

The
LOCHENBRECK
Story



Lochenbreck Hotel & Spa.

Lochenbreck

Lochenbreck House Lochenbreck Hotel Lochenbreck Spa Lochenbreck Well Lochenbreck Loch

Where is Lochenbreck ?

The site formerly occupied by Lochenbreck Hotel and Spa is on Ordnance Survey maps at NX649651 on the C13 road between Laurieston (3 miles away) and Gatehouse of Fleet (6 miles away).

Lochenbreck House, the Hotel and Spa, and now the cottage (Ramerish) and the Well are at the western end of the “Beech Avenue”.

Lochenbreck Loch, High Lochenbreck Farm and Burnside of Lochenbreck are nearby.

All the above lie in the parish of Balmaghie, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, south west Scotland.



This unusual road sign (A, B and C class roads on the same sign) was previously to be seen on the side of a house when heading south through Laurieston.

All of the above properties , and many others such as Darngarroch, which are shown on the map were at one time part of the **Woodhall Estate**.

The Laurie Family at Woodhall 1735 to 1890s

The land of the Woodhall Estate was originally owned by the Church but from 1735 the **Laurie family** and their descendants owned much of the estate until the late 1800s.



Rev. Walter Laurie from Stranraer bought a group of farms based around **Bargatton** to become the first local landowner from the Laurie family. He was married twice - both times to wealthy ladies. He died childless and the estate passed to his nephew **James Laurie** of Skeldon, Ayrshire in 1742. On James' death in 1757 the estate passed to his sister **Margaret** who was married to lawyer Andrew Sloan of Ayr. When she died in 1790 the estate passed to her son **Walter Sloan Laurie** who was an army Captain with the 4th Regiment of Foot. He served in Canada, Jamaica and America. He is believed to have changed the name of the **Clauchan of Pluckemin** on the estate, to **Laurieston**, the modern name of the village. He was

probably also responsible for build the oldest part of **Laurieston Hall** where the farm of Bargatton had stood. He died in 1801 leaving no direct heir.

The estate passed to his second cousin **William Kennedy Laurie**, who was also a Captain with the 4th Regiment of Foot. During his lifetime he invested in coffee plantations in Jamaica, naming one of his plantations Woodhall. He died in 1811, leaving 2 illegitimate sons.

The two boys were brought up at Laurieston Hall, the mansion house on the estate, by guardians.

The elder son, **William Baillie Kennedy Laurie** was born in 1791. His mother Janet Crawford was probably a daughter of a slave ship's captain. He inherited the Woodhall Estate at Laurieston. He served with the East India Company and married Antonio Robertson , a doctor's daughter from Trinidad in 1819. The couple had three sons and a daughter who were brought up at Woodhall, as their parents both died in 1835.

His younger illegitimate brother **Walter Kennedy Laurie**, born 1806, inherited the Woodhall estate in Jamaica, which was run by trustees until he was an adult. He was an art collector and lived much of the time in Italy, marrying an Italian girl. He died in 1837 aged 31.

William & Antonio's eldest son **William Baillie Kennedy Laurie** was born in 1820 and inherited Woodhall in 1835. Not much is known of him other than he sold the Woodhall estate to **Mr John Hutchieson** of Edingham, near Dalbeattie in the 1890s.

The Hutchison family were Glasgow merchants and John's brother owned nearby Balmaghie House. John Hutchison carried out a huge renovation on Laurieston Hall, largely rebuilding it. He died in 1902.

Laurieston Hall

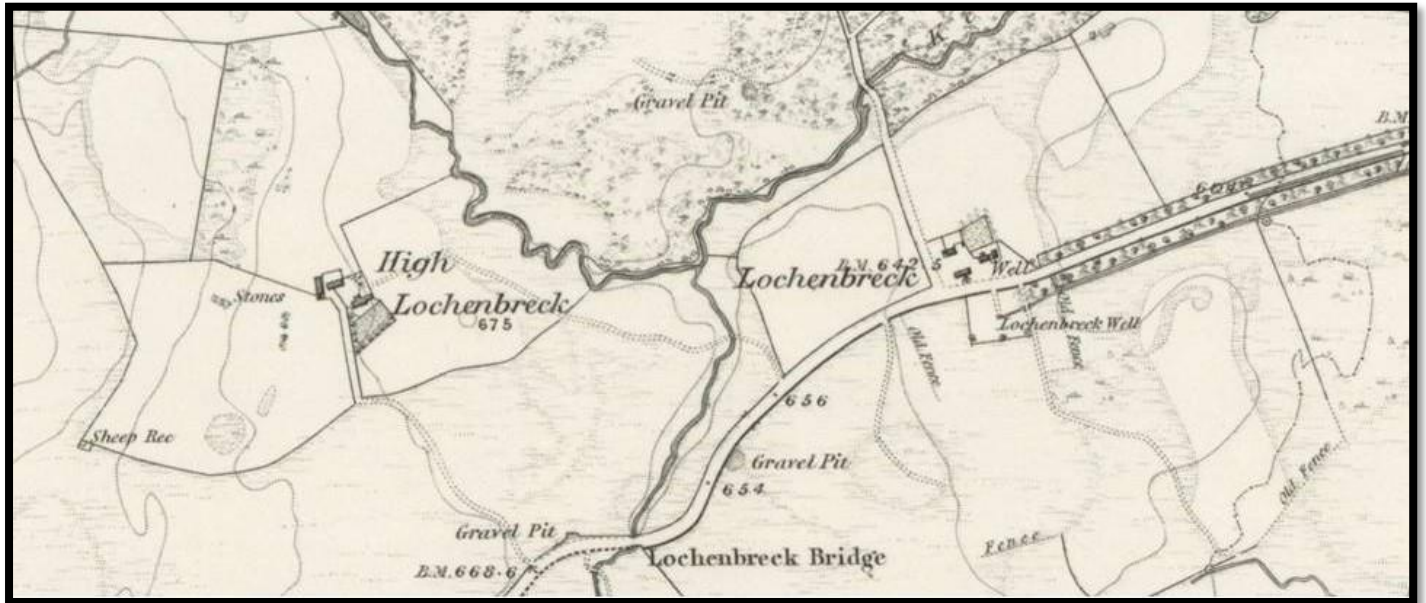


In the 1920s, Laurieston Hall was sold to Mr Stephen G. Holland. During WW2 the house was used as a hospital for tuberculosis patients.

Tenants of Lochenbreck House & Hotel

The tenants of the house and hotel and other nearby properties on the Woodhall Estate can be found in the Valuation Rolls.

Lochenbreck Hotel



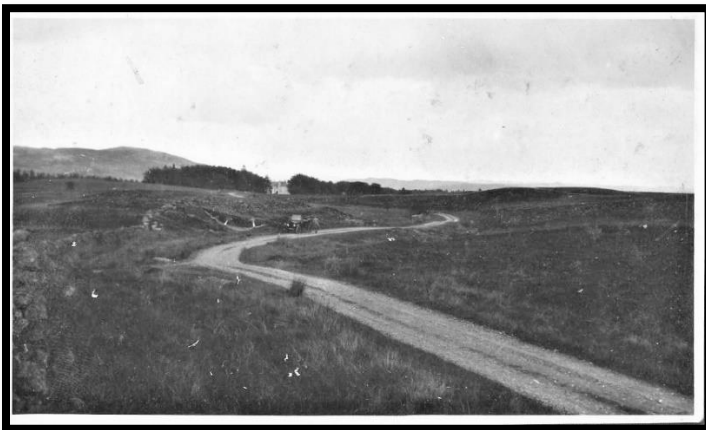
The above map is taken from the **Ordnance Survey of 1854**.

It is not known when the hotel was built on the site.

In **1793** or thereabouts Robert Burns is believed to have travelled along the road from New Galloway to Gatehouse of Fleet and stopped at the **Change House at Lochenbreck**.

A change house at that time was where travellers could swap a tired horse for a fresh one before continuing their journey. Often a Change House would also offer food and sometimes accommodation. Perhaps the Change House was the beginnings of Lochenbreck Hotel.

Access to the change house or hotel was via the road from Laurieston (or **Clauchanpluck**) to Gatehouse, over the moors. The route would have looked much different from today as there were few trees. After the Second World War much of the area was planted in conifers by the Forestry Commission.



Lochenbreck in the distance with Kennick Hill



Lochenbreck Spa

In the early 1800s this road was taken over and run by the Lochenbreck Trust (marked on the 1854 O.S. map). At that time Alexander Murray of Broughton & Cally was making changes to the roads into Gatehouse from the east. A **new entrance to Gatehouse** was made, still used today, and known as 'The Cut'. It replaced the former entrance down Ann Street. A new stretch of road was built from the foot of 'The Cut' to Barlay Mill to join the Laurieston Road. A new tollhouse was built at the foot of 'The Cut' so that it could serve as a toll for both roads.



“The Cut” at Gatehouse (between the 2 ponds)

The approach to the **Lochenbreck Hotel** and spa from the Laurieston side was enhanced by a long avenue of beech trees. When Malcolm Harper visited in **1896** he said that

'on the Laurieston Road, near the house, where there is a fine row of trees on either side of the road, the leafy boughs of which, meet overhead, and form an agreeable shade and a pleasant resort for the visitors.'

For the trees to be touching overhead, they must have been planted in the early 1800s.



Although the hotel was closely associated with the nearby spa and many people stayed there hoping for an improvement to various ailments, it was also a place for people to go for a bracing outdoor summer holiday.

The hotel offered fishing on the nearby loch, as well as croquet, bowling and tennis. There were many walks around the large garden as well as the surrounding area. When Malcolm Harper revisited the hotel in 1896, he thought that indoor entertainments were lacking and wished for a billiard table.

For evening entertainment some guest would walk along to Burnside of Lochenbreck where the McGhie sisters, Tibbie and Maggie lived. They would regale the visitors with stories and poems.

The census records

Every 10 years since 1841 a census has been taken which shows who was staying at each property on a particular night. It has proved quite difficult to find the Lochenbreck Hotel in some census. It may be that the hotel was not open at the time of year the census was taken, which was usually in the springtime.

The **1848** Ordnance Survey Name Book for Kirkcudbrightshire has the following reference:

'Lochenbreck: a dwellinghouse with a small farm of land attached on the estate of W.M.Laurie, Esquire of Woodhall. It is at present undergoing repair. Attached is a Spa Well, much frequented in summer months'

The earliest tenant of the Lochenbreck that we know anything about was **Anthony McMillan** about 1860. He appears in the **1861** Balmaghie census living at Lochenbreck Well; see below. He was a 57 year old farmer with 2 farm servants to help him run a 200 acre farm. His wife Agnes (maiden name Chesney) and two daughters lived with him. There is no mention of an hotel but the property had 16 rooms with windows.

Thomas Maxwell, a blacksmith, lived with his wife in a separate room.

Lochenbreck	1	John Murray	Head	Mar	66	Farmer of 400 acres	Newton Stewart		7
		Elizabeth	Wife		65	Farmer's Wife	Kirkcudbright, Balmaghie		
		James	Son	Mar	37	Farmer's Son			
		John	Son		38				
		Samuel	Son		27				
		Elizabeth	Son		25				
braebottage	1	Robert barrow	Head	Mar	53	Wood Forester			2 3
		Margaret	Wife		51				
		James	Son		13	Scholar			
		Elizabeth	Son		11				
Lochenbreck Well	1	Anthony McMillan	Head	Mar	57	Farmer of 200 acres			16
		Agnes	Wife		54	Farmer's Wife	Barbise		
		Isabel	Son		24	Farmer's Son	Newton, Balmaghie		
		Margaret	Son		15		Kirkcudbright, Balmaghie		
		William McMillan	Son		57	Ploughman			
		David McMillan	Son		15	Stable Boy			
		Mary Murray	Son		17	Domest. Servant	Lanark, Crawfordjohn		
Ditto		Thomas Maxwell	Head	Mar	50	Blacksmith	Dumfries, Dumfries		1
		Agnes	Wife		55		Kirkcudbright, Balmaghie		2 3

Anthony McMillan had moved to Fordhouse Farm, Kells by the 1871 census. He died in 1873.

A news clipping from the Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser of 4th May **1866** (reported again in 1916 in '50 years ago' section) notes that John Cumming is now the manager and that accommodation at the hotel had increased. The hotel would reopen on 15th May 1866.

Lochenbreck Spa Hotel.

This watering establishment, which has been well frequented for many years, and highly recommended by the medical profession for its excellent chalybeate spring and the purity of the air, will be opened on the 15th of May with increased accommodation for boarding, and a limited number of rooms for lodging. There will be boats on Lochenbreck Loch, which affords good trout fishing within five minutes walk of the house. A conveyance can be had to and from New-Galloway station, and parties wishing to stay should apply beforehand to save disappointment. For terms, &c., apply to Mr John Cumming, Lochenbreck Well, by Castle-Douglas. (4th May, 1866.)

The following newspaper advert appeared in **1868**
Edinburgh Evening Courant, 19th May 1868
Galloway: Lochenbreck Hotel by Castle Douglas

This Old Water Establishment, which is annually improving, and has been resorted to from time immemorial, is OPEN to receive visitors.
Attached is a famous Mineral Well, possessing wonderful medical virtue; and having the advantage of pure mountain air, is highly recommended by leading Doctors in Dumfries and Galloway.
Lochenbreck Loch affords good fishing close to the Hotel and free grant to several other lochs and streams.
Posting to and from New Galloway Station.
Wines.
Apply to Mr John Cumming

Transport to Lochenbreck improved greatly with the opening of New Galloway Railway Station, on the Dumfries to Portpatrick line in the **1860s**. Castle Douglas Railway Station, 10 miles away, had already opened in 1859.
New Galloway Station was actually at Mossdale, 8 miles south of the burgh. It was a pleasant 3 mile walk over the hill to Lochenbreck in good weather. When Malcolm Harper visited, he suggested that more markers were needed along the path to prevent visitors going astray! For the less fit, transport was available from the hotel.
New Galloway Station was well kept with two short platforms, a passing loop, offices and toilets.



When the **1871 census** was taken there were no guests at **Lochenbreck Hotel**.
The only residents were Jane Sproat, a housekeeper and Eliza Sproat a cook. There were now 22 rooms at the hotel. The Well, Farmhouse and Rosebank were both marked as unoccupied.

Lochenbreck Hotel	1		Jane Sproat	House	None	24
			Eliza Sproat	Domestic	None	22

John Cumming, age 32 unmarried, hotel manager was living a few miles away at Woodhall, the home of his landlord. (see 1871 census excerpt below).
William Kennedy Laurie, aged 57, unmarried, a landowner, was living in his large property Woodhall, which had (22 rooms). Also there were, Jane Gordon, a housekeeper and Margaret Clark, a domestic servant.

• Civil Parish of <i>Dalrymple</i>		Quoad sacra Parish of		Parliamentary Burgh of	Royal Burgh of			
No. of Schedule.	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE.	HOUSES.		NAME and Surname of each Person.	RELATION to Head of Family.	CON- DITION.	AGE of	
		In- habited.	Un- habited (U.), or Building (B.)				Males.	Females.
1	<i>Woodhull</i>	1		<i>William Kennedy Laurie</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>51</i>	
				<i>John Cumming</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>32</i>	
				<i>James Gordon</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Widow</i>		<i>34</i>
				<i>Margaret Clark</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Widow</i>		<i>24</i>
2	<i>Lodge</i>	1		<i>James Cumming</i>	<i>Head</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>65</i>	
				<i>Agnes Do</i>	<i>Wife</i>	<i>Mar</i>		<i>62</i>
				<i>James Do</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>26</i>	
				<i>William Do</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Widow</i>	<i>23</i>	
				<i>Helena Robertson</i>	<i>Son</i>	<i>Widow</i>		<i>17</i>

An advert appeared in the Dumfries & Galloway Standard on 3rd April 1872

LOCHENBRECK HOTEL AND SPA, BY CASTLE-DOUGLAS. THE HOTEL is OPEN to receive VISITORS. Invalids and others can now be accommodated with Apartments and well-aired Beds, by applying to JOHN CUMMING.

'With reference to the above, John Cumming begs to intimate that after Whitsunday the Establishment will be conducted on his own account; and while returning thanks to those Visitors and the Public generally for their previous patronage, he hopes, by continued attention to business, 'and moderate charges', to receive a still further share of their favours during the coming season.

1875 Scottish Post Office Directory

Innkeepers

Cumming, John, Lochenbreck Spa : Castle-Douglas.

About 1876, according to the Valuation Roll, **George Scott** became the hotel keeper at Lochenbreck.

Little is known about George Scott other than his name in the Valuation Roll and an entry in Slater's (ex Pigot's) Trade Directory.

1878 Scottish Trade Directory

Innkeepers

Scott, George Lochenbreck Spa Hotel

The 1881 census for Lochenbreck has been difficult to find. During this period the owner William Kennedy Laurie does not seem to have let out the hotel. At some point during this period a **William Cumming** seems to have run the hotel. His name appears above the door on a carte de visite.



It is most likely that William is the brother of John Cumming, a previous landlord. James and Agnes Cumming of Balmaghie had 2 sons - John born c 1840 and William born c1848. The probate for a James Cumming who died in 1878 was granted to John Cumming inn keeper, Castle Douglas, next of kin.

In **1891** William Cumming was living at Woodhall Lodge. He was 43, born Balmaghie and was a farmer and land steward. His widowed mother Agnes (84) was living with him. Lochenbreck was in the charge of **Robert Maxwell**, a caretaker and his wife. No one else was living there despite there being 31 rooms. Thomas Blythman lived at Woodhall Garden House and a Smith family were at Upper Lochenbreck.

In the **early 1890s** much of the Woodhall Estate was sold to **John William Hutchieson** of Edingham, Dalbeattie and a new tenant was running the hotel from about 1893.- **Charles Lindsay**. Malcom Harper commented in **1896** on the extensive improvements made to the premises at Lochenbreck by owner Mr. J. W. Hutchieson.

LOCHENBRECK HOTEL AND SPA,
BY CASTLE-DOUGLAS.

VISITORS, FAMILIES, and TOURISTS will find every comfort and accommodation in this quiet and rural retreat.
People staying at the Hotel have liberty to fish in the Loch.
A Conveyance will meet any train at New-Galloway Station or at Castle-Douglas, if previously advised.

CHARLES LINDSAY, Proprietor.

Charles Lindsay died at Lochenbreck in 1901. He is buried in the old cemetery at Twynholm.

Also
CHARLES LINDSAY, their son, who
died at Lochenbreck, 16th Jan
1901, aged 67 years
ex the gravestone at Twynholm where he is buried with his
parents Alexander Lindsay and Margaret Grier.

Charles Lindsay married Grace Sandilands at Twynholm in 1883. In the 1881 census, prior to her marriage, Grace was working as a housekeeper in a house in Edinburgh.
In the **1901** census at Lochenbreck Hotel, widow **Grace Lindsay**, age 59, born Broughton, Peebleshire was the hotel keeper. Her son Charles Lindsay, age 17, born Twynholm, was living with her and was an apprentice gardener.

By **1904** **Charles Edgar Priest** was running the hotel.

LOCHENBRECK HOTEL AND SPA
LAURIESTON, By CASTLE-DOUGLAS.

The Finest Health Resort in the South of Scotland.

In heart of the district now made famous by S. R. Crockett in the "Raiders,"
"Lilac Sunbonnet," &c.

800 Feet above Sea Level, commanding extensive Views
of surrounding Country.

Good Trout Fishing, Free to Visitors staying in the Hotel.

BOWLING GREEN and TENNIS LAWN.

TARIFF ON APPLICATION.

EDGAR C. PRIEST, Proprietor.

(A.P.D.)

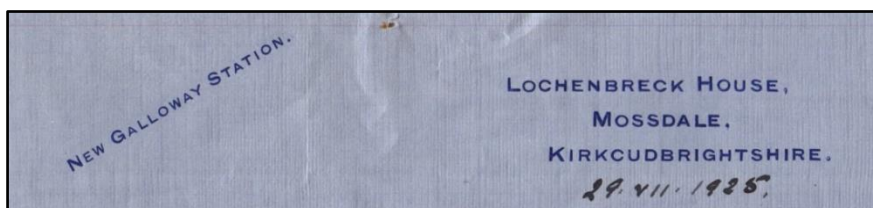
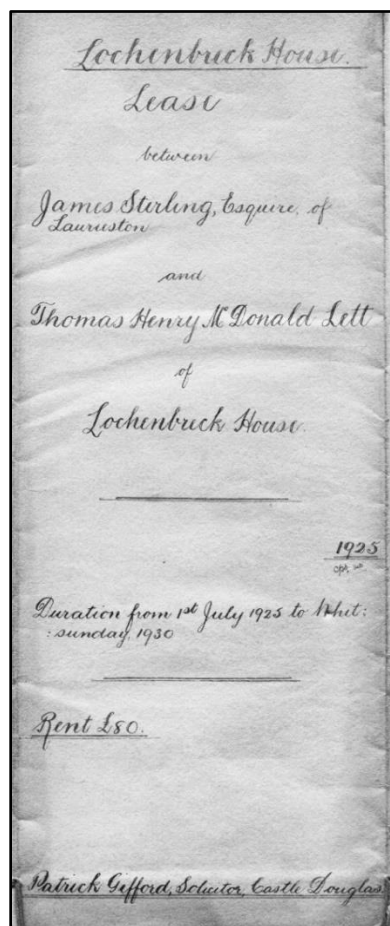
During WWI he was Assistant Adjutant-General. Colonel H. V. Cowan died 25th January 1918 in Bideford, Devon and is buried in the East-the-Water cemetery.

On 30th July **1915** a report in the Kirkcudbrightshire Advertiser by the Correspondent 'Heston' said 'I had the pleasure of visiting Lochenbreck Well two weeks ago, and the sight of the neglected hotel and the decayed pump-room gave rise to feelings of regret. At the present moment, when it is impossible for the people of these islands to cross the Channel—even to the adjacent Isle of Man—it is a thousand pities that no attempt was made to put Lochenbreck into repair, for assuredly full benefit of these beautiful uplands would have been taken advantage of by thousands in search of rest and health. I understand that proprietor of the property is a gentleman and a patriot, of whom the whole district is proud, and yet the Government are searching for healthy accommodation for our wounded soldiers and sailors. Could any hostel meet their wants so well as Lochenbreck ?'

In **1919** Major Ian B Hopkins became the tenant.

Ian Broughton Hopkins was born in Bothwell, Lanarkshire in 1881. He served with the K.O.S.B. When the 1901 census was taken, he was aboard a navy vessel 'India'. He was single and a captain in the K.O.S.B. He died on 8th November 1924 at Whithorn, although his address was still Lochenbreck. Probate was granted to his widow Violet Maud Norris. The couple may have married in India.

HOPKINS, Major Ian Broughton, Lochenbreck, Mossdale, Kirkcudbrightshire, died 8 November 1924 at Physgill House, Whithorn, testate. Confirmation Kirkcudbright, 25 February, to Violet Maud Norris or Hopkins, Lochenbreck aforesaid, his widow, Executrix. Will dated 30 May 1917 recorded Kirkcudbright 25 February 1925. Value of Estate, £10,694: 14: 2.



The next tenant of the house was **Capt. Thomas Henry McDonald Lett** a cattle rancher from Argentina.

He took out a lease for the dwelling 'formerly known as Lochenbreck Hotel, now Lochenbreck House' for 1st July 1925 to Whitsunday 1930. Certain rights were included such as permission to fish in the loch on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for himself, friends and family.

In November 1925 Capt Lett wrote to his solicitor saying that he was returning to Buenos Aires and was considering leaving his possessions at Lochenbreck and arranging a sub-let. He also stated that he doubted his family would return to live there as it was 'a bit out of the way and no possibility of renting a shoot for miles around'

There are numerous records of the Lett family travelling by boat between Britain and Argentina. His wife was Nancy Madelene Lett and children Gladys, Valerie and Ian. Thomas Lett was born about 1892 and is described as a cattleman and a rancher on the ships' manifests.

The last tenant was **Gordon A Black** in 1930.

1930 1st March Edinburgh Evening News

SCOTS FARM FIRE

WOMAN RUNS THREE MILES TO RAISE ALARM

When fire broke out at Lochenbreck House, near Laurieston, Kirkcudbrightshire yesterday, Mrs Black, wife of the tenant farmer, ran three miles to the nearest village in order to summon The Dumfries Fire Brigade. The whole of the new portion of the building was gutted, the damage amounting to £2,000.

The building subsequently appears to have lain empty and roofless for some time. In the 1930s - on the run up to the beginning of World War Two, or just after it started in 1939, an army unit came from Glasgow to practice demolition work. The events were remembered by farmer Tommy Veitch from Low Creoch Farm and passed on to his sons John and Andrew.

The army unit were based at Low Creoch Farm - the officers stayed in the farmhouse but the men used the barn. Tommy's father (also Tom) was shocked at the conditions of the soldiers - cold, wet and with mouldy food. Also included in the group were 2 prisoners of war, possibly Italians, who were later taken away under cover of darkness.

One of the officers noticed photographs of soldiers in the farmhouse and said that he had trained with one of the Veitch boys (it is not clear who this Veitch was).

The soldiers used the burnt out Lochenbreck Hotel as target practice and left the building a ruin.

Modern Lochenbreck

The hotel building was eventually demolished and a modern bungalow has been erected.

The only part of the old buildings to survive is the old stable. This has been converted into a 3-bedroom holiday house named Ramerish Retreat.



The beech avenue still exists, which is particularly beautiful in the autumn.



The Well

One of the earliest mentions of the well was on **John Ainslie's map of 1797**.

This photo comes from the 2021 publication of *The Lost Wells of Galloway* by Sue Taylor.



Lochenbreck Well is a chalybeate spring - a natural mineral spring containing sulphate of iron, and carbonic acid - which has clear orange-coloured water. According to the Statistical Account for Scotland 1844 - the water was a powerful tonic and diuretic and was not unpleasant to the taste. It was recommended for complaints of the stomach and other disorders. It was also recommended as a treatment for tuberculosis (or phthisis as it was called in the past).

The **1848** Ordnance Survey Name Book for Kirkcudbrightshire says 'a spa well famed for the medicinal properties of its waters. It springs off iron and is on the property of Wm. Laurie Esquire of Woodhall. A combination of the waters and the clean fresh air was deemed to have great health benefits. To make visitors more comfortable when taking the waters, a circular pavilion was built over the well with seats all around and a pump in the centre to draw water.

According to Malcolm Harper, this provided a place where young guests had laughter and fun and some fell in love. In 1876 Malcolm Harper wrote a poem 'The Lass I loe'd at Lochenbreck Well' remembering his youthful exploits.



Lochenbreck Spa

A brisk walk to the top of the nearby **Kennick Hill** was said to be proof that a patient was well enough to return home. Kennick Hill had the nickname of '**Hill of Health**'

When Malcolm Harper visited Lochenbreck in 1896 he commented on the fine view to be had from the top of the hill.

Sadly not everyone benefitted from taking the waters.

Wigtownshire Free Press **1863**

FERGUSON, David - Died 25/6/1863 - At Lochenbreck, Kirkcudbrightshire, where (he had) been for the benefit of his health, on the 25th ult., Mr David Fergusson, farmer, Wood of Auckland, Parish of Wigtown, aged 67 years - deeply regretted.



On 17th October **1896** Joshua Makepeace also died at Lochenbreck Hotel. He was a coffee planter from Guatemala but he did have a local connection. His wife was Isabella Graham, whose family had lived at the Saw Mill House, Ann Street, Gatehouse for many years. The couple had married at Girthon in 1888.

Joshua Makepeace gravestone and death record

Joshua Makepeace	1896.	Oct 17	all 56	Joshua Makepeace	Heart Disease	Mrs. Jones	1896.	Oct 17
			years	clerical Officer	6 months	Brother in law		at Leicester
Coffee Planter	sk 30 m A.M.			(deceased)	Dr. J. J. J.			
married to	Isabella Graham			Isabella Graham	14 days			
	Lochenbreck Hotel			(deceased)	deceased by	Gatehouse of Fleet		William Street
					deceased by			Register

Lochenbreck Loch

The loch is shown on Blaeu's 1654 map and also Moll's 1774 map, where it appears as **Loch Braik** (which means 'loch of the trout' - breac meaning 'speckled one').



Lochenbreck Loch
ex Geograph

In **1903** the “National Library of Scotland - Fresh Water Lochs of Scotland” book described Lochenbreck as follows:



Lochenbreck : The loch has a rhomboidal outline, each side being a quarter of a mile long. It is situated at an elevation of 651 feet above sea level, about seven miles north north east from Gatehouse of Fleet, and has characteristic features of a bare highland loch, modified by a plantation of coniferous trees on the eastern shore. The shores are stony, and the water is clear and slightly peaty. The flora is of the ordinary types excepting an abundance of **Eleocharis Multicaulis**. (*a spike rush from the sedge family*)

Today the loch is a popular fly fishing spot. In [2022 Flyfishingingalloway.co.uk](http://2022.Flyfishingingalloway.co.uk) described it as follows :
Lochenbreck Loch is a lowland loch set in beautiful, more cultivated and less rugged countryside. Here the bank fishing is more limited (the Association only has access to about half the shores), and boat-fishing is popular. Stocked monthly with rainbow trout averaging 2 pounds – and with a few weighing from 7 to 13 pounds – the loch offers some of the best value-for-money fishing in the British Isles, and anglers regularly take home the bag limit of four fish.

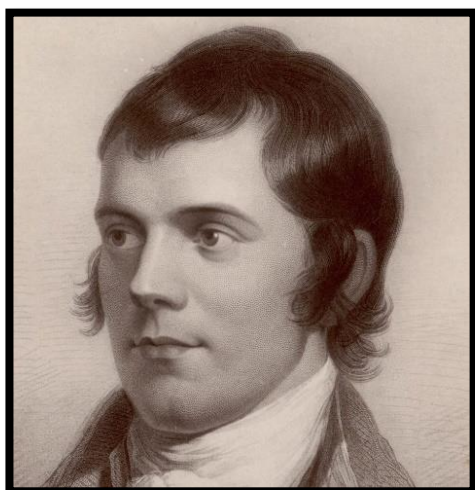
In [2012](#) Bill Sandiford from Gatehouse won the Lochenbreck Cup with a 12lb 10oz rainbow trout.



Well-known Folk who were associated with Lochenbreck

Robert Burns is said to have visited Lochenbreck in about 1793, whilst on a journey with his friend John Syme from Kenmure Castle near New Galloway to Gatehouse of Fleet. Reportedly Burns is said to have composed his well known poem 'Scot's Wha Hae' on his journey. Some say that, when he changed his horse at Lochenbreck, Burns asked for paper to jot down some words. Many believe that when he reached the Murray Arms* in Gatehouse he completed the poem. His companion John Syme remembered that Burns had been deep in thought during the stormy journey and the next day handed him the words to the poem, which was published later that year. However there are several versions of this story and the details do not always agree.

* *The Murray Arms was known as the King's Head or Head Inn at this time.*



Scots Wha Hae

BY ROBERT BURNS

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory!

Now's the day, and now's the hour,
See the front o' battle lour;
See approach proud Edward's power
Chains and slavery!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or freeman fa',
Let him follow me!

By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!—
Let us do or die!

Malcolm McL Harper

Malcolm Harper (1839-1914) wrote a number of books including 'Rambles in Galloway' in 1876 which describes Lochenbreck as he remembered it from his youth and how it had changed. He also wrote a poem - The Lass I Lo'ed at Lochenbreck Well about a youthful romance. He created this painting called 'Mary of the Moss', which depicts the interior of Burnside of Lochenbreck.



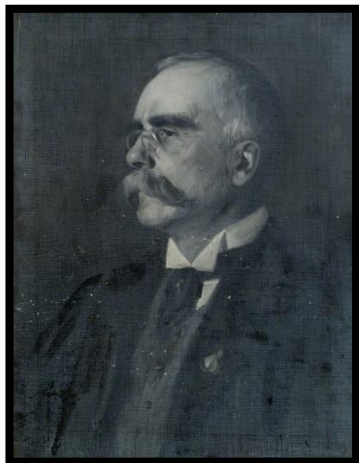
The Lassie I Lo'ed

by Malcom McL. Harper

1876

Oh! dearly I lo'e a' the Dee's rocky mountains.
Its licht birken glens, an' its dark heather braes,
Where the bonnie wild roses in simmer are blawin'
An' sweetly the wee birds are croonin their lays:
An' dear aye to me is the bricht glancin' burnie
That rins 'mang the rocks in the deep shady dell -
But dearer an brichter to me than them a' is
The lassie I lo'ed at Lochenbreck Well!

An' bonnie the wee ferny nook in the glen is
Awa' 'mong the uplan's o' Grennoch's wild shore,
An' pure is the breath o' the breeze that is blawin'
Frae hills roun' Loch Dee, where the mad torrents roar.
An' sweet to the e'e are the bricht broomy knowies,
An' wee glentin flo'ers 'neath the sun's gowden spell -
But bonnier an sweeter to me than them a' is
The lassie I lo'ed at Lochenbreck Well!

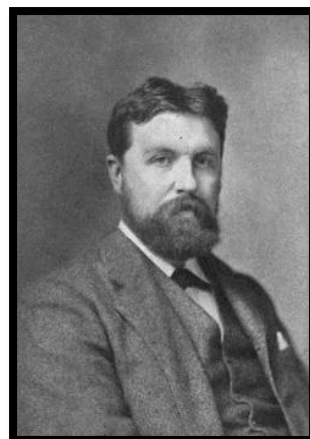


*Portrait of Malcolm Harper
by his friend William S McGeorge*

Oh! naething in Nature to me half sae fair is -
Nae wee modest primrose in shade o' the tree -
Nae lily in beauty wi' her can compare,
Or wee daisies gleamin' sae fair on the lea.
To me, a' the year, it would be a bricht simmer
If that it were mine in her presence to dwell -
For dearer to me than a' titles or gowd is
The lassie I lo'ed at Lochenbreck Well!

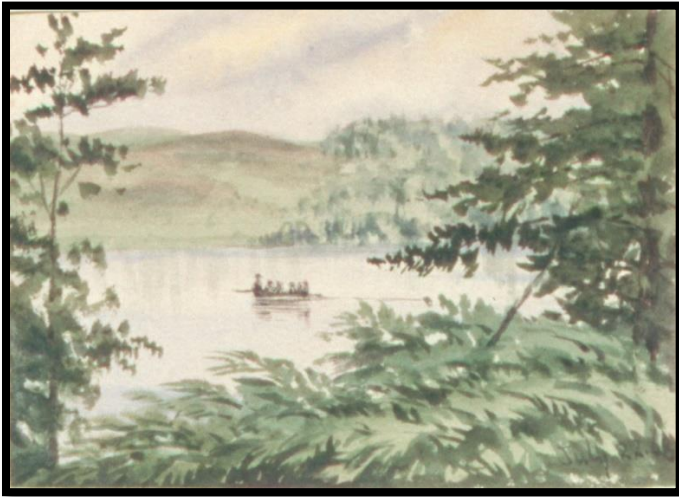
S.R. Crockett

Samuel Rutherford Crockett was a local lad, born at Little Duchrae, 3 miles from Lochenbreck, near New Galloway Station. He is unlikely to have ever stayed at Lochenbreck but he knew the area well and used it as inspiration for his novels such as 'The Raiders' and 'The Lilac Sunbonnet'



Henry Joseph Moule (1825 - 1904)

Henry Moule was an artist who was born in Dorset. He came to Gatehouse of Fleet in the 1860s to work as a factor on the Cally Estate. He and his family lived at Rosebank in Ann Street. He painted this picture of Lochenbreck Loch.



Henry Joseph Moule by W. Busk

William Stewart McGeorge (1861 - 1931)

W.S. McGeorge was born in Castle Douglas and from a young age was a friend of Samuel Crockett. As an adult, he and his wife lived in Edinburgh but spent their summers in Galloway.



Fishing for minnows at Lochenbreck



W.S. McGeorge by Edward Hornel

Thomas McGill Duncan

McGill Duncan's family owned a hut at Carrick shore near Gatehouse of Fleet from the 1930s. He created many paintings of the area including High Lochenbreck in 1952. It was named 'Near Gatehouse of Fleet'.



Other 'Lochenbreck' Properties

Burnside of Lochenbreck

Malcolm Harper's painting above depicts the interior of Burnside of Lochenbreck.

Like the Hotel and Spa, Burnside Cottage was part of the Woodhall Estate.

Sisters Maggie and Tibbie (Isabella) McGhie lived at Burnside Cottage since before the 1841 census, and were well known characters in the area. Both were born in Tongland to John McGhie and Mary Farr. Neither sister married. Isabella died in 1881 aged 65 and Margaret in died in 1888 aged 67.

High Lochenbreck

This farm was also known as **Upper Lochenbreck** and is the subject of McGill Duncan's painting above. The Murray family farmed this land for many years from the 1850s until the 1890s when William Kerr took over the tenancy. By 1920 Alexander Blain was the farmer and he was still there in 1930. Since the 1870s Darngarroch has been included with this farm.

Darngarroch

Darngarroch sits just inside the boundary between Girthon and Balmaghie parishes. The Grobdale Lane (a local word for a burn) separates the two parishes. This Balmaghie property is now a ruin. Prior to the 1870s Darngarroch was a separate farm. For many years it was farmed by the Livingstone family.

James Livingstone died about 1840 leaving his widow Janet née Kelly to run the farm. Her youngest child was just 2. Mrs Livingstone is named as the tenant in 1859/60.

Two of the older children, James and Isobel, emigrated to New Zealand in 1859. Four years later all the rest of the family followed except Janet the eldest daughter, who had married farmer John Sproat in 1854. Janet never saw any of her family again.



Darngarroch



Mrs Janet Livingstone

Lochenbreck entries in Valuation Rolls

Including farms and properties near the hotel.

Houses & hotel are in red, farms and farm cottages in blue

Date	Building	Proprietor	Tenant	Occupier
1859-60	Lochenbreck Well	William Kennedy Laurie of Woodhall	Anthony McMillan	tenant
1859-60	Lochenbreck	William Kennedy Laurie of Woodhall	John Murray	tenant
1859-60	Burnside	William Kennedy Laurie of Woodhall	Margaret & Isabella McGhie	tenant
1859-60	Cullenoch	William Kennedy Laurie of Woodhall	Samuel Wilson	tenant
1859-60	Darngarroch	William Kennedy Laurie of Woodhall	Mrs Livingstone	tenant
1870-71	Lochenbreck Hotel, grounds, offices etc	William Kennedy Laurie	John Cumming for proprietor	tenant
1870-71	Lochenbreck Farm	William Kennedy Laurie	John Murray	tenant
1875-76	Lochenbreck Hotel, grounds, offices etc + moss & cottage at Crae	William Kennedy Laurie	George Scott, innkeeper	tenant
1875-76	Upper Lochenbreck Farm	William Kennedy Laurie	Mrs Elizabeth Murray	tenant
1875-76	Lochenbreck Farm & Burnside	William Kennedy Laurie	John Murray	tenant
1875-76	Darngarroch	William Kennedy Laurie	Peter Tait	tenant
1875-76	Cullenoch	William Kennedy Laurie	George Henderson, Garroch	tenant
1881-82	Lochenbreck Hotel & farmhouse	William Kennedy Laurie		
1881-82	Upper Lochenbreck Farm	William Kennedy Laurie	Misses Hannah & Elizabeth Murray	tenant
1881-82	Burnside & Lochenbreck	William Kennedy Laurie	John Murray	tenant
1884-85	Lochenbreck Hotel, grounds, offices & house adjoining	William Kennedy Laurie		proprietor
1884-85	Upper Lochenbreck & Darngarroch	William Kennedy Laurie	William Kerr	tenant
1884-85	Lochenbreck farm + Burnside	William Kennedy Laurie	William Kerr	tenant
1884-85	Cullenoch	William Kennedy Laurie	Trustees of George Henderson	tenant
1884-85	Moss & cottage at Crae	William Kennedy Laurie		empty
1884-85	Farm at Crae	William Kennedy Laurie	James Byres	tenant
1891-92	Lochenbreck house, grounds + house	William Kennedy Laurie	Robert Maxwell (labourer) & Thomas Blythman (gardener)	tenant
1891-92	Lochenbreck farm + Darngarroch, Burnside & Cullenoch	William Kennedy Laurie	William Kerr	tenant
1891-92	Darngarroch	William Kennedy Laurie	James Muir, shepherd, occupier	tenant
1891-92	Crae Cottage	William Kennedy Laurie	Thomas Straiton, gamekeeper	tenant
1893-94	Lochenbreck Hotel, house & grounds	John William Hutchieson of Edingham, Dalbeattie	Charles Lindsay, hotel keeper	tenant
1893-94	Lochenbreck Farm + Darngarroch, Burnside & Cullenoch	John William Hutchieson of Edingham, Dalbeattie	William Kerr	tenant
1895	Lochenbreck house, grounds	John William Hutchieson		proprietor

	& hotel			
1899-00	Lochenbreck house, grounds & hotel	John William Hutchieson	Charles Lindsay, hotel keeper	tenant
1899-00	Lochenbreck Farm + house & Darngarroch	John William Hutchieson	William Kerr, farmer	tenant
1899-00	Darngarroch cottage	John William Hutchieson	William Kerr, farmer	Alexander Wilson, shepherd
1905-06	Lochenbreck house, grounds & hotel	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	Charles Edgar Priest, hotel keeper	tenant
1905-06	Lochenbreck, cottage	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	Charles Edgar Priest	James Brierley, coachman
1905-06	Farm & house, Lochenbreck & Darngarroch	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer, Camp Douglas	tenant
1905-06	Darngarroch Cottage	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer	Alexander Wilson, shepherd.
1905-06	Lochenbreck	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer	David McDill, shepherd
1905-06	Cullenoeh	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer	Empty
1905-06	Burnside of Lochenbreck	Heirs of Peter Milroy, labourer		
1906-07	Lochenbreck house, grounds & hotel	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	Charles Edgar Priest, hotel keeper	tenant
1906-07	Lochenbreck, cottage	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	Charles Edgar Priest	tenant
1906-07	Farm & house, Lochenbreck & Darngarroch	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer, Camp Douglas	tenant
1906-07	Darngarroch Cottage	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer, Camp Douglas	Alexander Wilson, shepherd.
1906-07	Lochenbreck	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer, Camp Douglas	David McDill, shepherd.
1906-07	Cullenoeh	Trustees of late John William Hutchison	William Kerr, farmer, Camp Douglas	Robert Johnson, shepherd.
1911-12	Farm & house, Lochenbreck & Darngarroch			
1911-12	Burnside of Lochenbreck	William Milroy		proprietor
1919-20	Lochenbreck house, grounds & hotel	James Stirling	Ian B. Hopkins, major	tenant
1919-20	Farm & house, Lochenbreck & Darngarroch	James Stirling	Alexander Blain, farmer	tenant
1919-20	Burnside of Lochenbreck	James Stirling	Heirs of Peter Mlroy	tenant
1919-20	Cullenoeh	James Stirling		empty
1919-20	Darngarroch Cottage	James Stirling	Alexander Blain, farmer	William Thomson, shepherd.
1930-31	Lochenbreck house, grounds	James Stirling	Gordon A. Black	tenant

	& hotel			
1930-31	Farm & house, Lochenbreck & Darngarroch	James Stirling	Alexander Blain, farmer	tenant
1930-31	Darngarroch Cottage	James Stirling	Empty	
1930-31	Burnside of Lochenbreck	Louisa, wife of Robert Nivison, 14 King Street, Castle Douglas	Ruinous	