

# SCANDINAVIANS IN DUMFRIESSHIRE AND GALLOWAY: THE PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

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## THE KINGDOM OF RHEGED

In the sixth century Dumfriesshire and most of Galloway formed part of the British kingdom of Rheged. The exact extent of this kingdom is not known but it certainly embraced Carlisle, while the place-name Dunragit in Wigtownshire, meaning 'fort of Rheged', suggests that this settlement may have been a western outpost of Rheged and that the Rhinns may not have formed part of the kingdom. It also seems likely that Rheged included the Eden valley as far as the crest of the Pennines, and its territory may even have spread beyond Rey Cross into Yorkshire.<sup>1</sup>

That the language spoken by the inhabitants of Rheged was the Brittonic form of Celtic, sometimes referred to as Cumbric, can be deduced from the place-name evidence. A good indication of the area in which Cumbric was spoken is provided by the distribution of place-names containing the generic *cair* 'fort'. There are hardly any instances north of the Forth-Clyde line, and the distribution-pattern of the names probably reflects the extent of the two British kingdoms of Rheged and Strathclyde.<sup>2</sup> There are a few *cair*-names in Dumfriesshire but none in Galloway and Carrick, and it is therefore tempting to accept Watson's suggestion that the generic may have become confused with, or replaced by, Gaelic elements as the Gaelic language became dominant in the area and Gaelic names and elements were superimposed upon the earlier stratum of Cumbric names.<sup>3</sup>

A Cumbric habitative generic which has a wider distribution than *cair* in south-west Scotland is *tref* 'homestead, village'. There are several *tref*-names in Dumfriesshire and Kirkcudbrightshire. Since the only place-name containing *tref* to be found between Triermain in Cumberland and the many in Wales is Treales in Lancashire, however, many of the *tref*-names in south-west Scotland may reflect the close relationship between Wales and Strathclyde in the period after the Border counties had passed under English rule, and did not derive from the period of the flourishing of Rheged.<sup>4</sup>

The inhabitants of the kingdom of Rheged would seem to have been Christian. Christianity certainly flourished in the Carlisle area in the fourth century and it may have survived there throughout the fifth and sixth centuries, while traces of fifth- and sixth-century Christian activity have been noted in the Dumfriesshire plain east of the Nith, and at Whithorn and Kirkmadrine in Galloway.<sup>5</sup> In the period between 450 and 650 the ecclesiastical establishment at Whithorn would seem to have kept in touch with the developments in the Irish church and to have expanded into a monastic centre. The expansion of Whithorn and the arrival of Gaelic-

speaking settlers in Galloway at this period are unlikely to have taken place completely independent of each other.<sup>6</sup>

### EARLY GAELIC SETTLEMENT

The Gaelic settlement cannot be dated particularly closely but a study of the distribution-patterns of certain Gaelic generics in various parts of Scotland in relation to the generics introduced by settlers speaking other languages has made it possible for a number of tentative conclusions to be drawn. It would seem that the distribution of the generic *sliabh* 'mountain' in Scottish place-names, mostly in hill-names but also in a number of settlement-names, marks a very early stage in Gaelic settlement, perhaps going back as far as the late fifth or early sixth century. Such names are particularly common in the Rhinns of Galloway and in Islay and Jura, and there are altogether about three dozen instances in Galloway.<sup>7</sup>

A study of the place-names containing Gaelic *baile*, the most widespread Gaelic habitative generic and also the one with the most general significance, shows that such names are of particularly common occurrence in southern Ayrshire, Wigtownshire and to a lesser extent in Kirkcudbrightshire.<sup>8</sup> On the basis of their distribution Bill Nicolaisen has divided southern Scotland into four zones: Galloway, Dumfriesshire west of the Nith, and Carrick lie in Zone 1, where it is assumed that there was a full-scale and long-lasting settlement of Gaelic-speakers; the rest of Dumfriesshire falls into Zone 2, where Gaelic settlement would seem to have been rather more short-lived and less intense.

A third generic of interest for the study of Gaelic immigration into south-west Scotland is *cill* 'hermit's cell', later 'church'. Bill Nicholaisen has pointed out that in areas with many Gaelic names for churches or many chapels dedicated to Gaelic saints there must have been a substantial Gaelic-speaking population and not merely a few Gaelic missionaries preaching to a predominantly Christian population. South of the Forth-Clyde line *cill*-names are practically restricted to the counties bordering on either the Firth of Clyde or the Solway Firth, and they are commonest in Ayrshire and Wigtownshire. The almost complete absence of such names from Caithness and Sutherland, to which Gaelic-speakers penetrated in the ninth century, has suggested that the distribution-pattern of the *cill*-names represents the spread of Irish ecclesiastical influence within a Gaelic-speaking context in pre-Norse times.<sup>9</sup> The thriving ecclesiastical establishment at Whithorn would probably have contributed to the density of *cill*-names in Wigtownshire. The possibility that there may once have been a good many more names in *cill* in south-west Scotland than survive to the present day in that form is one to which I shall return later.

### ANGLIAN SETTLEMENT

In the course of the sixth and seventh centuries the Angles of Northumbria extended their kingdom westwards across the Pennines and they must have

reached Dumfriesshire and Galloway at some time towards the end of the seventh century, that is, after their conversion to Christianity in about 630.<sup>10</sup> By 731 Whithorn had become the seat of an English bishopric and there is evidence for the influence of Northumbrian Christianity in the region in the form of carved stone crosses, which are found mostly in Dumfriesshire but also in Whithorn. It has been pointed out that the most likely source of inspiration for the details of the Ruthwell DMF cross is to be found at Jarrow DRH, that much of the scroll-work on the Bewcastle CMB cross would seem to be based on work at Hexham NTB and that the rosette and vine-scroll on a cross at Hoddom DMF has close parallels in crosses from Kirkby Stephen WML and Wycliffe YON.<sup>11</sup> These resemblances probably reflect both the political unity of the area between the Forth and the Humber, and the wide flung contacts between monasteries in this early period.

How intense was the Anglian settlement of Dumfriesshire and Galloway and how long did it last? English place-names of an early type are rare. Instances include *Edyngaheym* c.1124, which may be identified with either Edingham KCB or with the lost *Ednemland* DMF, two certain *hams*, Smallholm DMF and Penninghame WIG, and one possible *hom*, Twynholm KCB, and two *botls*, Buittle KCB and *Arsbotl*.<sup>12</sup> The element *tun*, which is by far the commonest habitative generic in place-names in England, occurs quite frequently in south-west Scotland, too. The problem with names in *-tun*, however, is that, since they continued to be coined for several centuries, there is no way of knowing how many of the names in Dumfriesshire and Galloway were actually coined in the early period of Anglian settlement. It seems likely, however, that distribution-maps of names in *-tun* present a good general picture of the areas settled by the English in the pre-Norse period. In Dumfriesshire the *tuns* are mostly found in the coastal plain, Liddesdale and Annandale. Twenty-five of the forty *tun*-names have as their specific a personal name or surname and most of these would probably not have assumed their present form until after the arrival of the Normans. In Galloway there are concentrations of *tun*-names in the lowlands of Kirkcudbrightshire and in the Machars of Wigtownshire. A few of these names, too, may contain the names of tenants from the post-Norse period. The place-names alone cannot reveal how long the Anglian settlement survived in south-west Scotland. The information they yield has to be compared with information from other sources. The last known Anglian bishop of Whithorn was consecrated in 791 and is not mentioned after 803.<sup>13</sup> The bishopric simply disappears from the records but it seems likely that the church itself survived. The fact that a high proportion of the Anglian settlement names survived to become the names of parishes in the twelfth-century parochial organisation probably also points to a continuing Anglian presence,<sup>14</sup> although it should be remembered that in the Danelaw Viking settlers are known to have adopted

and continued to use many place-names of English origin.

### **SCANDINAVIAN SETTLEMENT**

There is no written record of the settlement of south-west Scotland by Scandinavians but an entry in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for 875 records that while wintering on the Tyne, the Danish leader Halfdan and his men made frequent raids against the Picts and the Strathclyde Britons. These raids must have taken him across the Carlisle plain and Dumfriesshire. There is no suggestion that any Danes settled in these areas at the time, and the fact that the community of St. Cuthbert was seeking refuge near Whithorn as late as about 880 may imply that the Vikings had not yet settled here.<sup>15</sup> By the beginning of the tenth century, however, conditions west of the Pennines had clearly become unsettled, for at that time Abbot Tilred of Haversham was making preparations to become a member of the community of St Cuthbert and abbot of Norham in Northumberland, and a nobleman called Alfred fled over the mountains to the east, expressly to escape from pirates.<sup>16</sup> By 927, when King Athelstan made a covenant of peace with the king of Scots and the king of Strathclyde at Eamont Bridge in Westmorland, the Strathclyde Britons would seem to have been able to reoccupy south-west Scotland and northern Cumberland, probably as a result of the disruption caused in Northumbria by the Scandinavian invasions. The place-names of northern Cumberland certainly provide evidence that some of the Scandinavian names must have been coined before this British ingression.<sup>17</sup> It would seem, therefore, that the Scandinavian settlement of south-west Scotland must have taken place in the period between about 880 and 920.

### **THE GALL-GAIDHIL**

Who were these Scandinavians who settled in Galloway and Dumfriesshire? The generally accepted view has been that they, like the Vikings who had begun to settle in the Northern and Western Isles about a hundred years earlier, were mainly of Norwegian extraction, while the marked Goidelic characteristics betrayed by some of the Scandinavian place-names in south-west Scotland have been taken as an indication that the settlers were in fact Norwegians who had lived for some time in one of the Norwegian colonies in the Western Isles or Argyll. It has also been assumed that these were the people known as the *Gall-Gaidhil* or 'foreign Gaels'. The information about the *Gall-Gaidhil* has been discussed in detail by Daphne Brooke and I would merely add that the sparseness of the place-name evidence for a Scandinavian presence in Galloway does not suggest a high degree of linguistic scandinavianisation in the *Gall-Gaidhil* who settled in Galloway.

Another early assumption that ought probably to be abandoned is that the Scandinavian settlement in Cumbria, which also produced a number of place-names betraying Goidelic influence, was the work of a different

group of Norse-Goidelic settlers from those who settled in south-west Scotland, namely, settlers whose immediate place of origin was Ireland.<sup>18</sup> My recent study of the place-names of Cumbria has suggested that the Goidelic influence reflected in the names is rather to be ascribed to settlers arriving from the Western Isles or from Galloway and western Dumfriesshire.<sup>19</sup>

### SCANDINAVIAN TOPOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Do the Scandinavian names in Galloway, Dumfriesshire and Cumbria bear any resemblance to the place-names coined by Norwegian settlers in the Northern and Western Isles? Very little, in fact. Of the habitative generics which occur most frequently in the Isles, *stadir*, *setr* and *bolstadr*, there is not a single certain occurrence. Many individual settlements in the Northern and Western Isles have Scandinavian names that must originally have denoted topographical features, names with generics such as *-nes*, *-dalr*, *-holmr* and *-gill*. Such generics do certainly occur in settlement names in south-west Scotland. For example, there are Eggerness WIG and Almornes KCB, Kildale WIG, Kirkdale KCB and Dryfesdale DMF, Hestan (*holmr*) KCB and Lyneholm DMF, Gategill KCB and Carlesgill DMF. There are three names which might be thought to contain Scandinavian *vik*: Rerwick, Senwick and Southwick; but early recorded forms of these names, none of which show any trace of a *v* or *w* in the second element, suggest that they are more likely to be names in Scandinavian *eik* f. 'oak-tree' or the collective *eiki* n. 'oak-trees'.

I have noted altogether forty-one instances of Scandinavian names functioning as settlement names in Dumfriesshire and thirteen in Galloway. Such names are of even more frequent occurrence in north-west England, however, with 195 instances in Cumberland, 130 in Westmorland and 191 in Lancashire.<sup>20</sup> Such names are also of frequent occurrence to the east of the Pennines, notably in Yorkshire<sup>21</sup> but also to a lesser but not inconsiderable extent in the East Midlands.<sup>22</sup> The topographical names in south-west Scotland can therefore just as well have been coined by Danes as by Norwegians.

The distribution-pattern of names in *-fell* might at first sight seem to provide evidence for the introduction of this element by Norwegians to Wigtownshire, with subsequent dissemination eastwards and southwards to Dumfriesshire and Cumbria. The pattern is deceptive, however.<sup>23</sup> There are a few settlement names in *-fell* in the Lake District<sup>24</sup> but there is not a single instance in Dumfriesshire or Galloway, in spite of the hilly nature of much of these counties. It is as hill-names that names in *-fell* are common in south-west Scotland, particularly in Wigtownshire. Very few, if any, of these names are likely to have been coined by the Scandinavian settlers themselves. The first element of the names is often the name of another geographical feature, in many cases a name of English or Gaelic origin, and what the *fell*-names in fact reflect is the adoption of the Scandinavian

term as a loan-word in both English and Lowland Scots. The names in south-west Scotland are unlikely to date from the period after which Lowland Scots began to displace Gaelic as the local language and they cannot be used as evidence of a Norwegian origin for the Scandinavian settlers in the region.

The element *bekkr* 'stream' occurs frequently in place-names in both Norway and Denmark, but there is reason to think that this generic might be able to provide some information about the nationality of the Scandinavian settlers in England and Scotland. This is because, while it is very common in the Danelaw, it is of relative infrequent occurrence in most of the areas which are known to have been settled by Norwegians. There is only one instance, *Kviabekkr*, among the Icelandic names recorded in *Landnámabok*, and no instances are recorded in the six most northerly of the Faroe islands. It is of rare occurrence in Shetland and apparently not recorded in Orkney or the Hebrides. Two doubtful instances have been

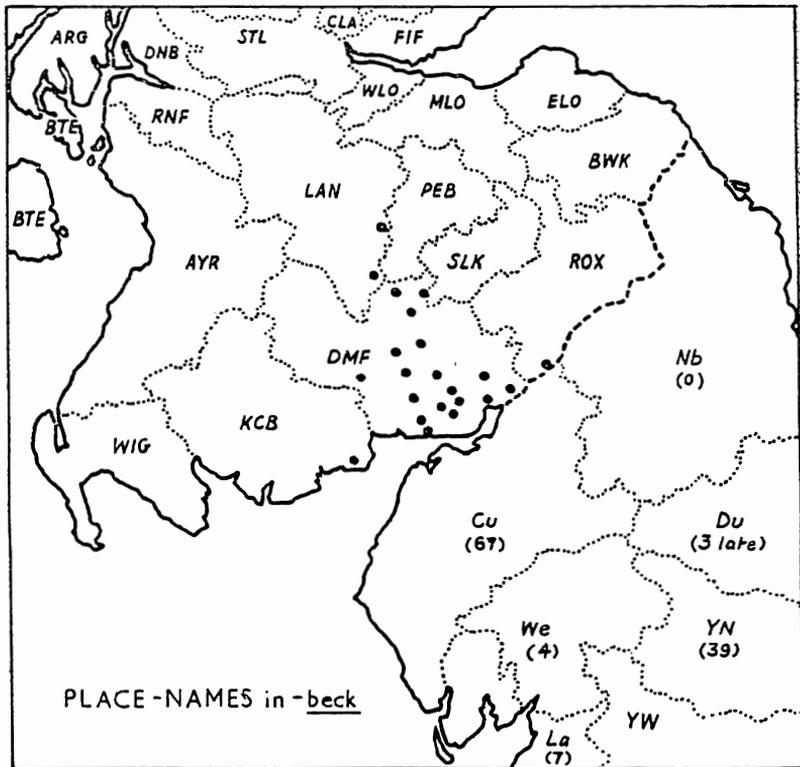


Fig.6.1 Place-names in *-beck* (from Nicolaisen, W. F. H., 'Norse place-names in south-west Scotland', *Scottish Studies*, 4 (1960), Fig. 1).

noted in the Isle of Man.<sup>25</sup> In Scotland the names containing *bekkr* cluster in Dumfriesshire, with a few instances in neighbouring counties, and Bill Nicolaisen considers that the element was introduced into Dumfriesshire from north-west England, where it is also of common occurrence.<sup>26</sup> The word *bekkr* was adopted into the dialects of northern and eastern England and became for a time the normal word for denoting 'running water smaller than a river' in the areas that had been subject to Norse influence.

It is therefore possible that the use of *beck* to coin names did not spread into Dumfriesshire until post-Scandinavian times, but there are three factors which argue against this. Firstly, a few of the Dumfriesshire names in *bekkr* are purely Scandinavian compounds with a Scandinavian specific, for example Allerbeck and Elbeck, both containing the collective *elri* 'alder-trees', and very possibly Fishbeck and Greenbeck. Secondly, five of the names are borne by settlements. Thirdly, neither the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* nor the *Scottish National Dictionary* records a word *beck* meaning 'stream' so the word can hardly have become firmly established in the south-west Scottish dialect. The only recorded instance of *bekkr* in Galloway is Beck Burn KCB, the name of a small stream which flows into the Southwick Water. Nicolaisen sees the addition of tautological Scots burn to the originally simplex name as an indication that the name was created by English rather than Scandinavian speakers, but to me the more likely explanation would seem to be that the stream was called *\*bekkr* by the Scandinavian settlers and that the epexegetic *burn* was not added until the Scandinavian language had dropped out of use in the area. The name Beck Burn, in fact, is evidence that *beck* did not enter the local dialect in south-west Scotland. I would argue that the names in *-bekkr* can be taken to reflect Danish influence on the nomenclature of Dumfriesshire.

#### **NAMES IN -BY**

The Scandinavian habitative generic which occurs most frequently in south-west Scotland is *-bie*, representing either Old Danish *by* or Old East Norwegian *býr*. This generic was used in Scandinavia and the Danelaw of almost any kind of settlement from a single farm to a thriving town. There are twenty-three instances of names in *-bý* in Dumfriesshire, and three each in Kirkcudbrightshire and Wigtownshire. These figures pale into insignificance in comparison with the seventy-six instances in Cumberland and the hundreds of names in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The names recorded in south-west Scotland, however, resemble in type the *bý*-names of the Danelaw and Denmark much more closely than the *boer*-names of the Northern and Western Isles. In the Isles there are at least ten simplex names and five Husabys, for example, but not a single simplex name or a Husaby occurs in south-west Scotland or England. There is one *bý*-compound which occurs twice in the Hebrides, twice in Argyll and is of frequent occurrence in Norway and Iceland and which also occurs in south-

west Scotland, namely *\*saur-boer* or *-by*. There are Sorbies in both Wigtownshire and Dumfriesshire (as well as one in Ayrshire and one in Fife), but since there are also two Sowerbys in Lancashire, two in Cumberland, two in Westmorland and four in Yorkshire, and the name occurs three times in Denmark, the south-west Scottish instances do not necessarily reflect Norwegian influence.

As long ago as 1894 Sir Herbert Maxwell noted that *by* in Scottish place-names is supposed to mark occupation by the Danes rather than the Norwegians<sup>27</sup> and the distribution of names in *-by* in south-west Scotland suggests that Dumfriesshire was settled by Scandinavians coming from south and south-east of the Solway and from across the English border rather than from across the Irish Sea,<sup>28</sup> while the *by*-names in the lowlands of Kirkcudbrightshire and Wigtownshire would seem to mark an extension westwards. It is significant that five of the seven *by*-names in Galloway have exact parallels in England. Bagbie KCB has a parallel in Bagby YON, Bombie KCB has parallels in Bombie and Bombay DMF as well as in Bomby WML and Bonby LIN, Applebie WIG has parallels in Applebys in WML, LIN and LEI and in Eppleby YON, Corsby WIG has parallels in Crosby in CMB (3), WML (2) and LNC, while Sorbie WIG, as mentioned above, has many parallels in both England and Scotland. The two remaining *by*-names probably have personal appellatives as their specifics. Mabie KCB would seem to contain Scandinavian *mey(ja)* or *mær* 'maiden, kinswoman' or the related OE *maege*, while the specific or Bysbie

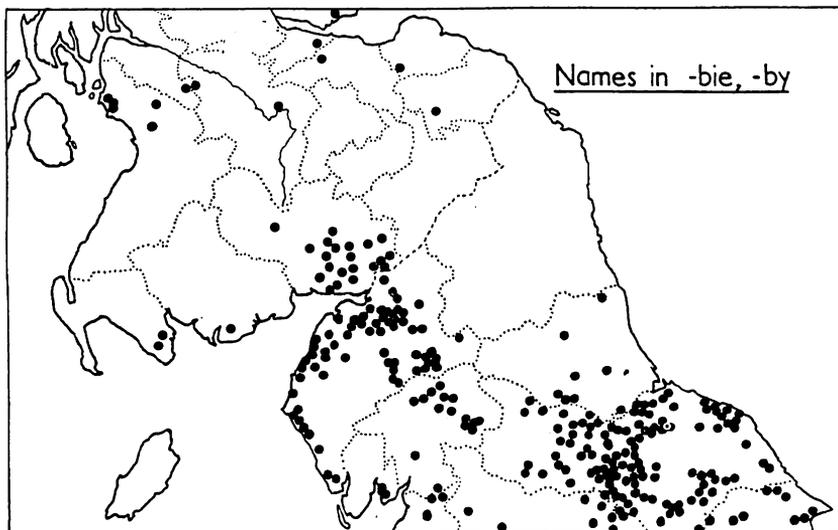


Fig.6.2 Place-names in *-bie, -by* (from Nicolaisen, W. F. H.).

WIG is Scandinavian *biskup* or a scandinavianised form of cognate OE *biscop* 'bishop'.

In light of the similarity in type between the *bý*-names in Dumfriesshire and Galloway and those in the Danelaw, it seems reasonable to assess the significance of the names in south-west Scotland in the context of the *bý*-names in England. I have argued elsewhere that in the Danelaw most of the *bý*-names date from the period after 900 and reflect the takeover and fragmentation of old estates rather than the exploitation of virgin land.<sup>29</sup> The names with appellative specifics would largely seem to have been bestowed upon pre-existing English settlements, while the names with personal names as specifics may reflect the original agricultural units into which the old English estates had been broken up. In the English counties of the north-west, Lancashire, Cheshire and Westmorland, where *bý*-names are quite common, there are no certain instances of names having personal names as specifics, probably because these counties were only under Scandinavian rule for a comparatively short period of time, so that there would have been little opportunity for fragmentation of the old estates there by Viking settlers.

In Cumberland and Dumfriesshire, on the other hand, the picture is very different. There are thirteen names in *-bý* in Cumberland and one, Ouseby, in Dumfriesshire whose specific is a Scandinavian personal name, while in the Carlisle area, the coastal plain of Cumberland and in eastern Dumfriesshire, mainly in Annandale, there are no less than twenty-eight *býs* whose specific is a Norman personal name. In my opinion the *býs* containing Scandinavian personal names reflect the granting of small territorial units to individual Scandinavians, while the hybrid names containing continental personal names reflects the taking over by Normans and Flemings in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries of settlement which, at the time of the takeover, had had Scandinavian names in *-bý*. For the original specifics of these names the new tenants would seem to have substituted their own personal names, for example, *Puncun* and *Richard* in Ponsonby and Rickerby CMB, *Lochard* and *Godefrid* in Lockerbie and Gotterbie DMF. As they penetrated further up the Annan valley, the Normans would seem to have come upon a settlement with an English name in *-tun*. After its takeover by a Norman called John, this was referred to as Johnstone and not as \*Johnbie.<sup>30</sup> Geoffrey Barrow has argued that in southern Scotland the settlement names formed in the twelfth century and consisting of a personal name plus *-bý* or *-tun* do not imply wholly new units of settlement<sup>31</sup> and the same must surely apply to the names in Cumberland which consist of the name of an eleventh- or twelfth-century tenant plus *-bý*. I would argue that there is no certain evidence for the use of the generic *bý* to coin new place-names in England or Scotland after the Norman Conquest and that the vast majority of the *bý*-names had been coined as such by the middle of the tenth century. What took place in the

eleventh and twelfth centuries was simply a partial re-shaping of the place-names to incorporate the forenames or surnames of the new tenants.

### HYBRID PLACE-NAMES IN -TUN

None of the *býs* in Galloway has a personal name as its specific, and this suggests that in Galloway, as in Lancashire, Cheshire and Westmorland, Scandinavian rule might have been comparatively short-lived, leaving little time or opportunity for the fragmentation of the old estates by Viking settlers. Of the Galloway *tuns*, however, one, Gelston, would seem to have received a Scandinavian personal name as its specific. It is apparently identical with Gelston LIN and both names would seem to contain a Scandinavian personal name *Gjofull*, an original by-name meaning 'generous, munificent'.<sup>32</sup> It has been argued that such names as Gelston in the Danelaw represent English settlements taken over and partly renamed by the Vikings. The same probably applies to Gelston KCB. Takeovers with subsequent partial renaming in the Norman period may be represented by Galloway names such as Corbieton KCB and Gordonston KCB. Corbieton is said to have been granted to Robert Corbet by David I in the first quarter of the twelfth century<sup>33</sup> and the Gordons have also been traced to a continental home.<sup>34</sup> Arkleton DMF is a name of the same type as Gelston KCB and must reflect the takeover of an English settlement by a Viking called *Arnkell*.<sup>35</sup> There are also a number of *tuns* in Dumfriesshire and Galloway whose appellational specifics betray Scandinavian interference. Three Carletons WIG (2), KCB are scandinavianised forms of an Old English name *\*ceorla-tun*, 'the settlement of the free peasants',<sup>36</sup> two Keltons KCB, DMF probably contain either Scandinavian *kjöl* m. 'keel' or Danish *kael* 'wedge-shaped piece of land'.<sup>37</sup> Myrton WIG and Merton WIG may contain Scandinavian *myrr* f. 'wet, swampy ground, boggy place', perhaps in one name merely influencing the form of an OE *mere* 'lake', for Myrton Castle stands beside the White Loch of Myrton, while close to Merton Hall is Merton Hall Moss.<sup>38</sup> Finally, Beckton DMF probably contains the Scandinavian appellative *bekkr* m. 'stream'.<sup>39</sup>

### PLACE-NAMES IN THVEIT

The generic *thveit* 'clearing', which is very common in both Norway and Denmark, is normally classified as a topographical one, but in fact it would seem to have had a quasi-habitative significance from the very beginning.<sup>40</sup> It occurs in place-names in the Northern Isles, the Danelaw and Normandy. Apart from the isolated instance of Moorfoot in Midlothian, however, the only county on the Scottish mainland in which the generic *thveit* occurs in place-names is Dumfriesshire, where there are ten Scandinavian compounds and nine hybrid names. In England, too, *thveit* has a much less general distribution than the exclusively habitative generic *-bý*. It is particularly common in Cumberland, Westmorland, northern Lancashire and the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, while

it is of comparatively rare occurrence in southern Lancashire, Cheshire, the East Riding of Yorkshire and the East Midlands.<sup>41</sup> Naturally enough, the *thveits* tend to occur in wooded areas and in Cumbria they are mostly found in the valleys within the mountain dome. I have argued elsewhere that settlement names in *-thveit* mark secondary settlements founded after the initial Scandinavian settlements established by the Vikings on hitherto unoccupied land in north-west England are to be found in Annandale.<sup>42</sup> Most of the nineteen *thveits* in Dumfriesshire are also situated in the hill valleys, although there is a cluster along the lower reaches of the Annan. There is not a single *thveit* in Galloway, a fact which suggests that the Scandinavian settlement there was not long-lasting enough or dense enough to lead to the establishment of new settlements on cleared land.

### TINWALD

The place-name evidence I have considered so far — the Scandinavian topographical names functioning as settlement names, the names in *bekkr*, and the names in *-bý* and *-thveit* — has pointed to a settlement of eastern Dumfriesshire, of a fairly large area west and north of Kirkcudbright, and of a smaller area in the Whithorn district of Wigtownshire by Scandinavians whose immediate place of origin was probably the Danelaw. There has been nothing to suggest an origin for the settlers in Norway or the Northern and Western Isles. There is, however, one name which points in the direction of the Norwegian colonies. This is Tinwald DMF, which is related to Tingvoll in Norway and Thingvellir in Iceland, the meeting-place of the Icelandic *thing* or legislative assembly, and which has parallels in Tingwalls in Orkney and Shetland, Dingwall on the Cromarty Firth, Tynwald in the Isle of Man, but also in Thingwalls in Lancashire and Cheshire and a lost *Thingwala* in the North Riding of Yorkshire.<sup>43</sup> The Danish equivalent of Norwegian Tingvoll is Tinghoj, and this name occurs in the North Riding of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Suffolk. It seems likely that the Tinwald-type names were borne by Scandinavian administrative centres and the location of Tinwald DMF in an area where Scandinavian place-names are comparatively rare is rather strange. It must be significant that Tinwald is not far from the county town of Dumfries.

I have suggested elsewhere that the Tingwalls in Lancashire and Cheshire may have been named by settlers who had become familiar with both the name and the concept in the Isle of Man, since there is other evidence pointing to a movement from Man to the coast of north-west England.<sup>44</sup> The exact site of *Thingwala* in Yorkshire is not known but it would seem to have lain within the township of Whitby. This shows that the name could occur in an area of predominantly Danish settlement, but it nevertheless seems reasonable to look upon Tinwald DMF as a name reflecting the influence of settlers from Norway or from one of the Norwegian island colonies.

## INVERSION COMPOUNDS

There is another group of names which points very markedly in the direction of the Norwegian settlements in the Gaelic-speaking areas. These are so-called inversion compounds, in which the generic precedes the specific in younger Celtic word order. In the areas of Scandinavian settlement in England such names are found only in the north-west, principally in Cumberland and Westmorland. There are three purely Scandinavian instances in Lancashire (all now lost) and one purely Gaelic one, Noctorum, in Cheshire which was probably coined by settlers from Ireland or the Isle of Man.<sup>45</sup> In Cumberland there are no less than twenty-four instances, in which at least one of the elements is of Scandinavian origin and thirteen of purely Gaelic compounds, while Westmorland has ten partially Scandinavian compounds and two purely Gaelic ones. The purely Gaelic inversion compounds were probably coined at the time of the tenth-century Strathclyde reoccupation of south-west Scotland, northern Cumberland, and Westmorland east of the Eden. They form a natural extension eastwards and southwards of the many names of the type in western Dumfriesshire.

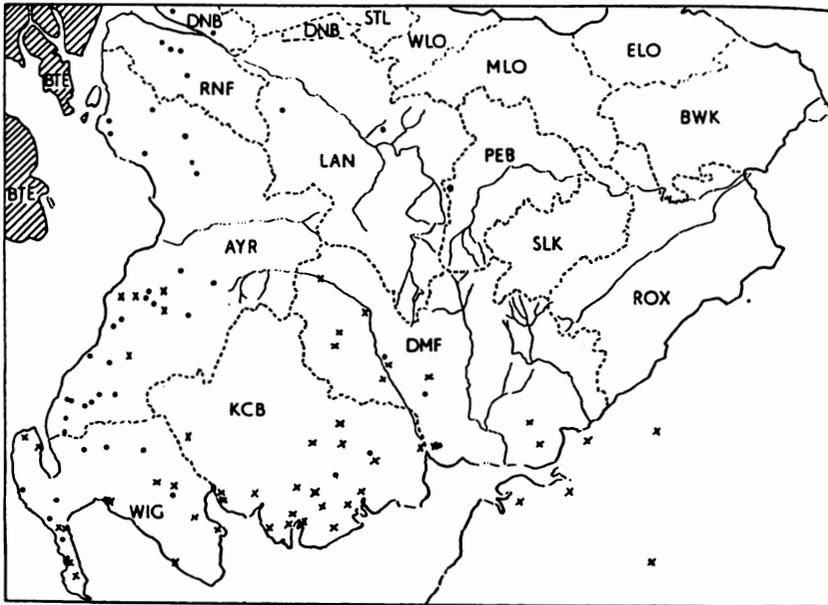
The names in which at least one of the elements is of Scandinavian origin need examining more closely. The possibility exists that the Scandinavian element in question had been adopted into the local vocabulary. Richard Bailey has drawn my attention to the fact that if the inversion compounds involving familiar elements such as *kirk* are omitted from the map, then the distribution-pattern of inversion compounds in Cumberland is more limited and hardly extends north of a line running from the Ellen to Penrith. Bailey argues that the spread northwards of the Celtic compounds probably represents an extension of this type outside its original area at some time after the period of the first Scandinavian settlements. If the *Kirk*-names are omitted from the map, then the distribution in Cumbria of inversion compounds correspond fairly closely with that of names containing the Gaelic loan-word in Scandinavian *aergi* 'shieling', that is, mainly in the coastal lowlands and in the Kent valley. It may well be that the inversion compounds and the *aergi*-names in these areas reflect an influx of settlers of mixed Norse-Gaelic origin, an influx that in the Kent valley would seem to have led to economic upheaval, since there is no Viking period stone sculpture at Kendal and Haversham, where Anglian period sculpture is found, although two-thirds of the sites with Anglian period sculpture in the north-west also have Viking-period sculpture.<sup>46</sup>

Against Bailey's hypothesis of a late expansion northwards from southern Cumberland of the partially Scandinavian compounds, can be ranged Alfred Smyth's suggestion that the distribution of Celtic-type compounds in Cumbria represents an eastwards and southwards extension of the concentration of such names in Galloway.<sup>47</sup> Of particular significance for this theory are the many names whose generic is *Kirk*- from Scandinavian

*kirkja* and whose specific is the name of the saint to which the church was dedicated, for example, Kirkbride.

**NAMES IN KIRK-**

Kirkbride-type names are characteristic of the south-west of Scotland, being found, apart from six names in Cumberland and a few outliers, only in Dumfriesshire, Galloway and Carrick.<sup>48</sup> Apart from a few dedications to Christ, St Michael and St Andrew, three to St Cuthbert and two to St Oswald, all the dedications in Scotland are to saints of the Irish church, some of which are very obscure.<sup>49</sup> John MacQueen examined the Kirkbride-type names in Galloway in the light of Gaelic names in which *cill* is combined with a saint's name to give names of the Kilbride-type. He argued that the Gaelic language must have been established in Galloway before the Norse settlement there, and that some at least of the Galloway compounds in Kirk- must be partial scandinavianisations of older Gaelic compounds in Kil-. On the other hand, the presence in Galloway of names such as Kirkoswald and Kirkcudbright suggested to Bill Nicolaisen that in some names Kirk- supplanted Kil- not in Scandinavian but in Anglian mouths. Recently, Daphne Brooke has argued that the names are merely



• Names in Kil-                      x Names in Kirk-, with historical Kil- forms  
 x Names in Kirk-

Fig. 6.3 Names in Kil- and Kirk- in Southern Scotland (from Nicolaisen, W. F. H., *Scottish Place-Names* (1976), Fig. 13).

‘the response of a multi-lingual society to the advent of a strictly territorial parish system’ in the twelfth century. She is unwilling to associate the Kirkbride-type names with Scandinavian settlement in south-west Scotland. One of her arguments is cogent. She points out that the geographical distribution of the Kirk-compounds within the region is far too wide to allow of any significant correspondence between these names and Scandinavian settlement. Such place-names as undoubtedly do point to Scandinavian settlement in Galloway, for example, the *býs* and the originally topographical names, have much more restricted distributions, being more or less concentrated around Whithorn and Kirkcudbright.

I would nevertheless argue that it is Scandinavian rather than Anglian influence that is reflected in the Kirkbride-type names. Kirksanton CMB is recorded as early as in Domesday Book (DB) of 1086 in the form *Santacherche*. Arguing that the spelling in *-cherche* must reflect OE *cirice* rather than Scandinavian *kirkja*, Brooke has taken the Domesday spelling as an indication that the element *kirk* in this name, and in others which have early forms in *cherche* or *chirche*, derived from Anglian rather than Scandinavian speech.<sup>50</sup> In DB, however, the voiceless stop (k) was normally represented before *e* and *i* by *ch*<sup>51</sup> and on the basis of a comparative study of Domesday manuscripts Peter Sawyer has argued convincingly that this was a very generally accepted Anglo-Norman convention.<sup>52</sup> For the pronunciation (k) before *e* and *i* the spelling *ch* predominated in the earliest post-Conquest manuscripts and was gradually superseded in the course of the twelfth century by *k*.<sup>53</sup> No significance can therefore be attached to spellings with *ch* in Anglo-Norman manuscripts in the eleventh century as evidence for an English origin for the element *kirk*.

The possibility cannot, nevertheless, be dismissed that *kirkja* has replaced OE *cirice* in some of the names in our area, as it did in the Northamptonshire place-name Peakirk.<sup>54</sup> How likely is this possibility? In England the type of name in which OE *cirice* is combined with a saint’s name is extremely rare outside the area subject to Welsh or Cornish influence, where they can sometimes be proved to be translations of a Celtic name.<sup>55</sup> It is probably significant that most of the Oswaldkirk-type names are found in north-west England or the North Riding of Yorkshire, areas not too far removed from the sphere of Celtic influence. It is nevertheless possible that *kirk* may have replaced *cirice* in some of the place-names of Cumberland and south-west Scotland in which the name either of an Anglo-Saxon saint, or of a saint popular among the British, or of one of the biblical saints favoured by the Northumbrian church, is now combined with Kirk- in younger Celtic word order: Kirkoswald, Kirkbrynnock and two Kirkandrews in Cumberland, Kirkcudbright and Kirkmichael in Dumfriesshire, Kirkcarsewell (Oswald), Kirkcudbright and the three Kirkandrews in Galloway, and Kirkoswald, Kirkcudbright and Kirkmichael

in Carrick. The absence of Kirkbride-type names from the Border counties and the Lothians, however, argues against an Anglian origin for the majority of the names in Kirk- in south-west Scotland.

As far as the Kirk-names containing Irish saint's names are concerned, it seems most likely that these reflect the replacement of Kil- by Kirk-. The distribution of the Kirkbride-type names corresponds reasonably closely with that of the Kilbride-type names in southern Scotland, except that the Kirkbride-type names do not extend as far north as the Firth of Clyde and that they cluster more thickly around the Solway Firth. This suggests very strongly that the Kilbride-type name lies behind the Kirkbride-type one, and that the Kirkbride-type name has spread out from the heavily scandinavianised areas of Cumberland and eastern Dumfriesshire into Galloway and Carrick.

I should like to suggest a possible source of inspiration for the replacement of Kil- by Kirk- in so many names. In all the areas of England in which place-names of Scandinavian origin point to Scandinavian settlement in the Viking period there are \**kirkju-bý* place-names, forty-six instances in all. At least forty-two of these names would appear to have been given by Scandinavian settlers to old-established English settlements in which they found a church on their arrival. In comparison with these forty-six Kir(k)bys, the nine names consisting of a saint's name plus *kirkja* are comparatively few and they have a much more restricted distribution. The situation in Cumberland is interesting. Here there are three Kir(k)bys and Bridekirk and Islekirk, containing the name of St Hild. It is significant that there are recorded forms of all three Cumberland Kir(k)bys which incorporate the name of the saint to which the church is dedicated.<sup>56</sup> St Bees is first recorded as *Cherchebi* c.1125, but it has one run of forms such as *Kirkebibeccoch* (1188x98) 1308, and another run of forms such as *Bechockirke* c.1210. *Beghoc* is an Irish diminutive form of the saint's name *Bega*. The now-lost *Kirkeby crossan* is recorded in this form in the middle of the thirteenth century, while other more or less contemporary documents have the forms *kirkecrossan* and *Kyrcros*. *Cros(s)jan* has been explained as an Irish personal name. The name *Kirkebi Johannis* which did not survive, was given to a new borough in 1305, the year after a church dedicated to St John had been licensed there.<sup>57</sup> Kirkby Stephen in the neighbouring county of Westmorland is first recorded in the form *Cherkaby Stephan* 1090x97 and the affix probably refers to the dedication of the church. In no other counties of England are Kir(k)by names distinguished by the addition of a saint's name, and it therefore seems likely that these four Kir(k)bys in Cumbria represent a compromise between the Kir(k)by-names of the Danelaw and the Kilbride-type names of south-west Scotland. I would argue that it was the confrontation of the Kilbride-type names with the Kir(k)by-names in areas of dense Scandinavian settlement that inspired the replacement of Kil- by Kirk- in some Kilbride-type names and

the inversion of the order of the elements in some of the Bridekirk-type names. I would also argue that the south-west Scottish parish names of the Kirkbride-type were the inspiration for the same type of name in the Isle of Man.<sup>58</sup> Finally, it must be acknowledged that the parochial reorganisation of the Anglo-Norman church in the twelfth century was probably responsible for the creation of several of the younger parish-names of the Kirkbride-type.<sup>59</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, then, it would seem to be advisable to omit the Kirkbride-type names from the list of names pointing directly to Scandinavian settlement in Dumfriesshire and Galloway. This leaves us with concentrations of Scandinavian place-names in eastern Dumfriesshire and smaller groupings around Kirkcudbright and Whithorn. Scandinavian settlement in Dumfriesshire would seem to mark a natural extension of the land route across the Carlisle plain of the settlement in Cumberland and Westmorland. The settlers in Dumfriesshire took over old-established settlements from their Anglian predecessors and would also seem to have split up some old estates into small independent units that were given names in *-by*, units which at a later date were taken over and partially renamed by Flemish and Norman settlers. The Viking settlers in Dumfriesshire would also seem to have cleared woodland in order to establish new settlements on virgin land — the *thveits*.

The settlers around Kirkcudbright may well have come by land from Dumfriesshire but it is also possible that they had crossed the Solway Firth from Cumberland. The sea route is perhaps the more likely one to have been taken by the settlers around Whithorn. Richard Bailey has pointed to evidence for artistic contact in the Viking period between this area and the coastal plain of Cumberland, a contact which by-passes the Carlisle plain, Dumfriesshire and Kirkcudbrightshire.<sup>60</sup>

The settlers in Galloway cannot have been anywhere near as numerous as those in Dumfriesshire. There is no place-name evidence for fragmentation of large estates into *by*s, or for the clearing of woodland in order to establish *thveits*. There is, however, evidence that many of the settlements with Scandinavian names were among the more important settlements in the region. John MacQueen has pointed out that almost half of the Galloway parishes have names which are either Scandinavian or show Scandinavian influence.<sup>61</sup> The fourteen parish-names of the Kirkbride-type cannot, of course, be taken as direct evidence for the administrative power wielded by the Scandinavians, but there are five parishes with purely Scandinavian names: Sorbie WIG, Stoneykirk WIG, Borgue KCB, Rerwick KCB and Senwick KCB (plus the additional now-defunct Southwick KCB), while Kelton KCB is a scandinavianised name. These names point to a takeover by Scandinavians of well-established

settlements. It would seem that in Galloway, as argued by John MacQueen, Scandinavian influence was felt most strongly at the centres of local government.

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### **Abbreviations:**

CMB — Cumberland	LIE — Leicestershire	WIG — Wigtownshire
DMF — Dumfriesshire	LIN — Lincolnshire	WWL — Westmorland
DRH — Durham	LNC — Lancashire	YON — Yorkshire
KCB — Kirkcudbright	NTB — Northumberland	(North Riding)

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*Sweetheart Abbey; general view of east end and crossing from the south-east.*