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In 2009. And it proclaims Minnyshant no more.

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This old Royal Label Factory fingerpost at the junction of B7045 and B742 has lost two fingers. See the article on page 18.

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Ayrshire Place-Names: a rich seam still to mine

Talk to South Ayrshire History and Family History Fair, Troon, 6th June 2009.
[South Ayrshire council area includes Ayr, Girvan, Maybole, Prestwick and Troon.]

Place-names of course loom large in any historical endeavour, whether it is to do with one family, one parish, or a whole kingdom. They are essential for locating events, journeys, lives, and deaths, and as such are an important bridge between the present and the past. They are also part of our cultural landscape and identity – it is hard to imagine Ayrshire without names such as Mauchline, Auchindrane, Garlaff or Gadgirth, to say nothing of Macilveenston, Yonderton or Change. And I apologise, as a mere Fifer, if I have mispronounced any of these.

However, place-names are also in themselves important tools for understanding the past, and it is this that I want to explore today. A place-name arises out of the interaction between language and environment, and so it tells us something about both at the time of its coining. One of the things that make Scottish place-names so important as a tool for understanding the past is the fact that many of them were coined before we have any other historical records – for many parts of Scotland they are, in effect, our earliest texts, albeit ones which are very difficult to decipher, and which must be handled with great care.

For various reasons working with Scottish place-names is especially challenging. As I say, they are generated when language meets environment, and here we have our first challenge. Scotland has one of the most complex language histories of any European country, and this means that it also has one of the most complex toponymic or place-name histories.

With every change of language, a kind of fossilisation occurs, by which place-names consisting of words from one language are borrowed AS A NAME by another language without the borrowers necessarily having any understanding of the words involved. These names are then subjected to all sorts of stresses and strains within the new language, such as re-interpretation and assimilation. It is clear therefore that the first thing we need to do with any place-name is to go back to the earliest recorded form possible, since the earlier the form, the nearer it will be to its original coining. And in fact much of the work of the toponymist consists in collecting accurate early forms and carefully recording the contexts in which they appear.

Not only does Scotland have a place-nomenclature made up of this bewildering array of languages, it is also one of the least surveyed of any northern European country. For example in England the English Place-name Survey County volumes have been appearing since 1923, and now cover almost all of England: the 83rd volume appeared this year (2009).¹ And the Place-Names of Northern Ireland series has been appearing since 1987 and now consists of 8 volumes covering over one sixth of the country.



Fig. 1: Language map: a brief overview (from Taylor 2002).

Scotland, in contrast, has only one county out of its 33 which has been subjected to this detailed treatment and which has appeared in print. This is Angus MacDonald's *Place-Names of West Lothian*, published in 1941. The only other county-wide published place-name survey in Scotland which approaches this high level of scholarship, and which is set out parish by parish, is W. J. Watson's *Place-Names of Ross and Cromarty* (1904), although Aberdeenshire is relatively well served with Alexander's *Place-Names of Aberdeenshire* of 1952. And soon, on the SPNS [Scottish Place-Name Society] website (for details, see Appendix), Norman Dixon's 1947 PhD 'Place-Names of Midlothian' will be available.

I have to say that the county whose place-names will soon be the best surveyed of any in Scotland is Fife, thanks to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) project based at the Department of Celtic and Gaelic, University of Glasgow, entitled 'The Expansion and Contraction of Gaelic in Medieval Scotland: the evidence of names' (for more details, see Appendix). At the core of this project is the completion of 5 volumes covering the whole of Fife. Vol. 1, covering West Fife, came out in 2006; Vol. 2 covering central Fife came out in Dec. 2008; while Vol. 3, St Andrews and the East Neuk, will be out later this year.

This means that anyone who wants to work with place-names at a local level in many places in Scotland has to start almost from scratch, and this is very much the case with Ayrshire. The upside of this is that almost any place-name work that is done in Ayrshire is original, ground-breaking research.

Let us look more closely at the language situation in Ayrshire. On the above map (Fig. 1), the list of languages which have contributed to the place-names of Ayrshire reads as follows:

Cumbric
Northumbrian
Gaelic
Scots

This map was prepared some eight years ago. Having engaged with the place-names of Ayrshire more intensively in the last few years, I would now list them as follows:

British [rather than Cumbric]
Northumbrian (or northern Old English)
(Old Norse)
Gaelic
Scots

We should bear in mind that these layers of language do not represent a neat succession, but that there will have been considerable overlap, with many of the inhabitants of medieval Ayrshire being bilingual, sometimes even trilingual.

British, Old English and Gaelic

From the place-names we know that British was spoken here long enough for it to have left behind a significant number of names. British can be described as a kind of Old Welsh, direct descendant of the P-Celtic language spoken throughout Roman Britain and beyond, and also closely related to Pictish. There is in fact the possibility that several Ayrshire places are mentioned in early Welsh poetry, the so-called poems of Taliesin, a 6th-century poet patronised by kings from what is now southern Scotland and northern England, whose poems (and attributed poems) are preserved in much later Welsh manuscripts.

As we are in Troon, I must read out one line of a Taliesin poem about the deeds of the fierce warrior king called Gwallawg ap Lleenawg:

Kat ymro **vret**rwyn trwy wres mawr tan,
meidrawl yw y trachwres (Williams and Williams 1968, 13).

This has been translated as follows: ‘A battle near Bre Trwyn, much heated, his [Gwallawg’s] fury’s a mighty fire’ (Clancy 1998, 91). While **vret**rywn can be translated simply as ‘hill by a promontory’, scholars have suggested it may be the hill of Troon, which derives from this same word, meaning ‘nose, ness, promontory’ (cf. Welsh *trwyn* ‘nose’).

Names such as Troon, Ayr, Girvan and Irvine, as well as the district-names Kyle and Carrick, probably all date from this early period when what we now call Ayrshire was part of a complex of northern British kingdoms, sharing in a British culture and language which

stretched as far as Cornwall. However, not all Ayrshire place-names of British origin are this early. In western Carrick (around Girvan and Maybole) there is a significant cluster of place-names containing **trev*, related to Welsh *tref* ‘farm’, e.g. Tarelgin, Troax, and Tradunnock. These could have been coined as late as the 11th century, by which time names in Old English, Old Norse and Gaelic were already in the Ayrshire name-scape.

Just to emphasise how important the place-names are for our understanding of the period before the 12th century, when our first documents start to appear, there are only two certain historical reference to any part of Ayrshire before that date. These are for the years 750 and 756. In 750 we are told that the Northumbrian king Eadberht ‘added the plain of Kyle, and other regions, to his kingdom’ (Bede, Continuation). His annexation does not appear to have lasted very long, since six years later, another source informs us that: ‘King Eadberht ... and Unust, king of the Picts, led an army against the city of Alcuith [Dumbarton Rock]. Hence the Britons accepted terms there, on the first day of the month of August. But on the tenth day of the same month there perished almost the whole army which he [Eadberht] led from Ovania [= ?Govan] to Newburgh ...’ (Simeon of Durham, *Historia Regum*).

We hear nothing more of the Old English-speaking Northumbrians in Ayrshire, and if this is all we had to go on, we could be forgiven for thinking that a Northumbrian presence here was fleeting and superficial. The place-names, however, tell a quite different story. Ayrshire has an important Northumbrian (northern Old English) layer of place-names. As with the British ones, they are not thick on the ground, but they do provide several important, high-status names, such as Turnberry (containing OE *þorn* ‘thorn, thorn-bush’ and *burh* ‘fortified place’)² and *boðl* ‘(high-status) dwelling’, contained in such names as Maybole and Tarbolton (for further discussion and distribution maps, see Barrow 1998, 67–9).

Early forms of Maybole are:

totam terram de *Meibothelbeg* 1187 x 1196 *Melr. Lib.* i no. 30 [given to Melrose Abbey by Duncan son of Gilbert son of Fergus]

inter *Meibothelbeg* et *Meibothelmor* 1187 x 1196 *Melr. Lib.* i no. 30

ecclesi<a> de *Maybothel* 1189 x 1250 *N. Berwick Cart.* no. 13 [Duncan earl of Carrick grants to the nuns of North Berwick the right of patronage of ‘the church of Maybole’ with lands, chapels and teinds etc]

ecclesiam Sancti Chutberti de *Maibothel* in i 1204 x 1250 *N. Berwick Cart.* no. 15 [as no. 13, but issued by Nicholas son of Duncan of Carrick; ‘the church of St Cuthbert of Maybole in Carrick’]

? OE *mæge* + OE *boðl*

For the first element, Nicolaisen suggests *mæge* ‘kinswoman, maiden’ (1976, 77, 133).

The earliest forms of this name are combined with the Gaelic affixes *mòr* ‘big’ and *beag* ‘little’, showing that the language then current in and around Maybole in the final quarter of the twelfth century was Gaelic.

There is little doubt that the language which figures most prominently in Ayrshire place-names is Gaelic. We do not know exactly when or from where it was introduced, but from evidence such as that provided by the affixes of Maybole, it must have been in use after the formation of Old English place-names. This is perhaps most clearly shown by the name Tarbolton:

Torboultoun c.1161 x 1177 Fraser, *Lennox* ii no. 1

(lord of) *Torboltona* 1335 *Melr. Lib.* no. 447

(church of) *Torboltona* 1335 *Melr. Lib.* no. 447

G tòrr + existing name *Bolton

The second element is an existing name from Old English **boðl-tūn*, combined probably with Gaelic *tòrr* ‘(conical) hill’, using Gaelic word order. The place-name must be considered Gaelic, but incorporating an already existing place-name (**Bolton*) coined during a period of Northumbrian settlement. As for the compound noun **boðl-tūn* ‘house-enclosure, house farm’, it is the origin of several northern English place-names, as well as of the East Lothian parish-name Bolton. Its precise significance is unknown.

Another example of this phenomenon was spotted recently by Thomas Clancy. This is the name *Pulprestwic*, appearing once in the 12th century, now the Pow Burn dividing Monkton from Prestwick (see Clancy 2008a, reference in Appendix). He suggests it contains the Gaelic **pol*, deriving ultimately from British **pol*, the standard word in this part of the world for a burn, and so a Gaelic name meaning ‘Prestwick Burn’, showing that Prestwick was already in existence by this time and being used as a name by Gaelic-speakers.

As to the details of how and when Gaelic was introduced into Ayrshire, as we have said, there are very few historical fixed points to go on, though it was firmly in place by the late twelfth century (see discussion of Maybole, above). The 870s must have been a key decade for our area, however, when Norse pressure caused the collapse of Northumbrian power, as well as the end of Dumbarton as the centre of a British-speaking kingdom both north and south of the Clyde. This left Ayrshire exposed to the Gall-Ghàidheil, literally ‘foreign Gaels’, where ‘foreign’ refers to the Norse, and who have given their name to Galloway. Thomas Clancy, in an important article on the Gall-Ghàidheil, in *JSNS* 2 (Clancy 2008, see Appendix), defined them as follows: ‘Gaelic speakers with some characteristics that distinguished them as also Norse’ (Clancy 2008, 23). In this article Clancy carefully charts the complexities of ‘Galloway’, which he calls ‘a flexible and evolving term over the period 850–1200’, but which for at least some of this time took in Ayrshire and Renfrewshire, as well as the wider area in and around the Firth of Clyde, and it is very probable that Gaelic was at least partly introduced into Ayrshire by this group.

Norse

However, there were also Norse-speaking Norse around in sufficient numbers and for a sufficient period to leave a thin but important layer of Norse names – there are at least 6 names in Ayrshire which contain ON *-by* ‘farm’ (the earliest recorded being Crosbie, Dundonald parish, c.1210). These names were probably formed in the 10th century (see Taylor 2004, see Appendix).

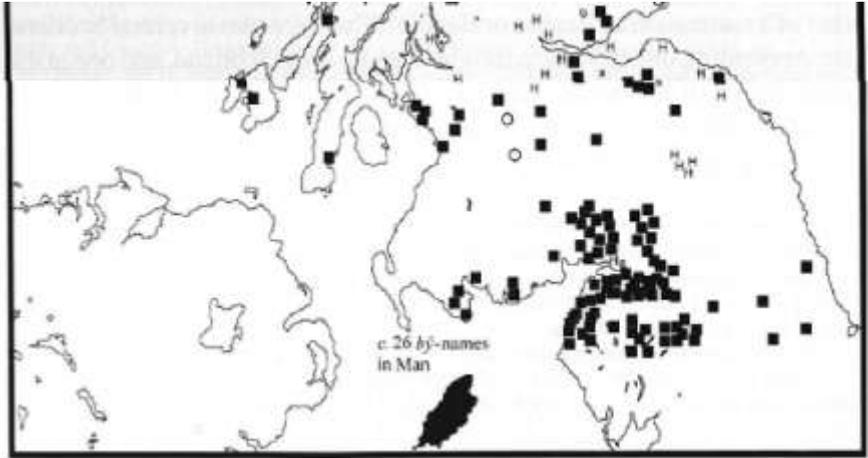


Fig. 2: Detail of map from Taylor 2004, 128

Key

black square: place-name with *-by* as second element.

open circle: place-name with *-by* as second element, but unattested before mid nineteenth century [to this can be added Bushby Hill by Mauchline]

X: place-name which shows variation between *-by* and *-tūn*.

H: hogback tombstone and kindred ecclesiastical monuments [shown for south and central Scotland only; not showing the twelve in English Cumbria; after Crawford 1987, 130].

Alison Grant in her 2005 article on this subject (see Appendix) suggested that there was a relationship between Arran and the general coastal distribution of these names in Ayrshire. She envisaged primary settlement in Ayrshire, with seasonal exploitation of Arran. The Arran connection is well worth exploring further, but if there was such a connection, then the influence was probably going the other way. Arran has a surprisingly high number of Norse names, including prime settlement-sites such as Brodick, Sannox and Ranza, not to mention the most prominent of all the relief features, Goat Fell. There is a comprehensive list of them in Ian Fraser's book on Arran place-names (1999, see Appendix). When you look closely, the island is teeming with them, all of them referring to physical features such as bays, valleys, hills and rivers.

Ian Fraser and, to a lesser extent, Alison Grant have assumed that because all these names are topographical, i.e. describe geographical features, there was no Norse settlement on the island, merely seasonal exploitation. This assumption needs to be carefully examined. Before doing this, I will define some of the terms I am about to use. Most place-names comprise two elements, a generic, giving the general type of place being described, and a specific, which singles out that general type from all the others in the surrounding area. Words can function both as generics and specifics, but typical generic elements are

Gaelic *baile* ‘farm’, *creag* ‘crag, rock’, *dùn* ‘hill-fort’, Scots *hill* ‘hill’, *side* ‘(hill-)side’, *muir* ‘muir, stretch of rough grazing’, *toun* ‘farm’. While typical specific elements are adjectives, such as Gaelic *dubh* in Dunduff, Maybole or *new* in Newark, Maybole (‘new work i.e. new building’); also personal names such as Neil in Neilshill, Tarbolton, or Thomas in Thomaston, Kirkoswald. Nouns can also function as specifics, such as Scots *sand* in Sandhill, Coylton, or Scots *friar* in Friarland near Ayr.

There are many categories of generic elements, but the two I want to discuss here are *habitative* and *topographic*. A habitative element explicitly refers to a habitation: e.g. British **trev* ‘farm’; Old English *tūn* ‘farm’; Gaelic *baile* ‘farm’; Old Norse *bý* ‘farm’; Scots *toun*. In contrast a topographic element refers to a geographical feature: e.g. Old English *ēa-mōt* ‘river-confluence’; Gaelic *mòine* ‘moss, peat-bog’; Old Norse *vik* ‘bay’; Scots *hill*, *brae*, *moss*.

In English place-name studies over the past 20 or so years there has been a kind of revolution with regard to these types of generic elements. It was once thought that names with habitative generic elements were the earliest and most important settlement-names, but it is now thought that generally speaking the earliest settlement-names have topographic generics, while those with habitative generics are later, often secondary developments, appearing in a second phase of settlement or land-taking, or when the earlier units are divided up.³

Because Norse place-names on the western mainland of Scotland, as well as on islands such as Arran and Bute, contain hardly any habitative elements, it was once thought that this meant there was little or no permanent Norse settlement here. However, scholars such as Barbara Crawford, Andrew Jennings and Arne Kruse, have applied the English model to Norse names in western Scotland, and in so doing have turned the older picture on its head. In short, Norse names such as *Breidvík* ‘broad bay’ (Brodict) and *Sandvík* ‘sand-bay’ (Sannox) indicate significant permanent Norse settlement. And so the *bý*-names on the Ayrshire coast could plausibly be interpreted as secondary settlement from an Arran base. I should add that Bute and Cumbrae cannot be left out of this picture. Cumbrae itself is a Norse name, meaning “Britons’ island” or the like, containing Norse *ey* ‘island’, while Bute has important Norse names such as Rothesay and Scalpsie, also containing Norse *ey*, and Langel (NS08 56), from Old Norse *langvell-* (‘long field’), the second element (nominative singular *völlr* ‘(level) field’) found also in Dingwall, Tynwald etc.⁴

Gaelic

Whatever the background to this Norse settlement in Ayrshire, it was probably quite controlled. I have argued in my article on *bý*-names in southern Scotland (Taylor 2004, see Appendix) that on the Scottish mainland, from Ayrshire to Fife, such settlement was probably happening with royal sanction. It was certainly very limited. In contrast, Gaelic settlement in Ayrshire was very wide-spread, as witnessed by the extent and density of Gaelic place-names. They are everywhere, containing elements such as: *achadh* ‘field, farm’ (Auchinleck, Auchindrane), *allt* ‘burn’ (Altizeurie [Straiton]), *baile* ‘farm’ (Balsagart [Kirkmichael]), *blàr* ‘(level) field, muir’ (Blairquhan), *cill* ‘church’ (Kilmarnock, Kilkerran), *cnoc* ‘hill’ (Knockdon [Maybole]), *druim* ‘ridge’ (Drummullan [Maybole]),

teanga ‘tongue (of land)’ (Change). These examples can be multiplied at least ten-fold, while many more elements can be added to the list.

As already discussed, the Gall-Gàidheil will have played an important role in bringing Gaelic to Ayrshire, from the west and south-west. However, as important, and, in terms of long-term survival of names, probably more important, was the Gaelic influence from the east and north-east as part of the expanding power of the kingdom of Alba, whose chief language was Gaelic.

The church seems also to have played a role in the Gaelicisation of Ayrshire. The key term here is *cill* ‘church’, the second element usually a saint’s name, the saint to whom the original church was dedicated. I have already mentioned Kilkerran, ‘(St) Ciarán’s church’. Various scholars have noted the many parallels between the saints in the place-names of Ayrshire on the one hand, and Arran and Kintyre on the other.

Scots

The last piece of this linguistic jig-saw is Scots, which was probably dominant in much of Cunningham and Kyle by the 13th century, with Gaelic remaining strong in Carrick for much longer. The whole process of the interaction of Scots and Gaelic is poorly understood, and in fact place-names offer the best chance of shedding light on the subject. While overall the picture is one of gradual replacement of Gaelic by Scots, it was not all a one way street, at least not in Carrick. For example, Killantringan, Colmonell, is a Gaelic name meaning ‘church of St Ninian’ but containing *Sanct Ringan*, a Scots form of that saint’s name.⁵

In many places in Scotland the coming of Scots was closely associated with the burghs, and this is very likely to have been the case in Ayrshire, too, with the royal burgh of Ayr, founded in the early 13th century, being a centre from which, on account of its trading privileges, Scots spread out through the hinterland, a good example of how language can change without there being a major displacement of people.

‘Roman’ Trenches at Tarbolton

In this paper I have concentrated very much on the ebb and flow of languages and people in Ayrshire, as reflected by its place-names. I would now briefly like to focus in on one element, to show how place-names can also help elucidate earlier land-use and exploitation, especially when viewed in conjunction with other landscape features. My chosen element here is Scots *park*, because, in a recently published article about Falkland in Fife (Taylor 2009), I have discussed it briefly in an Ayrshire context. In lowland Scotland, when *park* is found as a specific element in a place-name, such as in Park Hill or Park Mill, it almost always indicates the presence of land emparked or fenced for the purposes of hunting. To the east and north-east of the village of Tarbolton both Parkhill and Parkmill occur near each other, which alone would lead us to expect some kind of medieval hunting park. In fact, just such a park, complete with a paling or fence, and labelled *Parck*, along with Parkmill (*Parkmil*), is indicated on Timothy Pont’s map of Kyle, dating from the 1590s, and printed in 1654 (see Fig. 3).⁶



Fig. 3: Detail from Blaeu's map of Kyle (printed in 1654 from a Timothy Pont original dating from c.1590s). The church in the bottom left-hand corner represents Tarbolton. Image courtesy of NLS Map Library website.



Fig. 4: Detail from 'A Plan of the Estate of Nuthill, the Property of William Thomson Esq., surveyed by Thomas Winter, Anno 1757', in possession of Falkland Estate, Falkland, Fife. It is the earliest representation of The Trenches, which it terms 'an Old Fortification'. Note also the fields or enclosures called 'Deerends' to the west (right-hand side). Reproduced by kind permission of Ninian Stuart. Photo: Heather James.

Near the royal hunting park of Falkland in Fife there is a peculiar feature known as The Trenches (NO234079, NMRS No. NO20NW 8). They are first mentioned on an estate

map of 1757 (see Fig. 4). In my 2009 article I have suggested that they are connected with the capturing and sorting of deer from the Lomond Hills before they were taken to the nearby royal hunting park.

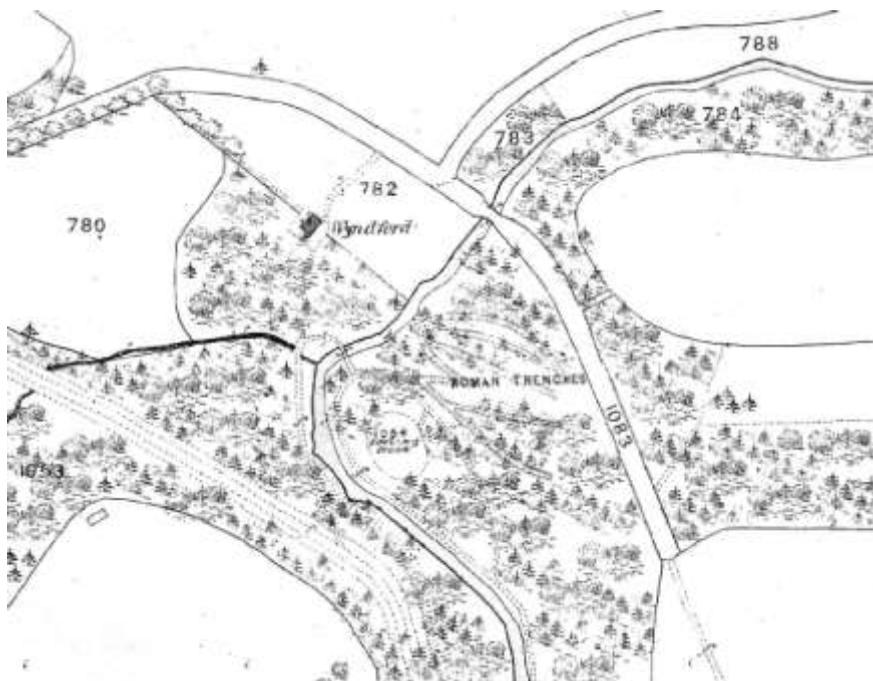


Fig. 5: So-called Roman Trenches at Parkmill by Tarbolton, along with Wyndford, as shown on OS 25 inch 1st edn (c.1858) [NS442268].

Image supplied by Christopher Dingwall, reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland.

While I was researching the Falkland Trenches, Christopher Dingwall of the Garden History Society drew to my attention a strikingly similar set of trenches near Tarbolton (NS442268), only 400 metres south-west of Parkmill Farm. They are generally described as Roman Trenches, which was also an explanation put forward for the Falkland ones. However, in the light of the explanation suggested for the Falkland Trenches, and of their close proximity to a medieval hunting park, I would argue that they, like their Falkland counterpart, are connected with the capturing or corralling of deer to supply the park.⁷

There is another piece of place-name evidence from Tarbolton which strongly corroborates this. It is the name Wyndford, attached to a small house, now gone, which lay less than a hundred metres north-west of a point where the Tarbolton Trenches converge (see Fig. 5, below). In the royal accounts (known as the Treasurer's Accounts) of 1505 relating to Falkland 14 shillings were "paid to John Balfour for ranging through the countryside⁸ with bloodhounds to drive the deer to the Park, and for the 'winding of the hay

yard' to catch them".⁹ The 'winding of the hay yard' is a difficult expression to translate, but seems to refer to the construction of some kind of wattle enclosure to catch the deer, and it is just such an enclosure that would be expected beside the apex of the Trenches, if they were indeed for the purpose I propose. The above-mentioned Wyndford takes its name from the ford over the Water of Fail just at the apex of the Tarbolton Trenches (see below, Fig. 5), and I would suggest it contains a word related to the wattle enclosure for the deer funnelled into it by the trenches. Alternatively, it might even be that the whole system of trenches was referred to a *wynd*.

Conclusion

To conclude, I very much hope it will not be too long before a full and detailed county place-name survey of Ayrshire can be inaugurated, along the lines of those for West Lothian or Fife. Only then can we seriously begin to mine the rich linguistic, social, environmental and cultural heritage that is buried within the wonderful place-names of Ayrshire.

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[For a select bibliography of articles and book-chapters with special reference to Ayrshire place-names, see Appendix, below]

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- Williams, Ifor and Williams, J. E. Caerwyn (ed.), 1968, *The Poems of Taliesin* (Dublin; reprinted 1975 and 1987).

Appendix

Ayrshire Place-Names Resource Sheet:

For full Scottish place-name bibliography, including some regional studies. see:
www.spns.org.uk/classtext.htm

Ayrshire Place-Names Select Bibliography (individual Ayrshire names in bold)

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- Patterson, W., 2007, 'Mapping a Pair of Ayrshire Twins', *Scottish Place-Name News* 22 (Spring), 14 [also on SPNS website] [**Sandhill** and **Bargenoch**, Coylton]
- Watson, W. J., 1926, *The History of the Celtic Place-names of Scotland* (various reprints, most recently by Birlinn, Edinburgh 2004, with new Introduction, corrigenda, some addenda and a full W. J. Watson bibliography, by S. Taylor), esp. Chapter VII, 'Ayrshire and Strathclyde' (pp. 186–205); but Ayrshire names discussed throughout (see index).

Useful dictionaries etc:

1. Modern Scottish **Gaelic**: <http://www.yourdictionary.com/languages/celtic.html> under 'Scottish Dictionaries'. The most extensive and detailed Scottish Gaelic Dictionary remains E. Dwelly, *The Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*, E. Dwelly 1901–11 (various editions and reprints), though it needs to be handled with some care <http://www.dwelly.info/index.aspx?Language=en>.
2. Old Gaelic (Old and Middle Irish and early Scottish Gaelic): <http://www.dil.ie> 'This electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language (eDIL) is a digital edition of the complete contents of the Royal Irish Academy's *Dictionary of the Irish Language based mainly on Old and Middle Irish materials*.'
3. **Scots**: <http://www.dsl.ac.uk> combines the multi-volume *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, ed. W. Craigie & others 1937–2001 (Scots till c.1700) with *Scottish National Dictionary* (Scots since c.1700), ed. William Grant et al. (1931–76).
4. **Welsh**: *Geiriadur Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru/A Dictionary of the Welsh Language* (Caerdydd/Cardiff 1950–2002) (on-line version <http://www.aber.ac.uk/geiriadur/>)
5. **Old English**: Bosworth-Toller *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (1898) + Supplement (1921) + Enlarged Addenda and Corrigenda (by Alistair Campbell, 1972): http://www.ling.upenn.edu/~kurisuto/germanic/oe_bosworthtoller_about.html. See also: Smith, A. H., 1956 (reprinted 1970), *English Place-Name Elements*, 2 vols., English Place-Name Society vols. 25–6. And *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names* (Á–

BOX), ed. D. Parsons and T. Styles, with C. Hough, Centre for English Name Studies (Nottingham 1997). (*BRACE–CAESTER*), ed. D. N. Parsons and T. Styles, Centre for English Name Studies (Nottingham 2000). (*CEAFOR–COCK-PIT*), ed. David N. Parsons, English Place-Name Society (Nottingham 2004).

Websites

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Names Project, Dept. of Celtic, University of Glasgow: details on: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/celtic/projects/> then select 'The Expansion and Contraction of Gaelic in Medieval Scotland: the onomastic evidence'. Project output includes a series of volumes on place-names of Fife, two of which have so far appeared.

Journal of Scottish Name Studies <http://www.clanntuirc.co.uk/JSNS.html>

National Library of Scotland maps site, including Roy's military survey, various early OS maps from OS 6 inch 1st edn, old town plans and some estate plans www.nls.uk/maps

New Cumnock: Robert Guthrie's website 'The Place-names of the parish of New

Cumnock': http://members.tripod.com/bob_newcumnock/placenames/welcomex.html

Ordnance Survey web-based publications for three of the languages which have made an important contribution to the place-names of Scotland: **Gaelic**, **Scandinavian** (Norse) and **Scots**. Each consists of an Introduction, which includes some basic grammar as it relates to place-name formation, and a *Glossary* of common place-name elements.

For **Gaelic** Place-Names (Introduction by Simon Taylor):

<http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/freefun/didyouknow/placenames/gaelic.html>

For **Scandinavian** Place-Names (Introduction by Anke-Beate Stahl):

<http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/freefun/didyouknow/placenames/scan.html>

For **Scots** Place-Names (Introduction by Simon Taylor):

<http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/freefun/didyouknow/placenames/scots.html>

There is a fourth such site, concerning **Welsh** Place-Names:

<http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/freefun/didyouknow/placenames/welsh.html>

Although each of these four sites includes the word 'Britain' in its title, in the first three read 'Scotland' for 'Britain', in the fourth read 'Wales'.

NOTE: These web-publications supersede the hard-copy *Place-Names on Maps of Scotland and Wales*, Ordnance Survey: glossary of common Welsh, Gaelic and Scandinavian place-name elements (1981).

Scottish Place-Name Society www.spns.org.uk

Scottish place-names discussion group <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/scotplace/>

Scotland's Rural Past website <http://www.scotlandsruralpast.org.uk/index/Doing>

Research/Historic Documents/Bibliography/Place-names–place-name studies

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- 1 Part IV (Gartree Hundred) of the *Place-Names of Leicestershire*, by Barrie Cox.
- 2 This element, which also appears in place-names as *-burgh*, as in Edinburgh, is found in the old name for the Heads of Ayr, which are shown on Blaeu's map of Carrick as *Elsberry head* (1654), earlier *Alesburc* 1185 x 1196 *Melr. Lib.* i no. 31; de *Alebuero* 1189 x 1196 *Melr. Lib.* i no. 32; de *Alesbiri* 1189 x 1196 *Melr. Lib.* i no. 33; de *Alesburc* 1197 x c.1200 *Melr. Lib.* i no. 36.
- 3 See for example Gelling and Cole 2000, xii–xiii, for England; for discussion of this in a Norse context, see most recently Jennings and Kruse 2009, 92–5.
- 4 The same name, in the form Langwell, is also found in Sutherland. When the Bute Langel first appears in 1440 (as *Langil ER* v 79) it is divided into four parts. It applies to what is probably the flattest and most open stretch of land on the whole island, on which today there is a small airstrip, as well as a golf course and land still under cultivation.
- 5 The same name appears in Portpatrick, Wigtownshire. See Watson 1926, 170 (details in Appendix, below).
- 6 This is the 'Park of Tarbolton' (parco de *Torboltoun*) mentioned in a Latin charter of 1428 (*RMS* ii no. 108).
- 7 John Smith describes these trenches in some detail, concurring with the local tradition that they were built by the Romans (1895, 150–54). I am grateful to Michael Ansell for this reference.
- 8 Probably around Falkland; J. M. Gilbert suggests this means the Lomond Hills (1979, 220).
- 9 'Item, to him he gaif John Balfour passand with raches in the cuntree to drif the deir to the park, and for wynding of the hay 3ard for deir taking,' 14 shillings (*TA* iii, p. 172). *TA* iii, Glossary under *wynding* has 'possibly making narrow entrances or alleys'. For further discussion of the phrase 'wynding of the hay 3ard for deir taking', see Gilbert 1979, 220.

Old Fingerposts in Ayrshire

In an article with the same title in *Ayrshire Notes* 18 (2000) 12–20, the author reported on the condition of the 16 extant old fingerposts in Ayrshire, as they were both earlier (when photographed at various times in the 1990s) and as they appeared in 2000, when some repairs had taken place and others were contemplated. The purpose of the present article is to review the condition of the fingerposts today.

Four types of fingers are to be found, as shown in the table below. Types I and 2 are original fingers manufactured by the Royal Label Factory, Stratford on Avon; they were cast in spelter, the most common commercial form of zinc, and weigh about 22Kg and 20Kg respectively.¹ The reproductions were made for South Ayrshire Council by David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd. of Kilmarnock, and are of mild steel.²

Finger Types



Type 1
c. 1925-1926



Type 2
c. 1927
may have a road number



Reproduction Type 1
c.2000



Reproduction Type 2
c. 2000

photos DCM 2000/2009



Base of FP 2. This is now concealed within a boundary hedge.

photo DCM 1995

Eleven of the posts bear the embossed legend 'Royal Label Factory Stratford on Avon'. Two are embossed 'Grangemouth Ironworks', two are concealed within earth banks and one is too heavily painted to be deciphered with any certainty.

In the following table the finial and fingers are described as they were in the 1990s, then the changes in 2000 are noted, and the last entry is the condition observed in March 2009. It will be seen that there are two significant losses: FP 1 has lost two of its fingers, and FP 3 is missing altogether. South Ayrshire Council has no plans to replace them with facsimiles.³ Elsewhere the country these old signs are regarded as an important part of the local heritage and are maintained for their contribution to the appearance of an area and its attractiveness to tourists.

In the table below the word *miles* and the abbreviation *mls* have been omitted from the descriptions of the fingers.

Fingerpost [FP] 1

Location: junction of B7045 and B742; NS332120; OS 70.

Finial spherical boss.

Fingers 4 type 1. A: Minnyshant 1½ Ayr 7; B: Maybole 2¼; C: Kirkmichael 3 Straiton 7 Newton-Stewart 37; D: Dalrymple 2¼.

2000

no change.

2009

fingers A and D are both missing (no more Minnyshant!).

FP 2

Location junction of B7045 and a minor road leading to Maybole; NS323101; OS70/76.

Finial *Ayr County Council*.

Fingers 3 type 2. A: Maybole 1½; B: B7045 Ayr 8½; C: B7045 Ayr 9.

2000

no change.

2009

no change. The beech hedge of the adjacent property now conceals much of the post.

FP 3

Location junction of B7045 and a minor road leading to B7023; NS328093; OS70/76.

Finial spherical boss.

Fingers 1 type 1 and 2 modern type 1. A: Ayr 9; B: Crosshill 2 Dailly 7 Girvan 13.

2000

Finger B had been lost and then replaced by a modern reproduction. Finger C, also a modern reproduction, had been added: Kirkmichael 1 Straiton 5½.

2009

this post is now absent.

FP 4

Location junction of B7023 and a minor road, in Crosshill; NS325066; OS70/76.

Finial *Ayr County Council*.

Fingers 3 type 2. A: B7023 Maybole 2¼; B: Kirkmichael 2½; C: B7023 Dailly 5 Girvan 11¼.

2000

no change.

2009

no change.

FP 5

Location junction of B741 and B7023; NS314054; OS70/76.
 Finial broken; -- *District* –(possibly *Carrick District of Roads*).
 Fingers 2 type 2. A: B741 Straiton 4; B: Crosshill ¾.
 2000 the fragment of the finial bearing the word *Carrick* has been lost; otherwise no change.
 2009 no change.

FP 6

Location junction of B741 and an unmetalled road; NS289026; OS76.
 Finial *Ayr County Council*.
 Fingers 1 type 2. A: Dailly 1½.
 2000 a modern type 1 finger B has been added. B: Kilkerran Crosshill 2½.
 2009 no change.

FP 7

Location junction of two minor roads, near Milton Farm; NX289957; OS76.
 Finial spherical boss.
 Fingers 1 type 1. A: Crosshill 1¼ Maybole 14¾ Newton-Stewart 24¾.
 2000 2 modern type 1 fingers have been added. B: Barr 1½; C: Dailly 6.
 2009 no change.

FP 8

Location junction of A77 and a minor road, near Kirkoswald; NS246077; OS70/76.
 Finial spherical boss.
 Fingers 2 type 1 and 1 modern type 1 (C). A: Maybole 4 Ayr 13; B: Killkerran (*sic*) 6 Dailly 6; C: Kirkoswald ½ Girvan 8.
 2000 finger A had been lost and has been replaced with a modern type 1. Finger B has been replaced with an alternative old type 1. B: Kilkerran.
 2009 no change.

FP 9

Location junction of A714 and a minor road, near Pinmore Farm; NX203921; OS76.
 Finial *Ayr County Council*.
 Fingers 1 type 2. A: Tormitchell 2½.
 2000 The only finger was repainted under the refurbishment programme. The post was later struck by a vehicle causing loss of the finial and damage to the finger. A new type 1 finger was to be fitted.
 2009 3 modern type 1. A (as noted in 2000): Tormitchell 2½; B: Girvan 5; C: Newton Stewart 25.

FP 10

Location junction of A714 and B7027, in Barrhill; NX237820; OS76.
 Finial *Ayr County Council*.
 Fingers 2 type 2. A: A714 Newton Stewart via Bargrennan 17½; B7027 Newton Stewart via Knowe 17½.
 2000 no change.
 2009 no change.

FP 11

Location junction of two minor roads; NS297045; OS76.
 Finial spherical boss.
 Fingers 2 type 1 and 1 modern type 1 (C). A: Girvan 8; B: Maybole 4 Girvan 13; C: Kilkerran Dailly 3/Crosshill 2½ (Dailly appears on one face and Crosshill on the other).
 2000 no change.
 2009 no change.

FP 12

Location junction of B741 and a minor road; NS332054; OS70/76.
 Finial missing
 Fingers 4 type 2. A: Crosshill 1; B: B741 Straiton 3; C Newton Stewart Hill Road 30; D B741 Girvan 11¾.
 2000 no change.
 2009 no change.

FP 13

Location junction of B741 and B7045; NS378050; OS77.
 Finial missing.
 Fingers 3 type 2. A: B741 New Dailly 8¼ Girvan 14½; B: B7045 Kirkmichael 4 Ayr 14; C (broken) S[traiton] Da[mellington].
 2000 C replaced with modern type 2. C: B741 Dalmellington 7 Newton Stewart 31.
 2009 no change (though the post is canted at an angle).

FP 14

Location junction of B7045 and a minor road, in Kirkmichael; NS341089; OS70/76.
 Finial *Ayr County Council*.
 Fingers 1 type 2. A: Patna 5¼.
 2000 finger A was found to be damaged and has been replaced. 2 new fingers have been added; all are modern type 1. A: Patna 5; B: Ayr 11; C: Straiton 4.
 2009 no change.

FP 15

Location junction of B730 and a minor road, in Dundonald; NS367342; OS70.
 Finial *Ayr County Council*.
 Fingers 2 type 2. A: B730 Tarbolton 6½; B: Symington 2¼.
 2000 no change.
 2009 repainted.

FP 16

Location junction of A759 and a minor road, in Troon; NS328312; OS70.
 Finial missing
 Fingers none. This is just a Royal Label Factory post.
 2000 no change.
 2009 the post has been used to carry modern tourist signs.

David Courtney McClure

- ¹ The term spelter also refers to a zinc alloy used as a solder.
 - ² Further information will be found in the original article, which can be found on the Ayrshire History Website (go to the site and use the search term *fingerposts*).
 - ³ Both were reported to South Ayrshire Council; the following response was received from Tommy Thorburn (Technician): 'The fingerpost you refer to has deteriorated with age and simply rusted. There are no plans to replace the fingerposts with a similar type. Should they be replaced we would replace the post with new fingerposts in compliance with the current traffic signs manual. The current advance direction signs, however contain most of the information, apart from distances, that the fingerposts contain. The current standard is to show direction signs in advance of the junction and fingerposts to locate the junction. The fingerposts would generally only be used where the advance view of the junction is impaired.'
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Ayrshire Federation of Historical Societies

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Federation was held on Sunday 17th May in the Vennel History Centre, Irvine, at 2 p.m. The office bearers remain unchanged, with the usual plea for more volunteers to join us in the work of running the Federation. It is, we hope, enjoyable, not especially taxing, and doesn't require a great commitment of time.

John Strawhorn Quaich

At the Annual General Meeting the John Strawhorn Quaich for 2009 was awarded to Jim Steel. In making the presentation, the secretary, Pamela McIntyre, spoke of Jim's long-standing involvement in the East Ayrshire Family History Society, his enthusiasm for genealogy, and his recognition of the importance of indexes and transcripts. Pamela also made mention of the tremendous support Jim gets in all his family history activities from his wife, Willina. He is a worthy recipient of the quaich.

Nominations for the award for 2010 should be sent to Pamela, with a short explanatory justification.

Swap Shop

The 2009 Swap Shop will be at **Scottish Maritime Museum, Irvine, on Sunday 4th October at 2 p.m.** As always, this will be a chance to meet with others of a like mind and discuss subjects of mutual interest, this time within the confines of this fascinating multi-site museum. We meet at the main (Linthouse) building, but there will also be the chance to see the museum's other sites, including the shipworker's flat in Montgomerie Street..

Continuing our now well-established series of biannual conferences in Troon, we will be holding the next in October 2010. It is hoped that the subject will be the Auld Alliance – Scotland's many and varied links with France.

Ayrshire Notes

The sharp-eyed will have noticed a slight change to the inside cover of this issue of *Ayrshire Notes*. What had previously been a shared effort between the Federation and the AANHS has now become a three-way effort. We welcome the members of Kilmarnock and District History Group, hope that they find the material in *Ayrshire Notes* interesting, and invite them (as we invite everyone, every time) to send in material on any aspect of Ayrshire's history.

Ayrshire Place Names

Simon Taylor's article underlines how little research has been done on Ayrshire's place names. The Federation is keen to explore with him ways in which we can contribute to promoting more research and publication of Ayrshire place names. In the meantime, we would be pleased to hear of anyone with lists of minor Ayrshire names, such as field names.

Diary of Meetings of Historical Societies

- AA Arran Antiquarians. Meetings in Brodick Public Hall, Brodick, at 2 p.m.
- AANHS Ayrshire Archaeological and Natural History Society. Meetings in Carnegie Library, Ayr, at 7.45 p.m.
- ASA Alloway & Southern Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Alloway Church Halls, Alloway, at 7.45 p.m.
- BHS Beith Historical Society. Meetings in lounge of the Eglinton Inn, Beith at 8.00 p.m.
- CHS Cumbrae Historical Society. Meetings in Hiccups Lounge, Newton Bar, Millport, at 7.00 p.m.
- CSD Catrine Sorn & District History Society. Meetings in A. M. Brown Institute, Catrine, at 7.30 p.m.
- DHS Dundonald Historical Society. Meetings in Dundonald Castle Visitors' Centre, Dundonald, at 7.30 p.m.
- EAFFHS East Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Gateway Centre, Foregate Square, Kilmarnock, at 7.30 p.m.
- FHS Joint Joint Meeting of Ayrshire Family History Societies. Carnegie Library, Ayr, at 7.45 p.m.
- KCCS Kyle and Carrick Civic Society. Meetings in Loudoun Hall, Ayr, at 7.30 p.m.
- KDHG Kilmarnock & District History Group. Meetings in Kilmarnock College at 7.30 p.m.
- Largs HH LDHS Hakon Hakonsson Lecture. In Vikingar!, Largs at 8.00 p.m.
- Largs Jt Joint meeting of LDHS and LNAFHS. In St. Columba's Session House, Largs at 7.30 p.m.
- LDHS Largs and District Historical Society. Meetings in Largs Museum at 7.30 p.m.
- L(MS) LDHS, Marine Section. Meetings in Largs Museum at 7.30 p.m.
- LNAFHS Largs & North Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Largs Library, Allanpark Street, Largs at 7.30 p.m.

MHS	Maybole Historical Society. Meetings in Maybole Castle, High Street, Maybole at 7.30 p.m.
NCHG	New Cumnock History Group. Meetings in New Cumnock Community Centre at 7.00 p.m.
PHG	Prestwick History Group. Meetings in 65 Club, Main Street, Prestwick, at 7.30 p.m.
SHS	Stewarton Historical Society. Meetings in John Knox Church Hall, Stewarton, at 7.30 p.m.
SWT	Scottish Wildlife Trust: Ayrshire Members' Centre. Meetings in The Green Room, Auchincruive, Ayr, at 7.30 p.m.
TAFHS	Tron @ Ayrshire Family History Society. Meetings in Portland Church Hall, South Beach, Tron, at 7.30 p.m.
WKCS	West Kilbride Civic Society. Meetings in Community Centre, Corse Street, West Kilbride, at 7.30 p.m.

August 2009

Mon 17 th	AA	Annie Tindley	Actual Pinching and Suffering: Responses to Poverty in Sutherland 1850-1870
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September 2009

Wed 9 th	DHS	Tom Cunningham	Buffalo Bill in Scotland
Thu 10 th	EAFHS	Anne Geddes	Update on Burns Centre
Tues 15 th	SWT	James Cassels	Birds of Arran and the Wildlife Festival
Tues 15 th	TAFHS	Mr Blackley	The Covenanters
Mon 21 st	AA	David Napier	Life on the Craig
Thu 24 th	BHS	Donald Reid	Discovering Matthew Anderson, Policeman/Poet of Ayrshire

October 2009

Thu 1 st	PHG	Adam K. Boyd	Around the Baltic
Mon 5 th	KCCS	Alistair Scott	An Architect at Work: How Emerging Architectural Issues will Shape our Buildings and Towns
Mon 5 th	L(MS)	Dugald Cameron	Clyde Ships and Aircraft
Tues 6 th	KDHG	Peter Aitchison	Black Friday: The East Coast Fishing Disaster of 1881
Thu 8 th	EAFHS	James Gibson	Robert Burns
Thu 8 th	AANHS	John Hume	Victorian Churches in Ayrshire
Mon 12 th	CHS	Derek Alexander	Archaeology at Culzean Castle
Wed 14 th	DHS	Jim Fallon	A History of the Fire Brigade
Thu 15 th	ASA	--	Family History Sources at Glasgow University
Mon 19 th	AA	Ken Currie	Heritage in America
Mon 19 th	Largs Jt	Billy Kay	The Scottish World
Tues 20 th	TAFHS	Members	Who Do You Think You Are?

Tues 20 th	KDHG	Annie Tindley	The Afterlife of the Clearances in the Crofters' War
Tues 20 th	SWT	Don Smith	Digital Critters
Thu 22 nd	AANHS	Gerald Cummins	Old Roads in Ayrshire
Thu 29 th	BHS	Charles Jamieson	Glasgow
November 2009			
Mon 2 nd	L(MS)	Frank Quinn	Clyde Crossings
Mon 2 nd	KCCS	Simon Green	"Dumfries House is, perhaps, the loveliest of them all."
Tues 3 rd	KDHG	John McGill	History of Loudoun Castle
Thu 5 th	PHG	Quentin Wilson, Ian Adams, & Stephen Kunz	Prestwick's Pilcher Project
Mon 9 th	CHS	Sarah Goldie	Something of the History of Largs
Wed 11 th	DHS	Elizabeth Stewart	A Chinese Adventure
Thu 12 th	AANHS	Charlotte Rosick	Dumfries House
Thu 12 th	EAFHS	Douglas McIntyre	An Ayrshire Shipbuilder
Mon 16 th	AA	Erlend Clouston	The Dead Cities of Syria
Mon 16 th	LDHS	Nigel Willis	Glasgow Necropolis
Tues 17 th	SWT	Jimmy Begg	The Ayrshire Coastal Path
Tues 17 th	TAFHS	Chris Paton	DNA and Genealogy
Tues 17 th	KDHG	Cate Devine	Recollections of the D-Day Landings
Thu 19 th	ASA	Margaret Morrell	History of Old Turnberry Aerodrome
Tues 24 th	WKCS	Ian McCrorie	Largs Pier
Thu 26 th	AANHS	Ian McCrorie	The MacBrayne Story – The Clyde Steamers
Thu 26 th	BHS	E Klinge	Preventing Hitler Getting the Atomic Bomb
December 2009			
Tues 1 st	KDHG	James Gibson	A Trip Round Burns Country
Thu 3 rd	PHG	John Kellie	An Ayrshire Miscellany
Mon 7 th	CHS	Fraser Hunter	New Light on Roman Scotland
Mon 7 th	KCCS	James Knox	The Genius of Osbert Lancaster: Architectural Satirist, Conservationist and Cartoonist
Mon 7 th	L(MS)	---	Members' night
Wed 9 th	DHS	Bill McGregor	Trams
Tues 15 th	KDHG	tbc	
January 2010			
Thu 7 th	AANHS	Tony Scott	Birds, landscape and culture of southern India
Mon 11 th	L(MS)	tbc	

Mon 11 th	CHS	Alastair Chisholm	Captain Peter Mitchell of the SS Melmore: A Glasgow-Donegal connection
Mon 11 th	KCCS	Ian T. Bunch	Golf and the Railways
Tues 12 th	KDHG	Norman Deeley	What Colour was the Clyde 1899-1939?
Thu 14 th	EAFHS	Tom Morrell	Ayrshire Coins and Tokens
Mon 18 th	LDHS	David Bruce	What Sir Walter Scott did for Hollywood
Tues 19 th	TAFHS	D W Webster	Wild Cards
Tues 19 th	SWT	Angus Hogg	Birding Down Under
Thu 21 st	AANHS	Peter Martin	Dr Samuel Johnson
Thu 21 st	ASA	Peter Towle and Andrew Dinwoodie	Who Do You Think You Are?
Tues 26 th	KDHG	Robin Nelson	How Railways Changed Ayrshire
Tues 26 th	WKCS	Cameron Sharp	Running a Country Park
Thu 28 th	BHS	Jim Gibson	Burns, The Lassies and Clarinda
February 2010			
Mon 1 st	KCCS	Hal Currie	Scotch Whisky
Mon 1 st	L(MS)	tba	
Thu 4 th	PHG	Mark Gibson	Craigengillan Estate
Tues 9 th	KDHG	Tony Pollard	The Archaeology of World War One
Wed 10 th	DHS	Stanley Sarsfield	Robert Hetrick – An Ayrshire Poet
Thu 11 th	EAFHS	John Smillie	Memory Lane
Thu 11 th	AANHS	Headland	Uncovering Industry – the M74 dig
		Archaeology	
Mon 15 th	CHS	Pauline Hunter	The Hunters of Hunterston
Mon 15 th	LDHS	David Breeze	The Antonine Wall: Scotland's new World Heritage Site
Tues 16 th	SWT	Stuart Brabbs	Ayrshire Rivers Trust: Fish and a Whole Lot More
Tues 16 th	TAFHS	Dougal McIntyre	Prestwick Airport
Tues 23 rd	WKCS	David Hopes	Restoration of Burns' Cottage
Tues 23 rd	KDHG	Alastair Hendry	Old Loudoun Kirk
Thu 25 th	BHS	Allan Richardson	The History of the Queen Elizabeth 2
Thu 25 th	AANHS	Allan McInnes	The Covenanting Movement between the Restoration of 1660 and the evolution of 1689-90
March 2010			
Mon 1 st	L(MS)	tbc	
Mon 1 st	KCCS	David Bell	Ayr Renaissance
Thu 4 th	PHG	members	Pot Pourri
Tues 9 th	KDHG	tbc	

Wed 10 th	DHS	Douglas Fraser	History of Urban Gardens
Thu 11 th	AANHS		The Silk Road
Thu 11 th	EAFHS	Robert Ferguson	Costumes of the Past
Mon 15 th	CHS	Dane Love	Lost Ayrshire
Mon 15 th	LDHS	Angela Callaghan	The Skelmorlie Aisle
Tues 16 th	SWT	Simon Jones	The Return of the Beaver
Tues 16 th	TAFHS	Bob Gemmell	The Arms and the Man
Tues 23 rd	KDHG	David Smith	The Roarin' Game: Scotland's Ain
Thu 25 th	BHS	Tbc	Castle Semple Ranger Service
Thu 25 th	FHS Jt	Gerlad Cummins	Old Roads of Ayrshire
Tues 30 th	WKCS	H Doyle	Admiral Cochrane – Founder of the Chilean and Argentinian Navies

April 2010

Thu 1 st	PHG	tbc	Ayrshire Archives
Mon 5 th	L(MS)	Bill Laing	
Thu 8 th	EAFHS	Gareth Hunt	John Hastie Museum, Strathaven
Wed 14 th	DHS	Wendy Sandford	'Following the Drum'
Thu 15 th	ASA	Ron Ferguson	Dating Old Photographs
Mon 19 th	LDHS	---	AGM
Tues 20 th	TAFHS	Irene McMillan	Dean Castle
Tues 20 th	SWT	Gill Smart	Ayrshire Reserves Round-up
Mon 26 th	CHS	Tom Davidson	'Eat your Heart out, Toshie!':
		Kelly	Glasgow's other great architect and
			Millport's Marine Station
Thu 29 th	BHS	Nancy Williamson	Coldstream Mill

May 2010

Thu 6 th	PHG	members	Blether of 2010
Thu 13 th	EAFHS	---	AGM
Thu 20 th	ASA	Gerald Cummins	Lost Ayrshire

Rob's Book Club: an occasional series

This is the year of Homecoming, and of Robert Burns, and there have been a number of books published to mark this celebration of his life, which have, mainly, been dealt with adequately in more august publications than this one. Otherwise, I don't seem to have acquired too many new books on Ayrshire, though I have seen a small book on the Southannan estate at Fairlie, and promised a copy. The re-publication of the book on the Knockshinnoch disaster is also to be commended.

On a recent visit to Welbeck, the Nottinghamshire estate of the Dukes of Portland, I discovered a number of books relating to the infamous Fifth Duke of Portland, which may well be of interest to people on the Portland's Kilmarnock and Troon estates (and to others

as well). *Miss Butler Remembers*, published in 2003, is, as the sub-title says, *A Laundrymaid's Recollections of the Fifth Duke of Portland*, while *The Enigmatic Fifth Duke of Portland*, by Derek Adlam, published in 2007, both set out to disavow some of the more outrageous stories of the Fifth – the Tunnelling – Duke's conduct. Both these booklets are published by the Pineapple Press for the Harley Gallery (harleygallery.co.uk), which is an attractive art gallery with a small museum of changing exhibitions about the great families of Welbeck (the Dukes of Newcastle, succeeded by the Portlands). Welbeck itself is resolutely private, but there is a public footpath through the park, and many of the uncountable Victorian estate buildings, e.g. lodges, can be seen by driving around the area. West of Welbeck is Cresswell Crags, a limestone gorge which was preserved from despoliation by the Fifth Duke, who prevented a railway running through the gorge, and landscaped it, making a boating lake. It is now a popular place for walking and recreation, with a new visitor centre, and Britain's first rock art has been found in some of the limestone caves. Another angle on the Duke is provided by *The Underground Man* by Mick Jackson (Faber & Faber, 2007), 'the fictionalised diary of a deeply eccentric English aristocrat'.

Two designers intimately connected with the restoration of Culzean Castle for the National Trust for Scotland have recently died. The architect Geoffrey Jarvis died in February, aged 81. From 1972 he converted the home farm complex at Culzean into today's visitor centre, while he also commenced the restoration and repair of the fabric of the castle itself. He also restored the 'dog kennels' of the Duke of Hamilton at Chatelherault, and 'through his attention to detail and sensitive approach to conservation, he enhanced ... these beautiful buildings in bringing them back to life.'¹ Much of the internal restoration, conservation and presentation at Culzean was due to David Learmont, the Yorkshire-born son of a Scottish G.P., who died in July, aged 74. His recreation of the kitchens at Culzean was completed in 1997, and he also oversaw the presentation of Brodick Castle.

Alastair Boyd, 7th Baron Kilmarnock, who died in March, aged 81, may have had little connection with Ayrshire, and lived most of his life in Spain, writing a number of excellent books on the country, and is perhaps best remembered for the strange ménage he shared with his wife, Hilary, and her first husband, the irascible novelist Kingsley Amis, who demanded that Hilary nurse him in his declining years. The poet Maurice Lindsay, author of the still valuable *The Burns Encyclopedia* (1959), died in April.

Mollie, Lady Butler, the widow of Lord 'Rab' Butler, died in February. She was born in 1907: her father, Frank Montgomerie, farmed chickens 'with notably modest success'² at Great Codham Hall, Essex. His family were one of many that moved to East Anglia from Scotland in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. I wonder whether he was from Ayrshire, and would be happy to publish in *Ayrshire Notes* either a note on this Montgomerie family, or a longer article on this internal migration, which is well-known but little researched.

And finally, the Texan guitarist and banjo player, Huey Long, who has died aged 105, 'linked up with the trombonist Snub Mosley in 1952 for a tour of overseas military bases that included the UK, where the band also played for a 2,000-strong crowd at Butlin's in Ayr.'³ Were you there: was your father there? Another story with *Ayrshire Notes* potential.

- ¹ Robert Clow, *Guardian*, 15th June 2009.
 - ² *Guardian*, 24th February 2009.
 - ³ *Guardian*, 30th June 2009.
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Etymology of Parish Names in the OSA¹

In the list of more than 160 questions which he enclosed with his ‘First Circular Letter to the Clergy of the Church of Scotland’, dated Edinburgh May 25th, 1790, Sir (as he later became) John Sinclair began by asking, ‘What is the ancient and modern name of the Parish?’ and then, ‘What is the origin and etymology of the name?’ In an issue of *AN* which includes Simon Taylor’s erudite article on Ayrshire Place-Names, and Rob Close’s plea for more work in this field, it seemed apposite to fill a page or two with the responses of a few of the ministers, beginning with the sceptical thoughts of the minister of Dunlop.

Dunlop

‘Nothing is seemingly more arbitrary and capricious than the names of places, and nothing is for that reason perhaps less attended to and understood; owing, as we suppose, their origin to mere fancy or arbitrary will, we think them unworthy of a serious investigation; and that every attempt to account for them, is but a confirmation of what we suppose. On the other extreme, is the opinion of those who allow, indeed, that they may be traced, and their meaning ascertained, but that in order to this, ancient times must be consulted, and ancient tales be believed. Whatever, therefore, comes stamped with this authority, and has any relation, though but in sound to the name, is admitted as a matter of importance, and sufficient to settle every inquiry of this kind. To such persons the marvellous and improbable are so far from being objections, that they rather appear to be natural for the times that gave them birth, and necessary to give dignity and permanency to what they were intended to express. It is for this reason, that the names of places have been explained in the most fanciful manner, and circumstances adduced in the explication of them, that exceed every degree of probability, and are evidently false. The name before us, as accounted for by some, is one of these. According to them, there was among the Danes who infested this country, a man of extraordinary strength and stature, and that upon a time, to show I suppose his extraordinary folly, he made a remarkable leap from a hill in the neighbourhood of the place where the church now stands, and to this incident the hill itself and the parish are indebted for their name. But without examining into the merits of this story, or regretting that it had not been more circumstantially told, we need only observe, that the name is with much more probability derived from an old and respectable family in the parish, or from its hilly appearance *Dun-lop* or *Dun-luib*, signifying, in Gaelic, “a winding or circuitous hill;” and were we to credit the tradition, that the house of Dunlop stood originally on the top of Dunlop-hill, we might be led from this circumstance, and the appearance of the ground about it, to suppose, that it might be called, in the language of the

times, the house on, or the house of the winding hill, and that the family itself might afterward assume that name, and give it to the parish.’ Rev. James Thomson, Vol. IX, 533-534.

Maybole

‘It seems to have derived its name from the ancient game called the *maypole*. There is at Maybole a piece of level ground, consisting of upwards of an acre, called the Green of Maybole, which is used as a place of exercise for the school boys; where, in former times, the people from several parts of the country used to assemble, for the purpose of enjoying the diversion of the maypole.’ Rev. Dr. James Wright, Vol. III, 219.

Straiton

‘When the Romans were masters of this part of the island, they formed roads of communication between their stations. The islanders called these roads *strats*, *strets*, or *streets*, from a resemblance they bore to the streets in their own miserable villages. Hence it is inferred, that towns or villages, the names of which begin with *strat* or *stret*, are so named, because erected on or near some Roman high-way { *Vide* Cambden, p.636; & Bede, B. 1. c. 11. }². To favour this conjecture, that the village of Straiton or *Stretton* stands on or near one of these Roman roads, there are still visible some vestiges of an oblong entrenchment on the summit of Benan [*sic*] Hill, which stands south from the village about half a mile, commanding a very extensive view of Carrick, Kyle, Cunningham, Arran, the rock of Elsa [*sic*], and some of the hills in the West Highlands. Some years ago, in digging a foundation for an obelisk, erected on the top of this hill, by the late Sir John Whitefoord, there was found an urn, curiously carved, and filled with ashes; and, at the farther side of the [587] same hill, there was found, about 3 years ago, another urn, much smaller than the former.’ William Crawford, Vol. III, 586.

Kilmaurs

‘Time, the great destroyer of men and things, has blotted out the memory of those circumstances which first gave rise to the name by which this parish is now distinguished; and, therefore, as in most cases of the kind, conjecture alone must supply the place of certain knowledge. In some ancient records of session, the name is spelled, *Kilmares*, which seems to be a small variation of the word *Maries*, and if so, it is probable that the *Kil* was dedicated to the Mother of our Lord, or to some person of the family who endowed it, bearing that name. But at this day, it is most commonly written *Kilmaurs*, by which some are disposed to think that the church, from which the parish has its designation, was originally dedicated to a St Maurs.’ Rev. Alexander Millar, Vol. IX, 350.

¹ *First Statistical Account of Scotland [OSA]*, 1791-1798.

² {...}: a footnote in the original publication.

AANHS Publications

Publications of the Ayrshire Archaeological & Natural History Society (AANHS) are available from Ronald W. Brash MA, Publications Distribution Manager, 10 Robsland Avenue, Ayr KA7 2RW. Further information about the AANHS and its publications will be found on the society's website: www.aanhs.org.uk

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