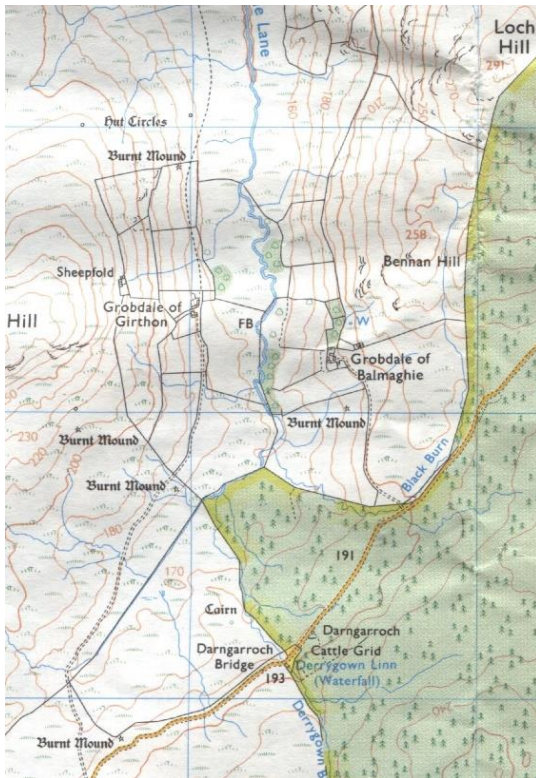


## Grobdale of Balmaghie

There are 2 farms named Grobdale in the Stewartry District of Dumfries & Galloway :-

- **Grobdale of Girthon** is in Girthon parish, to the west of Grobdale of Balmaghie
- **Grobdale of Balmaghie** is in Balmaghie parish, and to the east of Grobdale of Girthon

The two farms are separated by a stream known as the '**Grobdale Lane**', which forms part of the boundary between Girthon and Balmaghie parishes.



The 1996 OS map shows both **Grobdales** and **Darngarroch Bridge**.



Grobdale of Balmaghie is sometimes referred to as **Grobdale Balmaghie** and is known locally as **Wee Grobdale**.

### **The Hanging Tree**

A group of trees grow near the two Grobdales. The tallest tree is locally known as the Hanging Tree.

Billy Craig believes that a tenant of Grobdale of Balmaghie was asked by his landlord to leave the farm. The man was so distraught by this request that he hanged himself on a nearby tree.



The name of the owner and the tenant are unknown.



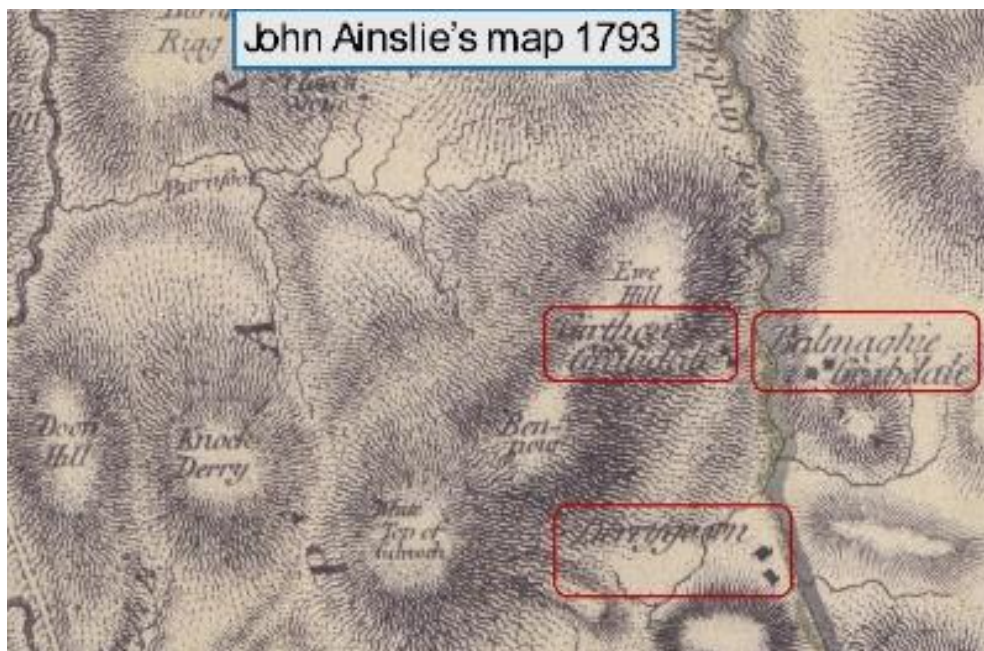
## **Origin of the name 'Grobdale'**

The origin of the name is unclear, but historical linguist Alan James thinks that it may have been named by English speakers during the tenth to twelfth centuries and the name was derived from Northumbrian Old English with Scandinavian influences.

'**Grob**' probably means a watercourse, while '**dale**' is a Scandinavian word for a valley, so it probably means a water course in Balmaghie Parish.

The two Grobdale farmhouses are only about a quarter of a mile apart as the crow flies, but over a mile apart by road. The name **Grobdale 'Lane'** comes from the local name for a fairly straight water course.

## Old Maps



Both Grobdale farms appear on the **1793 John Ainslie** map of the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright.

## Kirkcudbrightshire Place Name Book 1848 - 51

When the surveyors were making measurements for the first **Ordnance Survey map around 1850**, they also noted names of places and features to be marked on the map and asked local people for comments. These notes were recorded in **O.S. Place Name Books**.

Names as written	Description
<b>GROBDALE of Balmaghie</b>	A tolerable sized farm house with offices, in good repair. <b>It is the property of Alexander Livingstone, Potterland, near Castle Douglas</b>
<b>GROBDALE of Girthon</b>	A tolerable sized farm house with offices in good repair. <b>The property of Horatio Stewart Murray Esqr. of Broughton.</b>
<b>LAUGHENGHIE</b> (in ruins)	This was formerly a farm, house & offices. The land is now attached to Grobdale ( <i>of Girthon</i> ) It is on the Estate of Horatio Stewart Murray Esqr of Broughton <i>Laughenghie was on the east side of Laughenghie Hill which lies to the north west of Grobdale of Balmaghie. In 1851 it was a ruin.</i>
<b>GROBDALE LANE</b>	A 'considerable stream'. It forms part of the boundary between the Parishes of Girthon & Balmaghie. It feeds into the Auchencloy Burn near Loch Skerrow.

## Owners and Tenants

**1668** - The following implies that Alexander Halliday was a tenant at Grobdale of Balmaghie. The information comes from the Kirkcudbrightshire Abstract Documents online.

### James Milligen in Grobdale

November 2, 1668: [Balmaghie] Instrument of Sasine on contract of wedset between John Gordon of Kirkconnell and **Alexander Halliday in Grobdale**, where by John Gordon infest Alexander Halliday and his spouse, Margaret Gordon, in the half merkland Lairdmannoch extending to the five merkland with the pertinent lying within the parish of Tongland under reversion of 2000 merks. Contracted dated at Tongland May --, 1664. Sasine witnessed by John and Alexander Halliday lawful sons to John Halliday in Glengap, Alexander Newell, smith at the Water of Fleet, James Bell, burgess of Kirkcudbright and James Milligen servitor.

Registered in the General Register of Sasines in Edinburgh on November 21, 1668.



*N.B. - Usually in old documents 'of' a place indicates that the person is the **owner** of the property. 'In' a place indicates that the person is a **tenant** of the property.*

For a long time the **Livingston(e) family** seem to have owned or been tenants of Grobdale of Balmaghie. There are bits and pieces of information available but it is difficult to follow the family tree. They seem to be related to the Livingstone family who farmed Darngarroch nearby, which was owned by the Laurie family who also owned Laurieston Hall and farmed part of (High) Lochenbreck Farm.

## **Gravestones in Balmaghie Churchyard** mention Grobdale and Darngarroch.

*(These stones are now difficult to read and the Scottish Genealogical Society Transcriptions, Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, Volume 1 provided the following information.)*

**Gravestone 309** states that a **Patrick Livingstone, late in Grobdale**, died 31st July either 1736 (*or maybe 1756*), age 58.

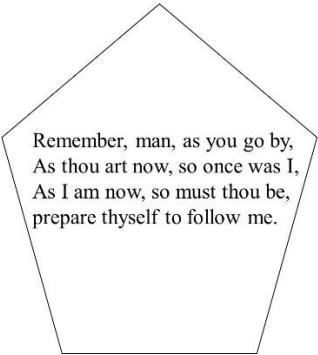
His wife was Jannet Durham who died in 1782, age 81.

The stone seems to have been erected in retrospect by a James Livingston in Dirrygown.

James, the erector, died at Darngarroch c.1811, age 85. He is probably Patrick's son (*born c1735*).

James' son, also James, farmer at Darngarroch died in 1845?, age 43 husband of Margaret Kelly.

**Gravestone 310** states that **Andrew Livingstone of Grobdale** died on 2nd September 1771, age 71. (so born 1700). His wife was named as Jean Bell who died 5th March 1798, age 78.



Remember, man, as you go by,  
As thou art now, so once was I,  
As I am now, so must thou be,  
prepare thyself to follow me.

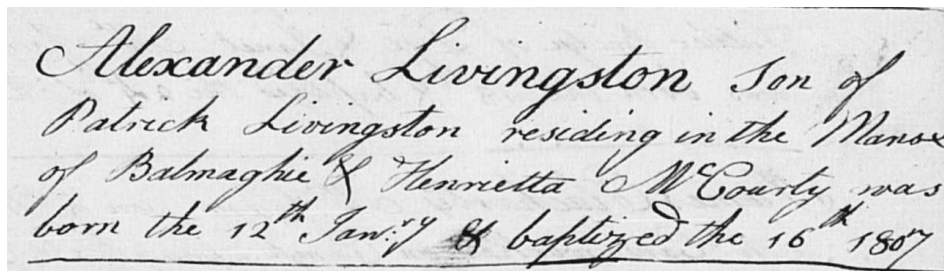
This stone has the inscription as here >>

## **Gravestone 311**

**Alexander Livingston of Grobdale** died 23rd February 1878 at Laurieston, age 71.

*His 1878 death certificate gives his parents as Patrick Livingstone, farmer (of Creochs) and Henrietta McCourty. His wife was Elizabeth McConchie (who died in Castle Douglas 1910.)*

The 1807 birth of Alexander Livingstone is recorded in the Balmaghie Parish records. Why he was living at Balmaghie Manse is unknown - the minister at the time was James Henderson.



Alexander Livingston Son of  
Patrick Livingston residing in the Manse  
of Balmaghie & Henrietta McCourty was  
born the 12<sup>th</sup> Jan: 1807 & baptized the 16<sup>th</sup> 1807

The grave also remembers :-

- father Patrick (*although the Genealogical Society transcription names him Peter*) Livingston in Creochs who died 26th January 1811, age 58.
- mother Henrietta McCourty who died 20th April 1857, age 84 (born 1773).
- uncle **James Livingston of Grobdale** died 22nd March 1821.
- brother **Andrew Livingston of Grobdale** died 22 March 1824 age 24.

- sisters Elizabeth (died 1815, age 14), Nicholas (died August 1806, age 2), Susan (died 1864, age 67)
- first wife Margaret Douglas died 18th February 1861, age 45 and his second wife Elizabeth McConchie died 16th July 1910 in Castle Douglas, age 85
- son Robert died at Potterland, Kelton on 6th January 1842, age 3years & 6 months and son James died 7th March 1843, age 6 months.
- Also listed are Janet Livingston, wife of Christopher Gordon died Falkirk 2nd February 2882, age 37 and James Livingston died Ilkley, Yorksshire 27th August 1883, age 36. (*They were also children of Alexander Livingston and Margaret Douglas*)

**Taxes** paid by **the occupants of Grobdale** provide names of those living at Grobdale.

1706 Balmaghie Land Tax Roll mentions Grobdale and values it at £80 but no owner is listed.

1797 **Patrick Livingston of Grobdale** paid 2/- Horse Tax

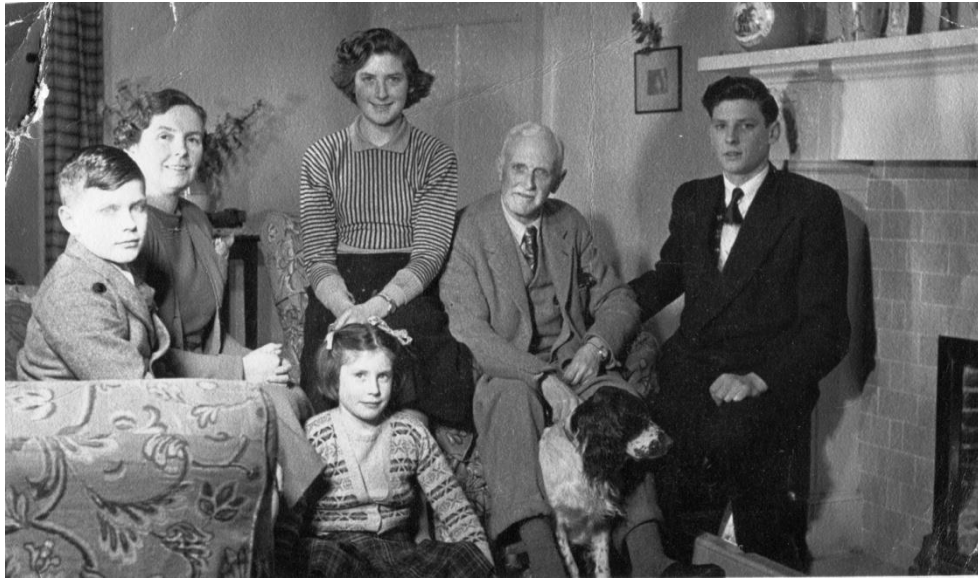
1799 Balmaghie Land Tax Roll gives **Andrew Livingston** of Airds as being the **owner of Grobdale**, Tormollen, Slogary & Airey. Grobdale was still valued at £80.

*Perhaps Andrew and Patrick Livingstone were brothers - sons of Patrick Livingstone who died in 1756 age 58.*

**Census** have been produced every ten years since 1841 and those up to 1921 are available to view. Taken along side **Valuation Rolls**, this gives us a clearer idea of who owned and / or occupied Grobdale and who was living at the farmhouse and using the shootings.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Owner of Grobdale</b>	<b>Tenant of Grobdale</b>
1851	Kelton census	Alexander Livingstone and wife Margaret and 4 children were living at Potterland Farm.	
1851	Balmaghie census	At Grobdale	<b>William McGavin</b> , single aged 50, born Tinwald. Dumfriesshire, farmer of 900 acres with brother John, sister Rachel, 2 servants & a shepherd
1859	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> , Potterland, Castle Douglas	<b>James McGavan</b>
1861	Balmaghie Census	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> but his son Alexander and family were living at Grobdale.	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> & wife Catherine Carter + brother Peter Livingstone who was a shepherd.
1870	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingstone, snr.</b> of Braefoot, Glenlochar	<b>Alexander Livingstone jnr</b> was at Grobdale Farm
1871	Balmaghie Census	<b>Alexander Livingston</b> , retired farmer and landowner was living at Braefoot, Balmaghie with his wife Elizabeth.	
1875	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> of Grobdale	<b>Alexander Livingstone jnr.</b> of Edingham, Dalbeattie and <b>James Livingston</b> , draper, Bradford
1878	Slater's Trade Directory	<b>Alexander Livingstone, snr.</b> , farmer Grobdale & Edingham, Dalbeattie	
1878	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> , farmer Grobdale	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b>

			<b>Shootings: James Livingstone</b> , wine merchant, Bradford
1878	Death of Alexander Livingston, husband of Elizabeth McConchie. 28th February 1878	Alexander Livingstone at Grobdale but residing sometime at Potterland, Kelton	His executors were Alexander Livingston of Grobdale, Peter Livingston, Merchant, Bradford & William McConchie, tenant, Glenlochar
1881	Balmaghie Census		<b>Elizabeth Livingston</b> , widow (of Alexander) was at Glenlochar as a housekeeper for her brother John McConchie, farmer.
1881	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> of Edingham, Dalbeattie	Farm: <b>Alexander Livingstone</b> Shootings: James Cunningham, Tarbreoch & John Graham, Darlington
1891	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingstone</b> of Lochside, Lochrutton	<b>John Wilson</b> , shepherd
1901	Valuation Roll	<b>Alexander Livingston</b> , Castle Douglas, farm & house	<b>John Wilson</b> , shepherd Shootings - <b>Wm. K. Laurie of Woodhall.</b>
1910	Death of Alexander Livingstone		
1911	Valuation Roll	<b>Peter Livingstone</b> , Morton, Rugby	<b>Andrew Wilson</b> , farmer Shootings - <b>Harry A. Timms</b> of Slogarie
1921	Valuation Roll	<b>William H. Sutherland</b> , merchant, Shaw's Hall, Flixton	<b>Alexander Wilson</b>
1930	Valuation Roll	<b>William H. Sutherland</b> per solicitor	<b>Alexander Agnew</b> , farmer
1941	Valuation Roll Farm, house & shootings	<b>Edward Caudwell</b> , Rowsley, Derbyshire	<b>Dr A.C. Craig.</b> A shepherd lived in the farmhouse
1951			Dr A. Craig died
1951	Valuation Roll Farm, house & shootings	<b>Edward Caudwell</b> , Rowsley, Derbyshire	<b>Margaret Armstrong &amp; Robert William Craig</b> (Dr A. Craig's wife and son Billy)
1961	Valuation Roll Farm, house & shootings	<b>Edward Caudwell</b> , Rowsley, Derbyshire	<b>Mrs Craig</b> , Newton Stewart
c 2019	Farmhouse sold		
2024			Farmland is still believed to be used by members of the Craig family.



Late 1940s : Dr Alexander Craig, and his wife Margaret with Douglas, Sheila, Jean & Billy.