Place-names in and around the Fleet Valley

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Machermore Stone

Gaelic *machair* refers to an extensive, at least relatively fertile, plain. In the Scots form, *machar* was used for such land in general, but in Galloway came to be used especially of the Wigtownshire peninsula, The Machars. Along the Atlantic coastline of western Scotland, especially The Western Isles, 'machair' refers to the stretches of calcareous shell-sand blown across coastal plains of acid peat, creating a unique and fragile ecology, and has come to be used in that specialised sense in the environmental sciences, but we have no 'machair' in that strict sense in Galloway.

Machair mòr is, then, a 'great plain', but the Machermore Stone that stands on the steep eastern slope of Meikle Multaggart, on the Kirkmabreck side of the Carrouch Burn opposite Craigheron, is on no such land. The name would seem to associate it with Machermore south of Cree Bridge in Minigaff, maybe it marked the boundary of some landholding or grazing rights belonging to that towerhouse. That, now known as Machermore Castle, does overlook a reasonably extensive area of grassy land alongside the river, The Links ('sandy undulating ground, generally covered with turf, bent grass, gorse, etc., which is frequently found near the sea-shore on a flat part of the coast' SND) of Machermore.

Maggie Ireland's Wa's

Maggie Ireland's Wa's are marked on OS maps on the west, Kirkmabreck, side of the Big Water of Fleet upstream of Little Cullendoch Moss. Though now in forest, the walls are those of a sheepfold, probably associated with a nearby farmstead or cottage. Maggie must have been the daughter or widow of a man surnamed Ireland, compare Irelandton above: here again, someone taken to be from Ireland is associated with a relative remote hill-farm.

Mail Trust Road

The trunk road from Dumfries to Portpatrick that crossed the Fleet at Gatehouse was named 'Mail Trust Road' on the first edition OS map, referring to its status under the Turnpike Acts of 1796 requiring the establishment of local trusts to maintain highways, funded (until roads became the responsibility of the county council in 1883) by tolls collected at tollhouses every six miles. Its route from the east of Gatehouse followed, to a large extent, the (second, later) line of the Old Military Road, and the latter name appears on current OS maps on stretches where it is no longer followed by the A75.

Until the nineteenth century, the road ran straight down from Galla Hill towards The Murray Arms. In 1806, at the command of Alexander Murray III, the route was diverted alongside the Bush Burn, to rejoin its former route by the new gateway at the top of Ann Street. Between 1819 and 1823, further realignment took it onto the present curving line through The Cut, dug in 1823, and a new tollhouse was built at the junction with Laurieston Road, at the end of the causeway between the two mill-ponds.

At The Murray Arms, the Military Road had already been diverted from its old line down Old Ford Road to cross the Fleet and continue via Anwoth across the Boreland Hills to the Corse of Slakes;

since 1730 most traffic had used the High Street down to the bridge, then continued via Fleet Street and the new road around the Cardoness headland, and thence followed the route along the hillside overlooking Cree Bay. The next tollhouse was marked on the first edition OS map at Bardristane , just beyond the parish boundary between Anwoth and Kirkmabreck.

Margrie

Margrie is a farm and associated buildings just north-east of Knockbrex. On the 1st edition OS map there was also Low Margrie already in ruins; Margrie Cottage was listed in the 1881 Census and appears on subsequent maps, Margrie House is now a separate dwelling from the farm.

In the 1851 Census it was listed as *Margerie*, but otherwise spellings are consistent, and imply a pronunciation with a 'stopped g' – 'marg-rye' or 'marg-ree'. In the forested area north of the Dalry to Moniaive road is Margree, with the prominent hill, Greentop of Margree. The first element in both names is Gaelic *marg*, which generally refers to a *merkland*, a portion of land valued at one mark (13s 4d, two thirds of one Scots pound) annually; in Galloway, the *merkland* replaced the quarterland (*ceathramh*) when the Lordship was finally incorporated into the fiscal system of the Kingdom of Scots in the fourteenth century.

However, *marg* is occasionally recorded in Irish Gaelic as a word for a boundary-mark (from Old English *mearc* or Old Norse *mǫrk*), and this may apply to some 'Mark-' names in Galloway (see Mill Mark below). As the land of Margrie is adjacent to the parish boundary between Kirkandrews and Girthon, that could be meaning here.

The second element in Margree is interpreted by Maxwell as *fhraeich* (Scottish Gaelic *fhraoich*), the genitive form of *fraoch* 'heather' with 'f' silenced after the feminine noun *marg*; it would be pronounced 'ree' in Irish, more like 'rye' (as in Dalry) in Scottish Gaelic, either is possible in Galloway. While Margrie is rather less likely than Margree to have been notable for its heather (ling, *Calluna vulgaris*), Penfold Moss that lies between the farm and the parish boundary would probably have had wet, acid conditions that could have favoured a conspicuous growth of Cross-Leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*).

Markrocher

Maxwell lists Markrocher as a place-name in Anwoth, but it does not appear on OS maps, nor do I find it anywhere else. Assuming the 'ch' is Scots, as in 'loch', he is probably right in interpreting it as **marg a'chrochadair* 'merkland of the hangman', see Margrie above. But, bearing in mind that gallows were generally set up close to parish boundaries, this name, like Margrie, might indicate a boundary-mark.

Maxwell spells the second element *crochadhair*, pronounced 'crogher', which is slightly different from the recorded forms in Irish or Scottish Gaelic which regularly have 'd' (pronounced 't') rather than 'dh' (pronounced 'gh' or elided). Nevertheless, the same element occurs in similar form in *Ardcrocher* (now lost) and Auchrochar Bank, both in Inch parish, Wigtownshire, while Craigcrocket in Carsphairn probably reflects *crochadair*. The hangman may have performed his grisly task at Gallows Knowe on the old main road near Laggan (see Hinton above). There is a Hangman Hill at Kirkbean, and see Culcraigrie and Culcronchie above for possible *croiche* 'gallows'.

Marion's Isles and Pool

Small islands and pool in the Black Water of Dee, included in Girthon parish, shown on the 1st edition OS map and now within the Forest Park. The identity of the eponymous Marion seems to be unknown.

Marl Pit

A marl pit is marked on the 1st edition OS map at a location close to where Girthon parish cemetery was later established, at the top of Memory Lane, though there were already graves nearby marked on the same map. Marl, a clay with relatively high pH, was a valuable fertilising supplement on poorer soils, so was dug wherever it could be found and conveniently carted away.

Marsh Wood (Cally Mains Wood)

Still named Marsh Wood on the 1st edition OS Map, before the digging of the canal and formation of Cally Bank on the south-east side of the estuary, this low-lying area of the Cally estate below the Deer Park would have been very marshy and flood-prone. Subsequently it became Cally Mains Wood, named from the adjacent estate farm.

Marshalltown Hill

Marshalltown Hill stands south of Girthon old kirk, north of Rainton; its southern spur is Rainton Bar (see Barhill above). It takes its name from holding that was mentioned in James Murray's will of 1797, and other legal documents around the turn of the century, but was no longer extant by the time of the 1st edition OS map. The 'Gipsy King' Billy Marshall buried in Kirkcudbright kirkyard is the most famous of a family who, as Mactaggart wrote in 1824, 'have been *tinklers* in the south of Scotland time out of mind'. While the enterprises of the Marshalls were generally of rather different kinds, it seems likely the place was a farm belonging to one of that family. There may be a connection with Marshalltown Iowa, familiar Galloway surnames are apparently found around there.

Miefield

In the northern part of Twynholm parish, near Glengap, is Miefield, pronounced 'my field' (*Meythfelde* 1456, *Mefelde* 1457, *Meefeld* on Blaeu's map, *Mayfield* on the 1st edition OS one). Of this the local historian Daphne Brooke wrote, 'The estate of Miefield, on the conjectural Roman road-line running from Loch Ken to Lauriston (sic), may have been a daughter settlement' (of a presumed Anglian estate-centre at Twynholm, see below). While there is still no archaeological evidence for the route from Glenlochar to Barwhill, Miefield probably was on, or close, to the main cross-country routeway during the period of Roman influence and throughout the middle ages, heading for the crossing of the Fleet near the Roman camp at Barwhill, and thence to the Anwoth gap below Trusty's Hill, some four miles to the west. It is also close to the route northwards from the coast at Ross Bay via Twynholm, Trostrie (see below) and Glengap.

-feld is an element that occurs relatively frequently in early Old English place-names: if the name was given early in the time of Northumbrian rule it would have referred to a fairly extensive tract of mainly open country with some trees, land used for grazing, by the later Anglo-Saxon period, it can be interpreted as 'common pasture'. It could indeed have been a significant adjunct of the *hām*, not merely a daughter-settlement.

Brooke, perhaps influenced by the form on the 1ˢᵗ edition OS map, takes the first element to be *mæġþe* 'mayweed'. This word probably occurs in a few place-names in the south of England such as Mayfield in Sussex, where Stinking Mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) was a hated weed of arable fields, causing blisters on harvesters' hands, but it is mercifully rare in our part of the country. Scentless Mayweed (*Tripleumospermum inodorum*), on the other hand, is very common, but less objectionable. It might have flourished when this location was first cultivated, but that would probably not have been at an early date: if it is 'mayweed field', it is likely to be a later mediaeval formation. Other possibilities are *mǣġþ* 'maiden', or the homophone of the latter meaning 'folk'; 'maiden' might imply the tract was previously unexploited, 'folk' might indicate some kind of common right to pasturage, but both are uncommon in place-names and, like *mæġþe*, apparently restricted to the south of England.

A more plausible, and interesting, candidate would be a Northumbrian ancestor of Scots *methe* (also recorded as *meyth*, so note *Meythfelde* 1456) meaning 'a boundary mark'. The settlement is situated in a bend of the Glengap Burn, sheltered to the north by Dow Craig Hill. It is reasonable to suppose that the *feld* extended across the whole of the roughly triangular piece of land; the boundary between Twynholm and Tongland runs for a short distance along the Glengap Burn to the east. I am not aware of any surviving boundary marker here, though it is a locality rich in prehistoric archaeology as well as substantial natural boulders. *Methe* is from Old Norse *mið*, and would imply a post-Northumbrian formation, indeed probably a Scots name no earlier than the thirteenth century, meaning 'common pasture by a boundary mark'.

McGhie's Seat

The high moorland east of Laghead Fell, though in Girthon parish, overlooks the boundary with Balmaghie (see above), and surely takes its name from the eponymous Maghie or McGhie, though whether the association was tenurial or simply fanciful is, I think, unknown.

McNaughton

In the 1642 Valuation Roll for Girthon, *MacNaightstoun* is listed in association with Airds farm (see above); in the 1819 Roll it is McNaughton, still associated with Airds as part of the Cally Estate. It was evidently a separate tenement, but does not appear on any OS maps or in any Census, so had disappeared by around 1850. Although McNaughton, *Mac Neachdainn*, is a Scottish surname, the 1642 record indicates that the place was named from a *MacNaigh*, Gaelic *Mac Niaidh*, common in Galloway with modern spellings including McNay, McNea, McNee, McNeigh or McNey.

Meadowhead

This seems to have been a popular name for homesteads and smallholdings in our area, the cottage at Cardoness being one of half a dozen in The Stewartry, all of them in existence by the time of the first Ordnance Survey and 1851 Census.

Mid Hill

This relatively modern English name is very common, occurring on OS maps some fifteen times in The Stewartry and more than fifty altogether in the Dumfries and Galloway region.
The one in Anwoth stands to the west of Rusko between Tor Hill and Cuil Hill. In Girthon, the Mid Hill of Drumruck lies west of that farm, at the summit of the Rig of Drumruck, now clad in forestry.

Both are close to features with earlier, Gaelic, names – see Tor, Cuil and Drumruck, and in the vicinity of Mid Hill of Drumruck is the location with the still older, Cumbric, name Penwhaile.

Millae

The hill named Millae stands to the north-east of Loch Whinyeon, beyond Bankben. It is just within the north-west boundary of Twynholm parish, and between Glengap and Laurieston Forests. The name is probably similar in origin to the more substantial double-summit hill, Meikle and Little Millyea, in the Rinns of Kells, the likely etymology for both being Gaelic *meall liath* 'grey-green hill'. *Meall* is 'a lump, a mass', and is sometimes used of hills with a 'lumpy' profile, though it is more generally just a somewhat lower hill than a *beinn* – Millae is a little lower than neighbouring Bankben, though only by 50'! *Liath* is usually translated 'grey' and may refer to the colour of the rock, though the Silurian sandstone of Galloway is so generally grey it is hardly a distinguishing feature; but it can also imply a greenish tinge, and can mean 'mouldy', so may refer, as here, to the appearance of stony surfaces partly covered by fairly sparse vegetation.

Mill Lades and Dams

Water-powered mills for grinding grain were important features of the local landscape and economy from the central middle ages until the nineteenth century, and, for a relatively short but very significant period in the history of the Fleet Valley, much more substantial mills spun cotton, and subsequently sawed wood and turned it to bobbins for steam-powered mills in Lancashire, Ulster and along the Clyde. Hydraulic engineering to power mills affected the landscape most obviously in the digging of *lades*, water-channels running to *dams*, the word referring not simply to the embankments but to the reservoirs holding the water in sufficient quantity to be directed as energy to drive the mill-wheels.

The earliest mill of which we have any record, but scarcely any visible trace now, is the Mill of the Lake, earlier *Laik* or *Laick*, near the Clauchan of Girthon and Garniemire (which see). The lake, which was presumably the mill-pond, has long since been drained, as to a large extent has the mire. No visible trace remains of the mill, but it appears to be one mentioned ca. 1300, and is marked as an antiquity on the 1st edition OS map.

The Mill Lade that flows into and through Gatehouse of Fleet (called *Mill Lead* on 1st edition OS Map, using the Standard English cognate of *lade*) was dug on the orders of James Murray of Cally in 1785 to bring water some four miles from Loch Whinyeon through a tunnel and a combination of existing streams and older lades (including those serving the corn mill at Barlay, see Barlay and Loch Lee above) to provide power for the workshops and mills in the town. The most important users of this system were the Birtwhistle cotton-spinning mills which opened in the same year.

The water was stored in the Mill Dam (also known as the Town Dam or Mill Pond) at the north-eastern end of the town. When the new road into Gatehouse was built c.1819 (The Cut), the Mill Dam was split in two but connected by pipes under the new road. Later, around 1935, the eastern dam was drained and a garage built on the site; this has now been demolished and the ground is currently in disuse, but the western dam still exists. Below the Dam, the Lade can be seen running between the gardens of Catherine Street and High Street down to the Mill on the Fleet.

A pair of smaller industrial mills was in Anwoth parish on the Skyreburn. The lade serving this mill is marked, again as Mill Lead, on the 1st edition OS map, though not on later ones; the mill dam

survived in the name Damhead, see above. The names of Mill Mark Cottage and Hill nearby also suggest a connection with the mill, but they may reflect a reinterpretation of an earlier, Gaelic name, see below.

Other traces of mill lades and dams survive at Ass House Strand in Cally Woods, at Corse Burn in Twynholm, at Ditches Pool in Anwoth, at Enrick and Gaitgill, and at Moss Lade and Moss Loch: see further under these names, and also Waulk Mill.

Mill Knock

The name of the summit to the east of Ben John is spelt as two words on OS maps, though Maxwell and others give Millknock. It has no apparent connection with any mill. Maxwell may be right to see the first part as Gaelic *maol*, 'a bare, rounded hill', though the pronunciation of 'Mill' and the fact that this hill is a little lower than its neighbour marginally favour *meall*, a hill-word that commonly refers to one somewhat lower than a *beinn* (see Millae above).

The second part of the name is Gaelic *cnoc*, which can name any free-standing eminence, even, as here, a substantial rounded hill (see *Knockbogle* above). The grammatical relationship between the two almost tautologous elements is ambiguous. The most likely Gaelic form would have been **meall cnuic*, with the stress on the second element, meaning something like '(lower) summit of (the) prominent hill'.

On the 1st edition O.S. map in 1854 the north-eastern slopes of Mill Knock are covered by trees and labelled Mill Knock Wood, and in the 1920s a portion of this wood still existed, but the hill is bare today.

Mullknock, now in a forestry plantation east of Loch Middle in Minnigaff parish, looks a similar name, but here the *cnoc* is a mere hillock, and the first element probably *maol*. Maxwell lists a different Mullknock, in Mochrum parish, but I can find no trace of it.

Mill Mark Hill

This hill is shown on the 1st edition OS map overlooking Kirkbride in the Skyreburn Glen, though it is not named on current maps. The name Mill Mark is also given on that map to a house in the group of buildings associated with Skyreburn Mill; in the 1851 Census 'Mark' is entered between Kirkbride and Skyreburn Mill, in the 1881 Census it is Millmark.

The obvious inference is that this name relates to the neighbouring Mill. However, the formation, and significance of 'Mark', raise doubts. The Skyreburn was the boundary between the mediaeval parishes of Anwoth and Kirkdale, the hill is crossed not only by the old main routeway between the two kirktouns and beyond but also by the *heid dyke*, the boundary between farmland and common hill-grazings. It is possible that 'Mark' refers to a boundary mark on the road: Old English *mearc*, Old Norse *mǫrk*, can mean both 'boundary' and 'mark', and, as observed under Margrie above, the adopted form *marg* is occasionally recorded in Irish Gaelic as a word for a boundary-mark. And, as in the case of Mill Knock above, 'Mill' might disguise Gaelic *meall*, the name might possibly have been **meall meirg* 'hill of (the) boundary mark' (the exact pronunciation of Galloway Gaelic is difficult to reclaim from the place-name evidence, but this would probably have sounded pretty similar to Scots 'Mill Merk').

Miller Hill

This hill, between Drumwall and Townhead, is the source of several small burns channeled to serve mill lades, dams and mills (see above) by both those settlements, and below them at Bush, Endrick and beyond. Presumably the tenant or manager of one of the mills thus served had use of the hill for grazing livestock, as well as responsibility for maintaining the lades. A *Millertoun* is listed in the 1642 adn 1819 Valuation Rolls for Girthon parish, but does not appear on any OS maps; it may well have been somewhere in this vicinity, the home of the eponymous miller.

Minnigaff

The name of the neighbouring parish and kirktoun Minnigaff is certainly Brittonic in origin. The first element is probably **minith* (with voiced 'th', Welsh *mynydd*), 'a hill, upland tract, rough grazing, common pasture'. The stage **minith* (from earlier **mönith*) had probably been reached by 600, though the name could have originated at any date between the sixth and tenth centuries. It is quite common in northern place-names, for example Mindork Fell in Wigtownshire (Kirkcowan), Minnygap in Dumfriesshire (Moffat), and Minto in Roxburghshire, and may elsewhere have been replaced by Gaelic *monadh* or Anglo-French *mont*, both ultimately cognate with *mynydd*. Alternatively, it might have been **miniu* 'brushwood, bush, scrub, thicket' (not surviving in modern Welsh, but cf. Gaelic *muine*), which would have followed the same phonetic trajectory. The second element, here as at Minnygap, is **gov* (Welsh *gof*) 'a blacksmith', who would have benefitted from the land as a source of charcoal and furnace-wood as well as grazing for his livestock.

Moat

Scots *moat* corresponds to the Anglo-French *motte*, referring to an artificial, typically pudding-shaped, mound, put up by Anglo-Norman colonists or those following them, mainly in the later twelfth century. 'Motte' is commonly used by historians to avoid confusion with the English sense of 'moat' for a water-filled defensive ditch, and has in some cases replaced *moat,* for example Cally Motte; 'mote' is also used, in the Stewartry for the important sites Mote of Urr and Mote of Mark (though neither of these is a typical 'motte'). The quantity of such features in Galloway, especially in the Stewartry, is conspicuous. There are around 50 places in that county with 'moat' in their names, largely concentrated in the southern parishes which were the most fertile and populous. Some turn out to be natural features mistaken for mottes (for example see Benmeal above), some have more or less vanished under ploughing, quarrying and other later activity, but conversely there are several other mottes marked on maps, or are known to archaeologists, but have no recorded names.

In Anwoth parish, Boreland Moat (otherwise known as Green Tower Motte) was a centre of local power probably constructed in the 1170s by an ancestor of the McCullochs, and occupied by them until Cardoness Castle was built on the overlooking hill. It is unusual in being formed by steepening and dividing a natural alluvial ridge into a motte and bailey, separated from each other and from the land by ditches which would have been filled at high tide. 'Motte and bailey' castles were typical of areas in England and Ireland where incoming Anglo-Norman lords were imposing their power on a doubtfully compliant local population, the presence of a bailey here suggests the lords of Anwoth maintained a garrison.

Kirkclaugh Moat (mis-spelt 'Kirkclangh' on the 1st edition OS map, and otherwise known as Kirkdale Moat) is likewise an unusual structure on the coast, perhaps re-using an earlier promontory fort, as the motte is perched dramatically on the cliff-edge, with a pair of ditches to landward forming an L-

shaped bailey in between (on the cross-slab found here, and possible early church site, see under Kirkclaugh above).

Cally Moat or Motte is a more typical example, which has benefitted from being preserved, probably deliberately, as a landscape feature, within Moat Park, part of the grounds of Cally House. Nothing is known of its origins, nor of any structures built on it, though there would probably have been one or more wooden buildings and a surrounding palisade. Like Boreland, it would have been lapped by the sea at high tide, but there is no evidence of any bailey, and, although defensible against minor attacks, free-standing mottes of this kind were perhaps more status symbols than sites of military power. It may have been built somewhat later than the more elaborate motte across the estuary, and occupied until it was superseded by the tower-house that became Cally Castle.

Beyond the hills to the east of the Fleet Valley there is a remarkable string of mottes, beginning in the south with Roberton Moat (see Roberton below), another motte formed from a natural strongpoint by simply digging a ditch around the sides not already protected by a steep drop; it may have been a re-use of an earlier power base associated with the Brittonic-named Rattra nearby (see under Rattra below). It was probably established in the early thirteenth century by a junior member of the family of Ralph de Campania who held the impressive motte and bailey, with its own *bord-land* at Boreland of Borgue (which Ralph had inherited from its founder, Hugh de Morville; for *bord-land* see Boreland above), and named after one of the two or more Roberts in the de Campania lineage. Barmagachan was probably established somewhat later, when the MacGachen family were granted lands in this area by the Lady Dervorgilla in 1282 (see further under Barmagachan above). Again, this motte seems more a statement of lordly status than a substantial military base.

Twynholm Moat (simply 'Moat' on OS maps) is adjacent to the main settlement in what was already a long-established territorial unit (see under Twynholm below), and would have been in the twelfth century the largest – indeed, pretty well the only – 'village' in the Stewartry west of the Dee. Although there is no documentation, it was probably subject to the de Morville, and subsequently de Campania, lordship based at Borgue. Twynholm stands at the junction of routeways to the north from the harbours at Castle Haven and Ross Bay, and to the west from the crossing of the Dee at Kirkcudbright. In the north of Twynholm parish, Trostrie Moat overlooks another 'crossing place' (see under Trostrie below), where the road from Dumfries crossed the northward road and the high ridge between the Tarf and Fleet valleys; it is another non-standard motte where a natural ridge has been extended and its top levelled to form an impressive stronghold.

Just across the parish boundary in Balmaghie, Edgarton Moat overlooks the route from Ringford to the Glenkens. It may well take its name from an Englishman, most likely in the retinue of the de Morvilles (see under Edgarton above). A couple of miles further north, Dinnance or Dunnance Moat, a *dùnan* 'small fort or hill' (see Dinnance above) likewise guards the road.

Although there is no documentary evidence for the mottes in Twynholm and Balmaghie parishes, it seems this north-south chain from Roberton to Dinnance seems more than coincidental, suggesting the Anglo-Norman lords were granting landholdings to kinsmen and reliable tenants where they could build for themselves modest strongholds that were at least statements of power, capable of deterring minor raiding, and collectively a cordon sanitaire between the productive lands of the Tarf and lower Dee valleys and the wilder hill-country to the west.

Moss Derry

Scots and northern English *moss* refers to boggy ground, especially peat-bogs. The word was present in Old English as *mos* and Old Norse as *mosi*; its presence in Scots and in the dialects and place-names of Cumberland and other Scandinavian-influenced parts of England suggests the latter may be the main source.

 Moss Derry at the head of the Cleuch Burn between the White Top of Culreoch and Knock Derry (which see above) is boggy, though not, I think, notably peaty. It is obviously named after the neighbouring 'Knock'. However, the order of elements is Celtic, with the descriptive element second. Such 'inversions' are not uncommon in Scots and Cumbrian place-names, probably reflecting the influence of their Gaelic mother-tongue on the Scots/ northern English of speakers who were bilingual. However, as pointed out under Knock Derry, both the Knock and the Moss could have originated in Cumbric; *maes* in Old Welsh meant 'open, relatively level land' (in modern Welsh 'a field'), and although a *maes* was typically clear of trees, *maes-deru* would have been associated with the cluster of trees on the neighbouring *cnuc*.

Moss Lade, Moss Loch

Both these names refer to water features that formed part of the complex system of ponds and watercourses that supplied power to the mills in and around Gatehouse. In both cases they would have drained areas that had previously been boggy (see Moss Derry above).

Moss Lade (not marked on OS 6" maps) is an artificial channel taking water from the Bush Burn to a mill dam south of Cushat Wood and thence to the main Mill Dam at the top of the town, supplying power to Scott's Mill on its way.

Moss Loch is marked on OS maps above High Barlay from the 1st edition on. It was probably formed in previously boggy ground as part of the lade system serving the mills at Barlay and extended to feed the lades in Gatehouse.

Moss Robin and Moss Terrie

Moss Robin is a marshy area above High Ardwall, skirted by the old track from Skyreburn over to Anwoth. A small pond is shown here on the 1st edition OS map, it had been used up until 1845 by the Anwoth Curling Club, and it was still on OS maps in the early 20th century, but has now reverted to moss (see Moss Derry above).

Robin, a diminutive of Robert, was a popular by-name for boys from the coming of Norman-French influence, and has been reasonably common in southern Scotland. The order of the elements in the place-name is 'Celtic', and Brittonic/ Cumbric *maes* 'open, relatively level land' could have been appropriate here (cf. Moss Derry above), but it is unlikely that Cumbric was still current when the name Robin became popular, and hard to suggest any plausible Brittonic word that might have got corrupted to 'Robin'. More likely it could have been formed by Gaelic-speakers who had adopted 'moss' into their place-naming vocabulary.

Moss Terrie, another squelchy spot, lies to the west of the summit of White Hill, again close to a routeway, nowadays the A75. Here again we can probably rule out Cumbric *maes*, but see a name formed by Gaelic speakers who had adopted 'moss'.

Terrie, if it corresponds to English Terry, is derived from the Germanic Theoderic; that name was well-known in Anglo-Saxon England, but the form Terri was introduced by the Normans, and is especially associated with settlers from Flanders. It is possible that it was introduced into our part of Galloway by someone in the retinue of Walter de Morville. However, in Ireland, Terry is a much-shortened form of the family name McTerelly, In Irish Gaelic MacToirdhealbhaigh, shortened to Tuire. A form of the same name, with 'softening' of the 'T', MacThoirdhealbhaigh, is the origin of the Galloway surname McKerlie, but it is quite possible that the Irish form was also current in the region, and that Maxwell is correct in interpreting Moss Terrie as *moss Tuire*.

So we have a fascinating mixture of linguistic echoes in these minor place-names, likely to have been formed by Gaelic speakers familiar with Scots, so using Scots *moss*, but referring to men whose names may hint at English, Flemish or Irish backgrounds. But who the eponymous Robin and Terrie were is quite unknown, they probably held rights of peat-cutting or other use of resources at these locations at some time, both names could have been given at any date between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries when Gaelic and Scots co-existed in our area.

Mossyard

This farm and clachan of cottages, now well-known as a caravan site and delightful rocky bay, is a 'bog-enclosure' (see Moss Derry above). The land has been much improved, but the former wetland can still be traced in the wooded area to the west of the farm, where the 1st edition OS map shows a small pond with a sluice, though this has reverted to marsh. Scots *yaird*, like English 'yard', tends to refer to a relatively small, formal enclosure, a courtyard or garden, but it was used more widely for 'a settlement or piece of land within an enclosure' as Old English *ġeard* and its Norse cognate *garðr*. Indeed, in this coastal location it is quite possible that this is a Norse-origin name, *mosi-garðr*, adapted to Scots speech.

Mount Pisga

The biblical name given to this relatively modest hill overlooking Rusko Tower from the west is recorded on Ordnance Survey maps from the 1st edition onward, but there is little other documentation. Mount Pisgah ('peak, high place') is the prominent summit of the mountain ridge to the east of the Jordan. It features in the story of Balak and Balaam, the words of King Balak to the embarrassed Moabite prophet after his attempt to curse the Israelites had been thwarted by an angel and an unco-operative ass might have suggested a pious, or simply humorous, similarity to our hill: '"Come, I pray thee, with me to another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shall not see them all, and curse them from thence" And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah...' (Numbers 23:13-14 AV). The omission of the final –h that is normally found in English transcriptions of the biblical name was probably a quirk of the Ordnance surveyor.

Mullbane

Overlooking Dalavan Bay east of Newton Farm, Mullbane is a classic *maol* 'bare, rounded hill', distinguished as being *bàn* 'white, light-coloured'. The surface here does show light areas on a satellite image, probably wind-blown sand. There is a Shoulder of Mullbane in a remote part of Carsphairn Forest, south of Windy Standard, though judging by the physical geography of the mass of which it is a shoulder, is more of a *meall*, 'a shapeless hill, rather lower than its neighbours' (see Millae above).

Mullgibbon

The first element here could be *maol* or *meall* (see Mullbane above), the latter is probably more appropriate to what is really a spur projecting from the Fell of Fleet towards The Black Water of Dee in the far north of Girthon parish. Maxwell's proposal, that the second element is *gobáin* 'of a snout' is certainly appropriate. It is now covered with forestry plantation.

Mulltaggart

Meikle Mulltaggart, to the north-east of the Cairnsmore of Fleet in Kirkmabreck parish, is a pretty good example of a *maol* (see Mullbane above). Little Mulltaggart to the east is less obviously so, by itself it could be a *meall*, but it presumably shares the same origin as its neighbour, **maol an t-sagairt*, 'bare, rounded hill of the priest', a name that must have originated in pre-Reformation times.

Muncraig

Monkraig in Blaeu's Atlas, this farm in Kirkandrews lies in a valley between Muncraig Hill and Muncraig Heugh. Scots *heuch* or *heugh* is from Old English *hōh*, literally 'a heel', and in English place-names generally referring to a heel-like hill-spur with a marked summit. The Scots word often refers to such a land-form, but it is likely to be associated with 'a precipice, crag or cliff' (DOST), and undoubtedly that is the feature indicated here by both *heugh* and *craig* – Muncraig Heugh being the seaward slope of Heugh Hill, dropping down to a steep, craggy cliff. Moreover, traces of prehistoric (probably iron-age) settlement and cultivation here imply that this was the feature that gave its name to the landholding.

The first element, Mun-, is ambiguous. In place-names it sometimes reflects early Gaelic **i-mbun* 'at the foot (of)', for example Moness at Aberfeldy and Monessie in Lochaber are at the feet of waterfalls (Gaelic *eas*), and Muncraig could be 'at the foot of the crag'. Alternatively, it could have been Gaelic *monadh*, even Brittonic **mönith*, 'a hill, upland tract, rough grazing, common pasture' (see Minnigaff above); this does occasionally appear as Mon- or Mun-, though normally before an initial 'd' or 't' in the second element that has absorbed the final consonant of the first, e.g. Mundurno in Aberdeenshire.

Munwhall

The name of this fairly small hill, west of Knockendurrick and south of Cairntosh, overlooking Irelandton Moor, presents problems for the toponymist. The first element is, as in Muncraig above, not wholly transparent: **i-mbun-* 'at the foot (of)' seems unlikely here; *monadh* 'a hill, upland tract, rough grazing, common pasture' would be appropriate, but there is no trace of the second syllable; *moine* (Irish *móin*) 'moorland, peat-moss' would also be plausible, though *mointeach* is more usual in Scottish Gaelic names; Maxwell suggests *moin*, which is found, albeit it rarely, in Scottish and Ulster place-names as a word for a hill, presumably an abbreviation of *monadh*; another Irish Gaelic term, considerably more common, is *muine* 'a thicket' also used to name hills (but generally anglicised as 'Money-`).

For the second element, Maxwell proposes *ghall* 'of strangers' or 'of standing stones' (see Ardwall and Drumwall above). The 'softened' 'gh' would be normal after a feminine noun, such as *moine* or *muine*. As elsewhere (see also Dergall and Knockgyle), 'strangers' are always possible. Munwhall and around is a notable area for traces of (relatively) early settlement, though not standing stones in the sense of megaliths. For the second element in Munwhul (*Monwhil* on Blaeu's map), the rather more substantial hill west of Clatteringshaws Loch, Maxwell gives **moin-chuill* 'hazel hill', and the

origin of Munwhall could be the same, though neither hill seems a likely place for hazel to grow exceptionally well. For other possible origins of –whall, see the discussion under Ardwall, above.

Murray's Isles

The name obviously refers to the Murrays of Broughton and Cally, part of whose estate they were until they were handed over to the National Trust for Scotland in 1991 by Mrs. Elizabeth Murray-Usher. Apart from the general 'Isles, or Islands, of Fleet', I am not aware of any other, earlier names for this small archipelago.

Murrayton

Overlooking the confluence of the Big and Little Waters of Fleet, a substantial house, farm and thrashing mill with its mill dam are shown on the 1st edition OS map, the dam no longer exists. Murrayton was presumably an enterprise of one of the Murrays of Broughton and Cally in the time of agricultural improvement in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries.