1st edition OS map, and by another bridge now on the A75, reflecting the changing line of the coastal road and indeed of the coast). Above the farm and the burn is the site of Kirkbride Chapel, less than a mile from Kirkmabreck Church which itself stands on the northern spur of Kirkbride Hill, between Kirkbride and Kirkmabreck Burns.

There were two more Kirkbrides in the Stewartry, one in Kirkcudbright parish is still a farm near the road to Gelston, though there is no trace of any church or burial ground here, another no longer extant was in Kirkgunzeon parish; Kirklebride in Kirkpatrick Durham parish is curious, it might have been a tautologous **Kirk-cil-brigde*, there is no trace of a church, but is otherwise recorded as *Kirktelbride*, and remains dubious. Other Kirkbrides are to be found in Kirkmaiden and Kirkcolm parishes on the Rinns (the one in Kirkcolm now spelt Kirkbryde), in Maybole and Straiton parishes in Ayrshire, in Durrisdeer and Keir parishes in Dumfriesshire, in Ayre Sheading on the Isle of Man, and as a parish on the R. Wampool in north-west Cumberland. Elsewhere in Scotland there are at least six towns or villages named Kilbride (East and West Kilbride being the most substantial), and numerous smaller settlements of that name.

Kirkbride is a 'Kirk- + saint's name' formation like Kirkandrews, which see for discussion. Bride is Irish Brigid, Scottish Gaelic Brigde, otherwise anglicised as Bridget, based on *brígh* 'power, virtue, authority'. While there have been cults of numerous female saints in Ireland named Brígh or Brigid, by far the greatest (and many of the others are probably just local clones) is Brigid of Kildare, an abbey that rivalled Armagh for supremacy, and so the cult of Brigid rivalled that of Patrick for influence and popularity, especially in the eastern province of Leinster. Unfortunately her historical background is vanishingly elusive: there may have been an abbess of that name in the early years of the church at Kildare, but there can be no doubt that the web of legends associated with her (and even her feast-day, 1st February, Imbolc – pronounced 'imvolg' – one of the quarter-days midway between solstice and equinox, and a major feast in Gaelic tradition) reflect a more or less seamless continuation of the cult of a pre-Christian goddess of the same name.

The Kirkbrides of Galloway, Carrick, Dumfriesshire and Cumberland clearly reflect the potency of this Irish saint's cult in the Solway region. It is striking that, unlike many of the 'Kirk-' named places, none of the Kirkbrides now in Scotland became parishes; Kirkbride parish in Cumberland is a small one, as was the mediaeval parish of Blaiket by Haugh of Urr, the church of which was dedicated to St. Bride; all are now single farms.

Her cult may have been introduced, and the places named, in the tenth century by the Gall-Ghàidheil coming from further north; Brigid was one of the saints promoted by the revived monastic community on Iona, which seems to have influenced the range of cults favoured by the Gall- Ghàidheil; on the other hand, she may have been introduced by settlers directly from Ireland in the same period or somewhat later (cf. Kirkmabreck below). The persistence of devotion to this female saint in little chapels separate from,

though (in both Anwoth and Kirkmabreck) not very far from, the ‘official’ parish churches suggests a tenacious adherence similar to that to be found in parts of Ireland.

Kirkclaugh

Curryclauch in 1548, *Kirreclaugh* 1605, *Kareclauch* on Blaeu’s map; the name has nothing to do with any church, it is Gaelic **ceathramh clach* ‘quarterland of stones’. The ‘quarterland’ was an important unit of land-assessment in mediaeval Galloway (see Carrouch Burn above).

Clach is an early Gaelic form for ‘of stones’ (modern Gaelic *clachan*); the spellings *–clauch* and *–claugh* imply a pronunciation closer to Irish and Manx than to modern Scottish Gaelic (see *Clauchan* above). The coast here is dramatically rocky, and the hill-slope above would have been scattered with enough stones left from the last ice-age to justify the name, though a good many must have been cleared over the centuries in human activities from setting up standing stones via the construction of Kirkclaugh (aka Kirkdale) Moat (motte), the building of Kirkclaugh House and laying out its estate, to the creation of Auchenlarie Holiday Park.

While Kirkclaugh seems something of an imposter in the company of ‘Kirk-‘ names, the slab found here incised with crosses on both sides raises the intriguing possibility that there was an early mediaeval church here: the carving on one face is of a style that implies it was probably associated with a chapel in the bailey of the motte, but that on the other side has a distinctive swollen shaft similar to ones found at Anwoth and Minigaff, and suggests that (as in these two places) there may have been an earlier church here (see Kirkdale below).

Maxwell lists another Kirkclaugh, in Buittle parish, but it is not recorded on any OS maps.

Kirkcudbright

While it is furth of the Fleet Valley and the closely neighbouring airts we are considering, we can hardly overlook the name of the historic chief town of the Stewartry, especially as it is another ‘Kirk + saint’s name’ formation, with an interesting relationship with Kirkandrews (see above).

Kirkcudbriht in 1210, *Kirkcuthbright* 1296, *Kirkcuprich* 1458, *Kirkcubright* on Blaeu’s map. It is undoubtedly ‘Cuthbert’s church’, and was (as explained above under Kirkandrews) probably named by Gaelic speakers, although they were using Anglo-Scandinavian *kirk*, and commemorating a major figure of the ‘Anglian’ church. While the townsfolk have maintained a spelling that reflects an early Scots form of the name, the pronunciation, ‘Kirkcoobry’, preserves that of later Gaelic, transmitted via Scots and English speakers through at least three centuries.

Born c635, Cuthbert began his monastic life at Melrose but in time became Abbot and Bishop of Lindisfarne, the earliest, and always among the leading, religious houses in northern Northumbria. He is known to have visited Carlisle in 685, a time when the influence and territorial holdings of the Northumbrian kings and of Lindisfarne were extending westwards into the Solway region, though there is no good reason to suppose he himself visited Kirkcudbright or founded the church here. It is however possible that Lindisfarne acquired land here, and established a church and monastic community, as Northumbrian rule extended along the northern coastline of the Solway from the late seventh century onward. It may be significant that Kirkcudbright, with its likely association with Lindisfarne, is close to Kirkandrews, which may well have been associated with Lindisfarne’s rival, Hexham (see Kirkandrews above), while Kirkandrews Balmaghie was at one time held by Iona.

In the third quarter of the ninth century, following the fall of York to the Danes and under continual threat from Viking raids, the community of St Cuthbert departed from Lindisfarne, carrying his relics and other treasures. Accounts of their long exodus make mention of their travelling at one stage (probably early in the 880s) to the Irish Sea coast, maybe with the intention of crossing to Ireland, but whatever their plan was, it evidently changed. The foundation of the church at Kirkcudbright has sometimes been associated with this movement. Certainly a church dedicated to Cuthbert would have housed some relic of the saint, but if the wandering community did stay here, it was probably because a church associated with their patron already existed.

Archaeologically, the presence of a fragment of a Northumbrian-style stone cross-head, as well as a 'Viking' sword in a burial, imply that there was a church and burial ground on the site of the present cemetery by the tenth century. The cult of St Cuthbert continued to be promoted, especially from the late eleventh century onward by the Prince-Bishops of Durham, where his relics finally found their resting-place. Reginald of Durham in his *Life of St. Cuthbert* records that on the saint's feast-day in 1164 another saintly abbot, Ailred of Rievaulx, was present at the ancient church, which at that time was known in the official records as *S. Cuthbert de Desnesmor* (the latter being one of the divisions of Galloway).

Dedications to St Cuthbert of three churches in Carrick in Ayrshire, in Maybole, Dailly and Ballantrae, suggest that the cult of the saint was also favoured in that region; Ballantrae was earlier known as *Kirkcudbrycht Innertig* (1545 and later), the old church was marked as *Old Kirkcudbright* on the 1st edition OS map (*Innertig* is the confluence of the Tig Water with the R. Stinchar). There is a Kirkcudbright Hill, *Kirkcubre* in 1511, in Glencairn parish in Dumfriesshire, implying the presence of church or chapel of St Cuthbert there too.

Kirkdale

This name, pronounced much like 'curdle' (with the 'r' of course sounded) must be primarily that of the narrow valley of the Kirkdale Burn, 'church valley'. Remains of the eponymous church survive north-west of the Hannay Mausoleum, but its history is obscure. Though it was the church of a small mediaeval parish, its dedication seems unknown. The crosses on the incised slab found at Kirkclaugh (see above), and a pair of carved pillar-stones found at High Auchenlarie, imply some ecclesiastical presence in the area by the twelfth century. The earliest record is *Kirkedal* 1275, so the name may have been given either by Norse speakers, **kirkju-dalr*, or somewhat later by speakers of early Scots, both elements having been adopted into late Northumbrian Old English and remaining current in Scots and northern English. When Kirkdale ceased to be a parish in 1618, the boundary between Kirkmabreck and Anwoth parishes was set just to the east, on the burn (un-named on OS maps) between the Kirkdale and Auchenlarie Burns.

The name Kirkdale became that of the big house built in 1787-8, and of Kirkdalde Steading and many other locations on the estate; the name of Kirkdale Hill is probably earlier, as is that of Kirkmuir on its south-eastern flank (see below).

Kirkmabreck

Kirkmabreck is another of the 'Kirk + saint's name' formations (see Kirkandrews above), probably created by Gaelic speakers who had adopted *kirk* as their word for 'a church', in particular, as here, an important one that became a parish church. The mediaeval church was abandoned in 1637, soon after the parish had been enlarged with the addition of Kirkdale (see above), and the centre of population had shifted to *Ferrytown*, now *Creetown*.

The name appears as both *Kyrkmakbrek* and *Kyrkmabreck* in 1534, *Kirkmakbrek* in 1537, and *Kirkmackbrek* on Blaeu's map. There is another Kirkmabreck, in Stoneykirk parish on the Rhinns, which is *Kirkmakbrik* on Blaeu's map. These records make it reasonably likely that the saint commemorated here was Aodh mac Bric. Aodh, later Áed, meaning 'fire' is the name of several Irish saints; this one was the son of Cormac *Breac*, 'freckled'. Nothing historically valid can be said of him, though a good many legends became associated with his cult, which was centred at Rahugh (Ráith Aodha) and nearby Killare, in Co. Westmeath. In Scotland he may also have been known as Modan, *Mo Aedán* 'my Aed-án', who was commemorated on the Roseneath peninsula north of the Clyde and around Falkirk. His fame was apparently promoted in Ireland by the Augustinian canons in the twelfth century, but the origins of his cult in Galloway are unknown: like Brigid (see Kirkbride above), he was a saint favoured by the Columban community in the tenth to twelfth centuries, and so, maybe, introduced by the Gall- Ghàidheil, or he else may have been brought by settlers directly from Ireland. The old church building probably dates from the twelfth century.

There is also a seventeenth century record that the chapel at Dunrod by Kirkcudbright was dedicated to St. Mary and St. Brioc. The latter might have been an elided form of *Mac Bric*, confused at some stage with Brioc, the patron of St. Breock in Cornwall and St. Brieuc in Brittany. The saint of Kirkmabreck has

sometimes been interpreted as *Mo Brioc* ‘my Brioc’, but the early records, and the geographical and historical contexts, make *Mac Bric* much more likely.

Kirkmuir

Kirkmuir is a farm at the north end of Clash Wood on the south-eastern flank of Kirkdale Hill near the head of Kirkdale Burn. It is pretty certainly ‘moorland (belonging to) the church’, part of the church land, though it could have once been **Cill Mhuire* ‘church of Mary’, the nearest church being that of Kirkdale, 500 metres or so to the south.

Knockbogle

Gaelic *cnoc* is usually translated ‘knoll, hillock’, and indeed generally does refer to fairly small but prominent features such as drumlins, but can name any free-standing eminence, a substantial rounded hill, even (at least in Ireland) big enough to qualify as a mountain. In modern Scottish Gaelic (and locally in Ulster), *cnoc* is pronounced much like ‘crock’, but in Scots and English it is equated with ‘knock’, i.e. ‘nock’.

‘Knock’ is very common in place-names in our region: there are around 125 names formed with this element in Stewartry, at least 300 on OS Pathfinder maps covering Dumfries and Galloway. It is also ubiquitous on the Isle of Man, where it appears as ‘cronk’ or ‘knock’. It is common throughout Scotland and Ireland, and occurs in Cumberland and elsewhere in north-west England as far south as the Wirral.

There was a Brittonic cognate **cnuc* (modern Welsh *cnwc*) and it is possible that a few ‘Knock’ names in Galloway have Cumbric origins. Maxwell lists a *Knockbogle* in Twynholm parish, which I have not located, it would appear to have Cumbric **bugeil* ‘a herdsman’ rather than the Gaelic cognate *buachaille*.

However, the concentrations of *cnoc* names around the Irish Sea, also in the inner Hebrides, and in Ross and southern Sutherland, coincide with areas where Gaelic-speakers were for some centuries in close contact with Scandinavian. Bilingualism would have been common in these areas, and the Old Norse hill-word *knúkr* might have contributed to the popularity of the Gaelic word in place-naming, and to the presence of *knock* as a common noun for a hillock in Scots and northern English (though there was probably also an Old English **cnucc* which occurs in place-names in Kent and neighbouring counties). All these Celtic and Germanic words are likely to have had a common, possibly non-Indo-European, origin.

Knockbrack and Knockbrex

Knockbrack is marked as a ruin on the 1st edition OS map a short distance west of a ford (now a bridge near the Raiders’ Road car-park) on the Black Water of Dee; it is not shown on modern maps. The site lies within FCS plantations. A track from the river-crossing runs near the site, which is on a rounded hillock, and there appears to have been a wall around it.

The name may be compared with Knockbrack in Closeburn parish, in the Dumfriesshire hills, Knockbrake, which occurs four times in Wigtownshire, and near Maybole in Ayrshire, Knockbreck occurring twice in Kirkcowan, another south-west of Muirkirk in Ayrshire, also *Knockbrek* shown on Blaeu’s map in Kirkcolm on the Rinns, no longer extant, and Knockbrock on the road from Dalry to Moniaive just east of the county boundary in Dumfriesshire. It is early Gaelic **cnoc bréc* (modern Gaelic *breac*), ‘multicoloured, speckled knoll’

Knockbrex is more closely in the company of East and West Knockbrex in Penninghame parish (*Knockbrakis* in 1506), along with Knockbracks now in forestry north of Glentroll village, another (with a house marked as a ruin on the 1st edition OS map) in Cumloden Deer Parks, and a third in Stoneykirk, and Knockbrax in Kirkinner. The Scots plural *brakis*, surviving as –brex (also as –bracks, –brax) implies that at some time in the later middle ages there was more than one landholding included under this name, as is still the case in Penninghame. The ‘speckled knoll’ in Kirkandrews is Knockbrex Hill, the small hill now maintained as a viewpoint. It is striking that all these **cnoc bréc* hillocks are either on the coast or in remote upland but in sight of old routeways; they would have been distinctive landmarks.

Knockdown

The hill overlooking High Creoch is probably, as Maxwell suggests, **Cnoc donn*, ‘brown hillock’. ‘-dawn’ reflects pretty closely the later Gaelic pronunciation of *donn* (compare Ben John above).

Knock Derry

Knock Derry is a summit on the western spur of the White Top of Culreoch, overlooking Moss Derry, with the Doon of Culreoch beyond. ‘Derry’, as in Northern Ireland, may be early Gaelic *daire* (modern *doire*), primarily ‘an oakwood’, (see Derrygown above). Neither this summit nor Moss Derry below would seem especially hospitable to deciduous trees. However, *daire* was often used to refer to a relatively modest clump of trees (not necessarily oaks) such as might have survived here: Michael Ansell’s observation (see Darncree above) that *daire* in Galloway seems to refer to small woods on marginal land, such as on hillocks in generally boggy surroundings, could well be relevant (and cf. Knockendurrick below).

The alternative possibility is *dearg* ‘red’: the rock here includes a narrow band of shale somewhat darker than the surrounding greywacke, though not, I think, conspicuously red; it might have supported a slightly distinctive vegetation that gave the small hill such a colour.

There is a Knockinderry Hill in the south-west of Penninghame parish, Maxwell interprets it as **cnoc an doire*. Knockaderry in Co. Limerick is the same.

Knockendurrick

Knockendurrick is one of the range of hills overlooking Irelandton Moor from the north, currently a focus of attention because of a controversial wind-farm proposal. As at Knock Derry above, we have a choice between **cnoc an daraich* ‘oak knoll’ and **cnocán dearg* ‘red hillock’, and similar considerations apply. *Darach* can mean either a single oak-tree or ‘oak’ collectively (it is a variant development from the same origin as *daire*). Knockendurrick is not an obvious habitat for a substantial stand of oaks, but nor is it a mere hillock or conspicuously red. Again, Michael Ansell’s observations, favouring a small piece of woodland, not even necessarily of oak, on a relatively modest hill (see Darncree and Knock Derry, above), could well apply.

There is a hill named Knockindarroch in Balmaclellan parish, which Maxwell takes to be **cnoc an daraich*; he also records a *Knockandarick* in Tongland, offering either **cnoc an daraich* or **cnocán dearg* here; it is absent from OS maps. Cronk Daragh in Arbory on the Isle of Man is interpreted in Broderick’s Dictionary of Manx Place-Names as ‘oak hillock’.

Knockewen

This small hill, at the southern tip of Girthon parish between Boreland, Rainton and Plunton, seems to be **cnoc Eoghain*, ‘Ewan’s knoll’. *Eoghan* was the ancestral name of a powerful clan, the *Eoghanacht*, in Munster, south-west Ireland, and a saint *Eoghan*, probably a sixth-century bishop of Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone, is the patron of Kirkcowan in Wigtownshire. But the name became a popular one for boys in both its Gaelic and Scots forms, the one who gave his name to Knockewen is unknown. Comparable names include Barewing (and *Ewinstoun* on Blaeu’s map) in Balmaclellan parish, and, elsewhere in Scotland, Tullichewan in Lennox and Pitewan in the Mearns.

Knockgyle

The small summit north-east of Castramont Wood is probably **cnoc goill*, which could be ‘knoll of the stranger’ or ‘of the standing stone’ (see Ardwall and Dergall above), though there is no record of a standing stone here. Alternatively, ‘-gyle’ could, as in Argyle (sic), be *Gàidheal* ‘of Gaels’, or *Gàidheil* ‘of a Gael’, possibly so-named at a time when Gaelic and Scots speakers were in competition for land. Whatever the origin, Knockgill in Crossmichael parish is likely to have been similar.

Knockmain

A low hill now planted with forestry, at the north-east edge of Girthon parish by the Palnure Burn and near The Queen’s Way. Given its liminal location, **cnoc meadhan* ‘middle knoll’ is conceivable, the

pronunciation of the second element would have been close to ‘-main’. Otherwise, there is the interesting possibility of a Cumbric **cnuc-main* or *-mein* (modern Welsh *cnwch maen* or *meini*), ‘knoll with a stone, or stones’ (cf. Redmain and Triermain in Cumberland), implying some conspicuous standing stone or group of stones, though no trace of any survives.

Knocknevis

At the northernmost tip of Girthon parish, Knocknevis is a spur of the Fell of Fleet, with little Loch Gower at its summit. It is now in the midst of FCS plantations, though crossed by the National Cycle Route 7; the Pullaugh Burn to the west and Black Water of Dee to the east were both much affected here by the building of the Clatteringshaws Dam just to the north.

Mysteriously, Maxwell lists, without further information, a Knocknevis in Carsphairn, but that is not on OS maps, conversely our Knocknevis is not in his *Place-Names of Galloway*.

In the absence of any historical documentation, any suggestion for the etymology of ‘nevis’ must be speculative. The echo of Scotland’s highest mountain is obvious, but the name of that mighty eminence may well have influenced that of this modest hill. And the origin of Ben Nevis is far from certain: the proposals that win most support among place-name scholars are either early Gaelic *neimheas* (modern *nimheas*) ‘poison’ (as primarily the name of the River Nevis, transferred to the mountain), or an ancient name formed from the Indo-European root **neb-* meaning ‘cloud, mist’, reinterpreted by Gaelic speakers. It is conceivable that Knocknevis had, or was believed to have, some long-forgotten venomous property, and it is not infrequently misty, but no more so than any other Galloway hills.

Another tempting possibility is Gaelic *neimheadh*: this derives from an early Celtic *nemeton* meaning a pre-Christian sacred place, an open-air sanctuary, but in early Gaelic (and earlier Old Irish) it came to be used of consecrated ground and, more broadly, church land. If there were at some time two or more portions of glebe-land on this hill, *nevis* could be a plural of **nevie*, a possible Scots form from *neimheadh*. But, again, historical documentation is lacking.

Knockninchock

A small hill between Bagbie farm and the ruin of Kirkbride church, above Carsluith, also spelt *Knockninshock*. It pretty certainly combines forms of the Gaelic words *cnoc* ‘hillock’ and *uinnse* ‘ash trees’: **cnocán-uinnseach*, with an adjectival form of *uinnse*, would be ‘an ashy hillock, a little knoll covered with ash trees’, or **cnoc na h-uinnseoig*, with a form of the noun more typical of Irish Gaelic, would be ‘knoll of the ash-tree’.

Knocktaggart

The domed hill to the east of Knockmabreck Church is **cnoc an t-sagairt* ‘the priest’s knoll’ (the ‘s’ was not sounded in this Gaelic formation). There is another Knocktaggart by Kirkmaiden church on the Rinnns.

Knocktinkle

Two small hills on opposite sides of the Fleet bear the name Knocktinkle, one in Anwoth parish near Rusko, the other in Girthon parish on the Laurieston road beyond High Creoch (now a recognised viewpoint with a small car-park). There is another Knocktinkle in Kirkmabreck, between Bagbie farm and the site of Kirkbride Church, and a fourth one overlooks the Dee from the east in Balmaclellan.

These names are interesting relics of the very ancient way of hunting deer (and other game animals) that was probably still practised in Galloway as late as the seventeenth century. Gaelic *timchioll* is a verbal noun literally meaning ‘a surrounding, an encirclement’; in such hunts it referred to the band of people whose task it was to encircle a herd of deer and drive the animals into a trap, typically a narrow defile (*èileag*), where they could be shot with arrows, later guns, or killed by hounds. **Cnoc an timchill* would have been the place where this party assembled. All the Knocktinkles enjoy extensive views of countryside where deer could be sighted and a plan to entrap them put into action.

Knockwhar and Knockwar

Knockwhar is the hill in Girthon parish between Lagg and Knocktinkle. Knockwar Hill in Kirkmabreck parish is to the north of Pibble.

In the absence of documentation, this name is very difficult. The Kirkcudbrightshire place-names website declares without any reference or further explanation, ‘Knockwhar probably means “near hill”’, but no Gaelic or Cumbric word meaning ‘near’ bears any relation to ‘whar’. More possible is Gaelic *uar* or *fuar*, primarily meaning ‘cold’. The more common form in Scottish Gaelic is *fuar*, which could become *whar* in Scots speech; *uar* is more frequent in Ireland, especially in place-names, but is recorded in Scottish Gaelic. Used as nouns, these words have a range of secondary, water-related senses such as ‘waterfall, waterspout, heavy shower’, even ‘landslip’, while *fuaran* or *uarán* is ‘a spring’. Perhaps the sense most relevant here is ‘wet ground’: both Knockwhar and Knockwar hills have extensive flushes, springs with associated boggy areas, their names may preserve a usage of *uar* or *fuar* in Galloway Gaelic for such features.

Knockwhirr to the west of Trostrie in Twynholm parish might have a similar origin, but it is an obscure name.