

A Reconsideration of the *Kirk*-Names in South-West Scotland

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Introduction

Place-Names in *kirk*-, which are found in the South-West of Scotland and the former county of Cumberland, present a problem regarding their linguistic origin. As *kirk* is usually a reflex of the Scandinavian element *kirkja*, this would appear to suggest that they belong to the Scandinavian stratum of place-names; and yet they display Celtic element order. This pattern of Scandinavian generic and Celtic form might indicate that the *kirk*- names belong to the group of inversion-compounds which are found chiefly in the North-West of England.¹ However, there are some fundamental differences between the two types of name, the most obvious being that the generic of the *kirk*-compounds is always *kirk*-, whereas the English names include a wide range of generic elements. Additionally, the specifics of the *kirk*-names are almost entirely hagiological, whereas the English inversion-names contain ordinary personal names and topographic elements. These distinctions mean that the *kirk*- names appear to have an entirely religious context, whilst the other inversion-compounds are predominantly secular. For this reason scholars have tended to treat the *kirk*- names separately from the English inversion-compounds.

Various alternative theories have been developed to account for the inception of the *kirk*- compounds, the most salient of which being that ON *kirkja* was not the original generic element in these names. MacQueen (1956: 142) argues for an essentially Gaelic origin for the *kirk*- compounds, suggesting that in the case of names which apparently contain the Gaelic element *mo* or *ma* 'my', a substitution of elements occurred, from Gaelic *cill*- to *kirk*-. Nicolaisen (1960: 64) suggests that because so many of the *kirk*-names have Celtic dedications, the majority of them are likely to have originally

¹ It is generally considered that the inversion-compounds were coined in a Gaelic-Scandinavian linguistic context. For a recent discussion see my article 'A New Approach to the Inversion-Compounds of North-West England', in *Nomina*, 25, 2002, 65-90.

contained Gaelic *cill-* as their generic. He also considers that in the case of *kirk-* names dedicated to English saints, such as Kirkoswald and Kirkcudbright, '*Kirk-* supplanted *Kil-* not in Scandinavian, but in Anglian mouths' (1960: 64).

Brooke (1983: 58) agrees that the *kirk-* compounds were not coined using ON *kirkja*, but argues that the original generic was probably English rather than Gaelic, because the earliest spellings of some of the *kirk-* names display *ch* spellings, e.g. *Cuthbriectis Khirche* 1164, *Kirchecormach* 1165-1206 and *Cerchewinni* 1159-81. She suggests that these names contained OE *cirice* rather than ON *kirk-*, precluding any significant involvement on the part of a Gaelic-Scandinavian speech community in the formation of this group of names.

Each of these theories will be examined in turn here, and it will be argued that the *kirk-* names do not represent partial translations from Gaelic *cill-*, nor did they evolve from OE *cirice-*. Rather, it will be suggested that they were in fact coined as *kirk-* names, and thus an alternative explanation for their inception must be sought.

Development from Names in Gaelic Cill-

The main argument for the *kirk-* names being adapted from Gaelic *cill-* rests on the fact that the historical evidence for some names shows variant forms containing the element *kil-*.² For example, the two Kirkpatrick names in Dumfriesshire are recorded as *Kilpatrick* in 1296 and 1528 respectively. The sporadic occurrence of these *kil-* forms led Nicolaisen (2001: 167-168) to conclude that 'in many cases, *Kil-* was translated or replaced by *Kirk-*'. However, what is significant about these *kil-* spellings is that in almost every case, the recorded forms of the place-names show at least one or more *kirk-* form which predates the *kil-* form. For instance, the Kirkpatrick names are recorded with the *kirk-* form in 1179 and 1355 respectively, in both cases more than a century prior to the *kil-* forms. In fact, of the eleven names amongst those listed in Appendix A that show a *kil-* form, only two do not have a *kirk-* form at an earlier date. Kirkbride in Kirkcudbrightshire is referred to twice in a single document as *Kilbride* or *Killbryde* in 1456, and *Kirkdominae* in Carrick is *Kyldormne* in 1391. As these records are so late, it is not possible to determine whether the names originally contained *kirk-* or *kil-*.

² See Appendix A for a full list of historical forms of the *kirk-* compounds.

However, it would appear that, at least in most cases, the *kil-* forms later supplanted the *kirk-* forms, and not the other way around. It should also be noted that in a recent publication, MacQueen has pointed out that if *kirk-* replaced *kil-* as a result of the predominance of Lowland Scots over Gaelic, then it would be somewhat strange that names in Northern Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire, where Scots also replaced the Gaelic language, did not undergo a similar alteration (2002: 57).

The only other potential indication that a partial translation of Gaelic *cill-* names might have occurred is found in MacQueen's assertion that names containing the Gaelic element *mo* must be entirely Gaelic in their inception. However, amongst the names listed in Appendix A, only eight could possibly be taken to contain this element. These are Kirkmahoe in Dumfriesshire, Kirkmabreck and the two Kirkmadrine names in Kirkcudbrightshire and Kirkmagill, Kirkmabreck and the two Kirkmaiden names in Wigtownshire. One of these can be eliminated immediately: Kirkmagill in Wigtownshire has the historical forms *Karmagell*, *Carnmagill* and *Keromagill*, which indicate that this name did not originally contain *kirk-* as its generic element, but rather developed its current form by analogy with existing *kirk-* compounds once its original specific became semantically opaque.³

The only available historical form of the Wigtownshire name Kirkmabreck is *Kirkmakbrick* on Pont's map. The Kirkcudbrightshire Kirkmabreck is somewhat better attested: *Kyrkmaberc* 1351, *Kirkmakbrik* 1468, *Kirkmabrek* 1468, *Kirkmakbrek* 1501, *Kirkmabreck* 1534, *Kirkmakbreck* 1534, *Kirkmakbreck* 1537 and *Kirkmackbreck* in Pont. What is notable about these spellings is that six out of the total nine take the form *mak* instead of *ma*. Johnston (1934: 229) suggests that the etymology of these names is 'Church of my dear Brec or Brieuç', but makes no suggestion of a possible historical figure of that name. Watson, on the other hand, identifies the Kirkmabreck names as referring to *Aed mac Brec*, a bishop who died either in 589 or 595 (1926: 166). This is corroborated by the six *makbreck* forms, and indicates that these names contain Gaelic *mac*, meaning 'son of', rather than *mo*.

³ MacQueen (1956: 139) suggests this element may have originally been Gaelic *ceathramh* meaning 'a quarter'. This name is one of a small group of pseudo *kirk-* compounds whose early spellings suggest original generics of either *ceathramh* or *cathair* 'fort' from Welsh *caer*, the others being Kirklaugh, Kirkhobble and Kirklauchline. These names have been included in the corpus of *kirk-* names for the sake of completeness.

There are only two historical forms of the Kirkmadrine names: one is *Kirkmadryne* in 1562, the other is *Kirkmakdryn* in Pont. Although these forms are rather late to be of use as evidence of the origin of the names, the fact that one of them is a *mak* form may also point to the possibility of a personal name involving *mac* rather than the honorific *my*. MacQueen (1956: 144) notes that confusion between *ma* and *mac* arose in this area because 'the "c" of "mac" is not sounded in the local dialect'. He suggests that forms such as the *mak* spellings could therefore have been hypercorrected forms of *ma*, caused by people assuming that there should be a 'c', and adding one in. Whilst this could be true, it seems at least equally possible that these names had the form *mac* originally, but because the 'c' was not sounded, they became *ma* in speech, which was then sometimes transferred to paper in this phonetic form. However, as the specific elements of the *kirk*-compounds all have an ecclesiastical context, it seems that if the Kirkmadrine names do contain a reference to someone named *Mac Drine*, then this person is likely to have been either a saint or a clergyman. As such, it might be expected that some record of him or her would survive, and yet there is no obvious candidate. This might suggest that in this instance, a name in *mac* is less likely than a construction with *mo* or *ma* and a hagiological dedication. Watson (1926: 162-163) records that there is no *Drine* listed in the Calendar of Scottish Saints, although there is an obscure reference to a *Draigne of Sruthair* who may have been an Irish saint.

Thus the specific element in the Kirkmadrine names may be *mo Draigne*. What remains uncertain is whether MacQueen is correct in his assertion that the presence of the prefix *mo*, *ma* in a place-name must necessarily indicate that the name itself was originally coined in the Gaelic language. Eilis Fitzsimons has recently pointed out that by as early as the seventh century the pet forms of saints' names such as *MoFhinnu* (from Finian) and *Mo dímmóc* (from Diarmid) 'were recognized as radical forms in their own right and were included in genealogies, Lives of the Saints and martyrologies as distinct personages'.⁴ This suggests that even *kirk*- compounds which do contain a hypocoristic form of a saint's name in *ma*- or *mo*- may provide evidence only that the place-name was coined as a commemoration to a saint whose name now incorporated a Gaelic element. As the saint from the Kirkmadrine names is obscure, there is no evidence to indicate whether or not *Madrine* developed as an

⁴ Eilis Fitzsimons, 'St Maughold of Kirk Maughold', unpublished Conference Paper, given at the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland's Tenth Annual Conference, Douglas, Isle of Man, 6th to 9th April 2001.

independent form of *Draigne*. However, the evidence is better for the other *kirk*- names which appear to contain Gaelic *mo*. Kirkmahoe in Dumfriesshire is dedicated either to one of the eight saints called *Mochoe*, or to St Kentigern under the byname of *Mochoe* (Watson 1926: 162, MacQueen 1973: 24). In either case, although these names may have been coined as hypocoristic forms, they have clearly developed into autonomous designations. The two Kirkmaiden names are dedicated to St Medana or Medan. Johnston (1934: 229) identifies *Medan* as an Irish saint, who was a contemporary of St. Ninian, and Brooke (1983: 61) notes that the *Aberdeen Breviary* accredits her with founding both the Kirkmaiden churches, and lists her as being buried at Whithorn. Brooke suggests that these names may not contain *mo* at all (1983: 61), although Watson had previously argued that *Medana* was likely to be a Latinised form of *M'Etain*, originally *Mo Etain*, 'the virgin of *Tuam Noa*' (1926: 163). Even if Watson is correct, it would appear that *Medana* became disassociated from *Mo Etain*, and was worshipped as a saint in her own right, and as such the dedication of the two Kirkmaidens need not have involved Gaelic *mo*. This appears to be supported by the historical forms of the names which bear a closer resemblance to the *Medan* than to *Mo Etain* (see Appendix A).

It becomes clear that the group of names discussed above were not necessarily coined by Gaelic speakers, as some do not contain *mo* at all, and where the element is present it is likely to have become an integral part of the saints' names prior to the coining of the *kirk*-compounds. Thus there is no reason to assume that these names must represent partial translations of names in *cill*-. It should also be noted that there is no correspondence between this group of names and those which contain historical *kil*- forms. The only possible exception is one of the Wigtownshire Kirkmaiden names, which has a *kil*- spelling in the late fifteenth century. However, this is predated by three *kirk*-spellings, the earliest of which is 1275. Given that the name is spelled *kirk*- consistently after this single *Kilmedun* form, it seems likely that this is a *kirk* name which was briefly affected by the fluctuation between *kil*- and *kirk*- in the names of this area.

It may also be significant that the evidence for the presence of even *cill* + *mo* constructions in this part of the country is sparse. MacQueen identifies only three rather dubious instances in Galloway. One of these is Kilmacfadzean, which he identifies as '[p]ossibly *cill M(h)o Phaidin*, "my little Patrick's church"' (1956: 144). However, since this name is not recorded prior to the sixteenth century, when it has the form *Kilmakfadzean* 1574, it has been suggested that the specific may in fact be the local surname Macfadyean (Maxwell 1930: 166). In this case the generic may not be *cill*-, and instead might be

Gaelic *cuil* 'a corner' or *coill* 'a wood', both of which have modern reflexes in *kil-*. Killimingan, which MacQueen (1956: 144) identifies as *cill m'Fhinnein* 'my Finian's church', is found in the form *Killynngan* in Pont, suggesting that the *ma* may well be a later addition. Finally, there is Killimacuddican, which he identifies as 'my little Cutu's church'. However, Watson comments '[t]he saint is doubtless the famous Mochutu of Rathan and Lismore, who died in 637' (1926: 165). This would therefore appear to be another instance where the hypocoristic form developed independently of the original name, and as such offers no real evidence of a *cill-* + *mo* construction. In any case, even if all three names were genuine *cill-* + *mo* formations, this would still be sparse evidence for the establishment of the name-type in Galloway.

In conclusion, it is clear that the *kirk-* compound names cannot be accounted for as *cill-* names into which *kirk-* was later substituted. Where alternative forms in *cill-* occur, it is *cill-* which appears to be the later substitute; and where *kirk-* names appear to contain the Gaelic pronoun *mo*, this does not prove that the names themselves are entirely Gaelic constructions.

Development from Names in Old English Cirice-

Brooke's suggestion that the *kirk-* names may have either evolved from, or represent partial translations of, OE *cirice-*, *cyrice-* is better supported by the historical forms of the *kirk-* compounds. Although there are only three names in Kirkcudbrightshire and one in Dumfriesshire whose spellings suggest they might represent *church-* rather than *kirk-*, in the case of the Kirkcudbrightshire instances these spellings are the very earliest available for the *kirk-* names, dating back to the mid-twelfth century. Kirkcormack is *Kirhecormach* between 1165-1200, and a second attestation of this spelling is dated 1172-4. Kirkcudbright is *Cuthbrictis Khirche* in 1164, and Kirkgunzeon is *Cherchewinnin* between 1159-81. This suggests the possibility that the other *kirk-* compounds may also have had a *church-* form at this period, making the *kirk-* forms a later development. Few of the other *kirk-* names are recorded prior to the early thirteenth century, and it may be significant that the three names had all developed *kirk-* forms by then: Kirkcormack is *Kyrkecormac* by 1200-06, Kirkcudbright is *Kyrkecuthbert* by 1200-06, and Kirkgunzeon is *Kirkewinnen* around 1174-99. Further evidence is apparently offered from three Cumberland names, which show a parallel development. Kirkandrews in Eskdale is *Kirchand'r* in 1165,

but *Kirkeandres* in c.1230, Kirkbride is *Chirchebrid* in 1163, and *Kirkbride* c.1185-89, and Kirksanton is *Santacherche* in Domesday Book, but *Kirksan* by 1152. All of this appears to point towards an Anglian development for these names, which spread into Scotland from northern England, becoming *kirk-* between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th centuries, with the *khirche-* and *kirche-* forms perhaps signifying an interim stage of development between *cirice-* and *kirk-*, as Brooke suggests (1983: 58).

However, the fourth instance of a *kirche-* spelling occurs in the Dumfriesshire name Kirkpatrick-Fleming, which is *Kirchepatric* in 1181, yet *Kirkepatric* in 1179 and again in 1189. Although the first *kirk-* form predates the *kirche-* form by only two years, it does imply that, at least in this instance, the *kirk-* form did not develop from *cirice-* via *kirche-*. Additionally, the hypothesis of a development from OE *cirice-* rests essentially on six early spellings of four names. The Kirkcormack spellings are from the *Liber Cartum Sancte Crucis* and the *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scottorum* respectively. The Kirkcudbright form is from *Vita Beati Cuthberti Reginald Monachi Dunelmensis*, the Kirkgunzeon form is from *Holm Cultram*, and the Kirkpatrick-Fleming form is from *Registrum Episcopatus Glasguensis* (Brooke 1983: 68-69). The possibility therefore exists of a disparity between the names as spoken by the local inhabitants, and as recorded by scribes in Latin texts, especially in the cases of texts derived in England, where influence from Anglian *cirice-* is likely. It is also possible that the various *cherche-* and *kirche-* forms, in Kirkcudbrightshire, Dumfriesshire and Cumberland, are not intended as reflexes of OE *cirice-* at all. Fellows-Jensen (1991: 90) points out that in Domesday Book, where the earliest of these *cherche-* forms is recorded:

the voiceless stop (k) was normally represented before *e* and *i* by *ch*, 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.

Fellows-Jensen (1991: 90) also notes:

For the pronunciation (k) before *e* and *i* the spelling *ch* predominated in the earliest post-Conquest manuscripts and was gradually superseded in course of the twelfth century by *k*.

Given that the *ch-* forms of the Kirkcudbright, Dumfriesshire and Cumberland names had all correspondingly developed *k-* spellings by

approximately the end of the twelfth century, the possibility therefore exists that the movement from *cherche-* to *kirk-* forms reflects merely a change in spelling conventions, rather than the substitution of one element for another, or even a phonological development from [tʃ] to [k]. Further evidence that early *cherche-* forms could be reflexes of ON *kirkja-* rather than of OE *cirice-* is found in the Kirkby names of northern England. These names are known to have been coined as *kirk* rather than *cirice* names, since they are from ON *kirkju-bý*, a name given by Scandinavians to existing settlements where there was a church (Fellows-Jensen 1987: 298). Yet of the twenty-eight Kirkby names which are recorded in Domesday Book, twenty-six have *cherch-* or *chirch-* spellings (a complete list of these names is given in Appendix B). Only the two Norfolk names Kirby Bedon and Kirby Cane are spelt *kerk-*, which suggests that in most areas *k* was indeed written as *ch* before and after *e* and *i*. These names, for the most part, developed *k* spellings in the post-Domesday period up to the late twelfth century, in a similar manner to the *kirk-* compounds, and the fluctuation between the forms of the Dumfriesshire name Kirkpatrick within a single decade seems more likely to reflect a transitional period in spelling conventions than a development in pronunciation from *kirk-* to *kirche-* and then back again.

Additionally, there is the fact that Anglian influence in southern Scotland was much more widespread than Scandinavian influence, and Fellows-Jensen (1987: 304-305) has pointed out that had Anglian speakers been responsible for coining the *kirk-* compounds, it might be expected that they would be found over a wider area of distribution, particularly in Lothian and the Borders. A further problem with the hypothesis of an English origin for the *kirk-* compounds is that it offers no explanation for the word-order in these names, which, if coined by Anglian speakers, would be expected to follow the Germanic pattern of specific + generic.

The Origin of the Kirk- Compounds

It therefore appears impossible to account satisfactorily for these names as being part translations of Anglian or Gaelic formations. Indeed, there are only 15 *kil-* spellings and 6 *cherche-* or *kirche-* spellings amongst the Scottish names listed in Appendix A, against the overwhelming majority of approximately 180 spellings which are recognisably *kirk-* or *kyrk-* forms. Given that the majority of the names show *kirk-* spellings consistently, the most logical conclusion is that most of them were in fact coined as such. This does not, of

course, exclude the possibility that a few of these names may have been *cill-* or *cherche-* forms originally, and were converted to *kirk-* later once this pattern of naming had become established. However, the historical evidence indicates that the majority of the names did not evolve in this way.

As the *kirk-* compounds do not appear to have been created by substituting or adapting an earlier generic in existing place-names, the problem remains regarding the seemingly incongruent mixture of Germanic and Celtic linguistic influences which these names display. I have argued elsewhere (2002: 79-83) that the inversion-compound names in North-West England were coined by Gaelic-speakers who had shifted to the culturally-dominant Scandinavian language in the Western Isles of Scotland, and then travelled to the North-West of England along with monolingual Scandinavian-speakers. Thus, the inversion names were essentially coined using a dialect of the Scandinavian language which included some features from Gaelic, including syntax, personal names and diminutive suffixes. It seems plausible that the first *kirk-* compounds were coined by these Gaelic-Scandinavian bilinguals in the Solway region. Names such as Kirkoswald and Kirkcudbright which are dedicated to Northumbrian saints may have been coined to refer to existing ecclesiastical establishments, although the Kirkbride names may reflect the establishment of new churches dedicated to the Celtic saints worshipped by Christian Gaelic-Scandinavian settlers around the Solway Firth. It is possible that the Scandinavian settlement of the Galloway coast occurred simultaneously with that of Cumberland, and that Gaelic-Scandinavian bilinguals coined the first Scottish *kirk-* compounds at that time. However, the limited nature of Scandinavian place-names in Galloway, as suggested by their confinement to coastal areas and by the lack of secondary settlement names, appears to indicate 'a secondary expansion from areas of primary colonization' (Oram 1995: 135). This might suggest that the settlers who colonised Galloway originated from the Scandinavian settlements in coastal Cumberland. A later colonization of this type may have included a much lower proportion of Gaelic-Scandinavian bilinguals than were involved in the original influx from the North-Western Seaboard of Scotland, which would account for the relative lack of inversion-compounds of the non *kirk-* compound variety in Galloway. It seems likely that there were at least some Gaelic-Scandinavians amongst the group, however, who transferred the *kirk-* + saint name-type from Cumberland, and coined the initial *kirk-* compounds in the region.

It should be stressed that this Gaelic-Scandinavian origin would only apply to the initial establishment of the *kirk-* compound name-

type, and that the majority of the names are unlikely to have been coined by this linguistic group. As the Cumberland *kirk-* compounds are so limited in number, it seems likely that the original Galloway instances would have been similarly limited. Since there is so little evidence for mixed Gaelic-Scandinavian settlement in the South-West of Scotland, it seems that such a large group of ecclesiastical names utilising a single generic would be unprecedented. Yet only a handful of names in Cumberland and Galloway would be necessary to establish the name-pattern in coastal areas around the Irish Sea, and once it had become endemic, there would have been a process of dissemination beyond the original speech community.

It is pertinent that Brooke has argued against a Gaelic-Scandinavian inception of this type, and considers that the names were coined during a later period, and in a more systematic manner. She suggests (1983: 66-67) that the majority of the names were coined from the twelfth century onwards in an Anglo-Norman parochial context, as part of a process of the restructuring of ecclesiastical boundaries. In support of this theory she has shown that some of the *kirk-* names are indeed demonstrably late, and were coined to replace earlier Cumbric or Gaelic names (1983: 58-59). For example, the parish of Kirkinner in Wigtownshire is recorded as *Carnemal* in 1275, *ecclesia Sancte Kenere de Carnesmall* in 1326 and *Kykynner alias Carnismole* by 1400. Clearly, in this instance, the *kirk-* form developed in the model of earlier *kirk-* compounds and eventually supplanted the alternative Cumbric name. Similarly, the Galloway parishes of Blaiket, Urr and Sorbie Major developed *kirk-* compound forms to replace existing names. Blaiket was *ecclesia de S Brigide de Blachet* in 1164-74 and *Blacket* in 1175-99, becoming *Kirkebride* in 1249. Urr was *Hur* in 1185, *S Constantini de Hur* in 1233-41, and *Kircostyntin* in 1262. Sorbie Major is *ecclesia S Foylani de Sowrby* in 1185-1200, *Sowrby* in 1221 and *Kirkfolan* in 1282. In all three names, the *kirk-* form seems to have been created in the thirteenth century, although it is noteworthy that these late *kirk-* compounds proved to be transient, with the original parish names ultimately becoming predominant. The Carrick parish name of Kirkcudbright-Innertig would also appear to belong to this group, although *Innertig* does not become *Kyrkubry de Entertig* until 1484, and both names are preserved in the modern parish name.

However, I would argue that not all of the *kirk-* names discussed by Brooke should be considered as late replacements of other place-names. One of the main problems with the historical forms of *kirk-* compounds is that the earliest form of the names are often recorded in Latin, and it seems likely that there is some disparity between these

Latinised records and the colloquial forms of place-names prevalent in the South-West at that time. Brooke (1983: 62) has argued that *kirk*-compound names were often created by prefixing the element *kirk*- to the official Latin designations. Yet it also seems plausible that rather than having been created to replace the Latin designations, the *kirk*-names co-existed independently as colloquial variants of these names. For example, the parish names Kirkandrews Balmaghie in Kirkcudbrightshire and Kirkmichael in Carrick display the respective historical forms *ecclesia de S Andree* 1165-1215 and *S Michael de Munthyrduffy* 1270-80, but are also recorded as *Kyrcanders* 1189-1209 and *Kirkmichell* 1275. As the two sets of names are concurrent, it is difficult to uphold Brooks' suggestion that the *kirk*- compounds were later replacements for the official Latin forms. Similarly, the parish of Kirkmaiden in the Rhinns of Galloway displays the historical forms *Kirkemethen* in 1275, *S Medan de le Rhynnys* in 1393 and *Kyrkmedin* in 1444. The fact that a *kirk*- form predates the Latin form in this case is further evidence that these Latin forms do not represent earlier versions of *kirk*- names. Rather, it suggests the co-existence of different linguistic registers amidst the corpus of historical evidence. Thus, in the case of *kirk*- compounds where there is no evidence of an earlier Cumbric name being supplanted, it is likely that the *kirk*- forms predate their earliest historical forms, as the first appearance of a *kirk*-name in the corpus of evidence may be indicative only of the use of a more informal register rather than the genesis of the name itself.

Brooke admits that in the case of parish names such as Kirkandrews Balmaghie and Kirkandrews Parton, it is by no means certain that the *Kirkandrews* was a later addition to existing names (1983: 59). I would suggest that rather than representing the original designation of these places, 'Balmaghie' and 'Parton' were instead distinguishing affixes added to distinguish between two places of the same name in close proximity, as has clearly happened in the case of the various Kirkpatrick names. In this context, it is notable that both of these place-names have been used as the distinguishing affixes of other names in that part of Kirkcudbrightshire, namely in Boreland of Parton and Whitehill of Balmaghie.

It may also be significant that the majority of *kirk*- names whose historical forms do show evidence of replacing an older name are the names of parishes. Brooke contends that the *kirk*- compounds were coined as a response to 'the introduction of the territorial parish structure in the newly reconstituted bishoprics of Glasgow, Whithorn and Carlisle' (1983: 66). It is indeed plausible that names such as Kirkinner and Kirkfolan in Wigtownshire and Kirkbride and Kircostyntin in Kirkcudbrightshire may have been created under these

circumstances. However, it seems likely that these new coinages took the form of *kirk-* followed by a hagiological dedication because this name-type was already in common use as a parochial designation. MacQueen (1956: 144) notes that names in *kirk-* appear to have been of greater importance than names in *cill-*, so it would be entirely plausible that they would develop into medieval parishes. Brooke's small group of parochial *kirk-* names which are demonstrably late would then have been coined by analogy. Further evidence against the theory of an Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical origin for the *kirk-* names is offered by MacQueen, who has recently pointed out that '[t]welfth century parish churches...were dedicated to Roman rather than early Irish Saints' (2002: 58). As such, the hagiological dedications of the corpus of *kirk-* names would suggest an earlier, Celtic-influenced origin in the majority of cases. Similarly, as mentioned above, MacQueen notes that the distribution of the *kirk-* names in Scotland is too limited to reflect Anglo-Norman parochial reorganisation, since there are no instances in Ayrshire and Renfrewshire (2002: 57). Given this, it seems that there is very little to support the notion of any significant Anglian involvement with the *kirk-* names, particularly during their inception period.

Brooke (1983: 58) had suggested that the origin of the *kirk-* compounds was likely to post-date the period of Scandinavian settlement as the earliest historical records of *kirk-* compounds in Scotland date from the twelfth century, which coincides neatly with the date of the development of the Lowland Scots word *kirk*. However, as she herself admits, the 'documents relating to Galloway scarcely begin before the later twelfth century' (1983: 58), and there is also evidence to support the notion of an earlier, Gaelic-Scandinavian inception for the names. Fellows-Jensen has pointed out that although *kirk* was used by both Scandinavian and Northern English speakers, compound names including *kirk* and a hagiological dedication only occur in areas of attested Gaelic-Norwegian influence: namely Cumberland and the North Riding of Yorkshire.⁵ Similarly, she notes that although Kirkby names are very common in England, only in the former counties of Cumberland and Westmorland are these names distinguished by the addition of a saint's name (1987: 305-306). This would also appear to suggest that the name-type emerged in a Gaelic-Scandinavian context.

Brooke (1983: 59) also asserted that 'the geographical distribution of the *Kirk-* compounds within the region is too wide to allow any

⁵ Fellows-Jensen (1987: 305). In the North Riding of Yorkshire, however, the word-order is Germanic e.g. Felixkirk, Oswaldkirk and Romaldkirk.

significant correspondence between the incidence of these names and Scandinavian settlement'. However, this would not preclude the possibility that the *kirk*- names had their inception in the coastal regions of attested Scandinavian settlement, before spreading inland. Nicolaisen (2001: 141) has pointed out that 'practically all the names are to be found in coastal districts or in easily accessible river-valleys' (see map 1). The theory of a coastal genesis for the names in *kirk*-, followed a gradual movement inland, would arguably better fit the distribution of the names than would the theory that the *kirk*-compounds are representative of the area covered by the reconstituted bishoprics of the twelfth century.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is clear that the evolution of the *kirk*- compound names was a long and complex process. These names cannot be accounted for as adaptations of existing names in either Gaelic *cill*- or OE *cirice*-. Neither is it likely that the names were coined *en masse* in the twelfth century as part of a process of Anglo-Norman parish reorganisation. Rather, the evidence suggests that the names had their origin in Gaelic-Scandinavian contact, and that once the name-pattern had become established in the area it continued to be used to coin similar names for a considerable period of time, including some of the analogous parish names identified by Brooke. As the corpus of names grew it absorbed names such as Kirkmagill and Kirkhobble when the original generics of these names became obscure, and it is of course possible that a small number of names in *cill*- or *cirice*- may also have been assimilated during this process, although these would have been vastly outnumbered by genuine *kirk*- compound names.



Map 1: Distribution of the kirk- names

*Appendix A: Historical Forms of the Kirk- Compounds***Wigtownshire****Kirkbride:** [Kirkmaiden]*Kirkbride* (1462)*Kirkbryde* (1545)*Kirkbryd* (1577)*Kilbryd* (1678, 1691)**Killbryd** (1672)**Kirkbryde:** [Kirkcolm]*Kirkbryde* (1587, 1591)**Kirkchrist:** [Old Luce]*Kirkchrist* (1574)*Kirkcrist* (1599)*Kilchrist* (1614)**Kirkchrist:** [Penninghame]*Kirkchrist* (Pont)**Kirkcolm:***Kerkecolemm* (1186)*Kyrcum* (1275)*Kyrkum* (1295-96)*Kirkom* (1302)*Kyrceum* (1358)*Kyrcum* (1448)*Kirkcum* (1551)**Kirkcowan:***Kirkkewan* (1435)*Kirkewane* (1471)*Kirkewane* (1485)*Kirkcowane* (1498)*Kirkewane* (1499)**Kirkfolan:***ecclesia S. Foylani de Sowrby*
(1185-1200)*Sowrby* (1221)*Soureby* (1281)*Kirkfolan* (1282)**Kirkhobble:***Keirchappell* (1645)*Kerychappell* (1662)**Kirkinner:***Carnemal* (1275)*ecclesia Sancte Kenere de**Carnesmall* (1325-26)*Kykynner alias Carnismole*
(1400)*Linkynner* (1428)*Carnismule alias Kyrckynner*
(1460)*Kirkynnir* (1503)*Kirkynner* (1538, 1544)*Kirkinver* (1584)*Kirkynnuir* (Pont)**Kirklauchline:***Kererlauchlin* (1515-16)*Kirulauchlie* (1543)*Kerelauchleine* (1596)*Keirlachlyn* (1662)*Keirlauchline* (Pont)*Kerlauchlin* (1675)**Kirkmabreck:***Kirkmakbrick* (Pont)**Kirkmadrine:** [Sorbie]*Kirkmadryne* (1562)

Kirkmadrine: [Stoneykirk]*Kirkmakdryn* (Pont)**Kirkmagill:***Karmagell* (1487-88)*Carmagill* (1506)*Keromagill* (1571)*Carmagyll* (1616)*Kyrmagil* (Pont)**Kirkmaiden:** [Kirkmaiden]*Kirkemethen* (1275)*Kirkmaiden* (1393)*S. Medan de le Rynnys* (1393)*Kyrkmedin* (1444)*Kilmedun* (1469)*Kirkmedyn* (1493)*Kyrkmadan* (1529)**Kirkmaiden:** [Glasserton]*Kikmethin* (1306)*Kyrckemethym* (1307)*Kirkmidyne* (1473)*Kirkmedin* (1543)*Kirkmadin* (1545)*Kirkmaiden* (Pont)**Kirkcudbrightshire****Kirkanders:** [Borgue]*Kirkeandres* (1234)*Eglise de Kircandres* (1296)*Kirkandris* (1306-29)*Kirkandris* (1315-21)*Kirkandres Plunton* (1335-36)*Kirkandris* (1426)*Kirkandris* (1459)*Kirkandriss* (1550-85)**Kirkandrews:** [Balmaghie]*ecclesia de S. Andree* (1165-1215)*Kyrcanders* (1189-1209)*Kirkanders Balemakethe* (1255-93)*Kircander Balimeth* (1275)**Kirkandrews:** [Parton]*Kirkandrum Purten* (1275)*Partone* (1296)*Kirkandres Porton* (1335-36)*Perton* (1414)**Kirkbean:***Kirkbene* (1272)*Kyrkebebe* (1275)*Kyrkben* (1425)*Kirkben* (1427)*Kylbieni* (1468)*Kirkbane* (1548)*Kirbene* (1587, 1606)*Kirbyinn* (Pont)**Kirkbride:** [Merksworth]*Markisworth de Kilbride* (1456)*Merkeland de Killbryde* (1456)**Kirkbride:** [Blaiket]*ecclesia de S. brigide de Blachet* (1164-74)*Ecclesia Sanctae Brigide de**Blaiket* (1170)*Blacket* (1175-99)*Blakhet* (1214-34)*Blacketh* (1233-41)*Kirkbride* (1249)*Kilbride* (1488)**Kirkbryde:** [Kirkambreck]*Kyrkbryde* (1534)*Kirkbryd (vel Kilbryd)* (1597)

Kirkcarswell:

Kirkassudie (1329-71)
Kyrassalda (1365)
Kirkcassald (1468)
Kirkcassall (1481)
Kirkassail (1537)
Kyrcarsall (1562)
Kyrcastell (1562)
Kirkcossald (1567)
Kirkcaswell (1571-72)
Kirkcossald (1602)

Kirkchrist:

Kirkcrist (1294)
Kyrcrist (1331)
Kyrccrist (1345)
Kyrcrist (1416)
Kirkcrist (1540)
Kirkchristie (1589)
Kirkcryst (1592)

Kirkconnel:

Kirkconnel (1200-34)
Kirkeconeuel (1235-53)
Kyrconeuel (1270-80)
Kirkconnevill (HC)
Kyrkoneville (HC)
Kirkconnell (1549)
Karkonnel (Pont)
Kirkconnell (Pont)

Kirkconstantin:

Hur (1185)
S. Constantini de Hur (1233-41)
Kircostyntin (1262)
Hurr (1290)

Kirkcormack:

Kirhecormach (1165-1206)
Kirhecormach (1172-74)
Kyrkecormac (1200-06)
Kirkormock (1329-71)

Kirkcormok (1475)
Kirkcormok (1605)

Kirkcudbright:

Cuthbrictis Khirche (1164)
Kyrkecuthbert (1200-06)
Kirkcudbriht (1200-14)
Kirkcudbrit (1218)
Kircuthbright (1296)
Kirkcudbrich (1325)
Kirkupbrich (1458)
Kirkcubricht (1459)
Kirkcudbrith (1495)
Kircubright (Pont)

Kirkennan: [Buittle]

Kirkkenane (1428)
Kirkennan (1453)
Kirkunzane (1453)
Kirkynnane (1453-54)
Kirkkenan (1458)
Kirkennane (1464)
Kirkenane (1484-85)
Kirkennane (1490)
Kirkcunan (1611)

Kirkennan: [Minnigaff]

Kerykennan (Pont)

Kirkeoch:

Priory of S. Evoca (1423)
Kirkevok (1464)

Kirkgunzeon:

Cherchwinnin (1159-81)
Kirkewinnen (1174-99)
Kirkewynnyn (1175-85)
Kyrkegunni (1185-1200)
Kirkwynnin (c.1200)
Kirkgunyen (1275)
Kyrguny (1291)
Kirkgunny (1291)

Kirkewynmy (1291)
Kirkewinny (13th C)
Kirkewenny (13th C)
Kirkgunyane (1368)
Kirkginyane (reign of David II)
Kirkgunzane (1458, 1495)
Kirkgunzean (1465)
Kirkgunzeane (1499)
Kirkguinnan (Pont)
Carguinnan (Pont)

Kirkinna:

Kirkkynner (1581)
Kirkener (1586)
Kirkinar (1595)

Kirklaugh:

Kareclaugh (Pont)
Kirreclaugh (1605)

Kirklebride:

Kirkilbrid (1593)
Kirkilbryde (Pont)

Kirkmabreck:

Kyrkmaberc (1351)
Kirkmakbrik (1468)
Kirkmabrek (1468)
Kirkmakbrek (1501)
Kirkmabreck (1534)
Kirkmakbrek (1534)
Kirkmakbrek (1537)
Kirkmackbrek (Pont)

Kirkmirran:

Kirkmirrein (1605)
Kirkmirren (1606, 1607)
Kirkmyrring (1615)

Kirkpatrick: [Durham]

Kirkpatrick Dorand (1272)
Kyrkepatric Duraunt (1275)

Kirkpatrick Durand (1296)
Kirkepatric Duraund (1305)
Kirkpatrik (1538)
Kirkpatrick Dirrame (1607)

Kirkpatrick: [Irongray]

Kyrkpatric Cro (1275)
Kirkepatrick (1304)
Kirkpatric juxta Travereglis (1347)
Kylpatriccro (1394)
Kirkpatric-Garngray (1463)
Kirkpatrik-Irengay (1501)

Dumfriesshire

Kirkbride: [Durisdeer]

Kyrkbrid (1471)

Kirkbride: [Keir]

Brydeburgh (1320)
Kirkbridis (1552)

Kirkconnel: [Parish]

Kirconnel (1296)

Kirkconnel: [Old Parish]

Kirccconveth (1427)
Kyrkconnell (1486)
Kirkconvell (1506)

Kirkconnel: [Tynron]

Kyrkcunel (1327)

Kirkcudbright:

Kirkcubre (1511)
Kirkcudbrecht (1549)
Kirkowbrik (1660)

Kirkmahoe:

Kirk(e)maho (1251)
Kirkmaho (1275)
Kirkmaho (12580)
Kirkmahook (1319)
Kirkemogho (1319)
Kirk(e)mahook (1428)
Kirkmocho (1430)
Kirkmahoo (1522)
Kyrmahewe (1563)

Kirkmichael:

Kermyghkel (1296)
Kircmichelle (1315)
Kyrmichell (1329)
Kirkmichhel (1384)
Kirkmighell (1574)
Kirkmeichall (1583)

Kirkpatrick:

Kirkepatric (1179, 1189)
Kirchepatric (1181)
Kirkepatrick (1291)
Kirk Patrick (1291)
Kilpatrick (1296)
Kirk Petry (1660)

Kirkpatrick: [Juxta]

Kirkpatrick juxta Moffet (1355)
Kilpatrick Juxta (1528)

Carrick**Kirkbride:** [Maybole]

Kirkbride (1511-12)
Kirkbride (1540-41)

Kirkbride: [Girvan]

Kirkbryide (1606)
Kirkbryde (1633)

Kirkconstantine:

Kirkcudbright:

Innertig (1275)
Inntug (1404)
Invertig (*S. Cuthberti*) (1444)
Kyrkubry de Entertig (1484)

Kirkdominae:

Kyldormne (1391)
Kuldomine (1404)
Kildomine (1444)

Kirkmichael:

S. Michael de Munthyrduffy
 (1270-80)
Kirkmichell (1275)
Kircmichel (1333)
Kyrmichel (1362)
Kyrcmychel Munterduffy (1370)

Kirkoswald:

Kykoswald (1324)
Kircoswald (1326)
Kyrassalda (1365)
Kirkoswald (1374)

Cumberland**Kirkandrews:** [Penrith]

Hermitorium Sancti Andreae
 (c.1140)
Kirkandreas (a.1147, c.1160)
Hermitorium quod vocatur
Kirkandreas (c.1158)
Kyrkandres (1344)

Kirkandrews: [Eden]

Kirkanders (c.1200)
Kirkeandreas juxta Burgh
 (c.1235)
Kircandr' (1249)
Kirk(e)andres (1261)
Kircandres (1263)
Kircandres (1272)
Kirkandres (1272)
Kirkandres by Karlisle (1285)
Kyrkandres iuxta Karliolum
 (1393)
Kirkanders (1576)
Kirk Andrews upon Eden (1777)

Kirkandrews: [Esk]

Kirchand'r' (1165)
Kirkeandres (c.1230)
Kirkanders (1257)
Kircandres (1298)
Kirkanders (1576)
Kirkanders upon Eske (1658)
Kirkandrews-upon-Esk (1695)

Kirkbride:

Chirchebrid (1163)
Kirkebride (c.1185, 1189)
Kirkbrid (1190)
Kyerkeb' (1201)

Kirkbrynnok:

Kirkebrynnok' (1339)

Kirkoswald:

Karcoswald (1167)
Kierkoswald (1201)
Kirkos(e)wald (1212)
Kirkoswald (1219)
Kirkehoswald (1258)
Kirkeosewod (1265)
Kyrkehoswald (1292)
Kirkebyossewald (1292)
Kirkuswald (1375)
Kirkhozewold (1552)
Kirkeswald(e) (1586)
Kirkcouswald (1659)
Kirkcuzalt (1665)

Kirksanton:

Santacherche (DB)
Kirkesant' (1152)
Kirkesantan (1152)
Kirksanton (1175-90)
Kyrksanton (1278)
Kyrkesande (1292)
Kirkesanton (1333)
Kirksancton (1629)

Abbreviations

DB – Domesday Book.

HC – The historical Form is from Holm Cultram.

pont – The historical Form is from a Pont map.

*Appendix B: Historical Forms of the Kirkby Names***East Kirkby:**

Cherchebi (DB)
Chirchebia (1142)

Kirby Bedon:

Kerkebei (DB)
Kirkeby Bydon (1291)

Kirby Bellars:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirckeby super Wreic (1242)
Kirkeby Belers (1428)

Kirby Cane:

Kerkeby (DB)
Kyrkeby (c.1095)
Kirby Cam (1282)
Kirkebycaam (1375)

Kirby Grindalythe:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkebi in Krandale (1180-95)
Kirkeby Crandala (c.1190)
Kirkby in Crendalith (1367)

Kirby Hall:

Chercheberie (DB)
Chirchebi (1163)

Kirby Hill:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkeby in Mora (1224-30)

Kirby Hill:

Kirkebi (c.1160)
Kyrby Hylle (AD i)

Kirby in Cleveland:

Cherchebi (DB)

Kirby Knowle:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkeby subtus Knoll (1230)
Kirby Knol (1279)

Kirby le Soken:

Kyrkebi (1181)
Kyrkeby (1254)
Kirkeby in the Sokne (1385)

Kirby Misperton:

Chirchebi (DB)
Mispertona Kirkeby (c.1090)
Kircabi-mispertun (1157)

Kirby Ravensworth:

Kirkeby Ravenswathe (1280)

Kirby Sigston:

Kirchebi (1088)

Kirby Underdale:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kircabi in Hundolvesdala (1157)
Kirkeby Hundoldale (1254)

Kirby Wiske:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkeby super Wisc (c.1180)
Kirby Wisch (1212)

Kirkby:

Cherchebi (DB)
Kirkeby (1207)

Kirkby cum Osgodby:

Kyrchebeia (1146)
Kirkeby (1254)

Kirkby Fleetham:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkby et Fleteham (1287)
Kyrkbyfletham (1291)

Kirkby Green:

Cherchebi (DB)
Kirkebi (1202)

Kirkby in Ashfield:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkeby in Esfeld (1216)
Kirkeby in Essefeld (1237)

Kirkby Ireleth:

Kirkebi (c.1195)
Kirkby (1227)
Kirkby Ireleth (1278)

Kirkby Laythorpe:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkebi et Leitorp (1206)
Kirkeby Leylthorp (1316)

Kirkby Lonsdale:

Cherchebi (DB)
Cherkeby Lonnesdale (1090-7)
Kircabilauenesdala (1090-7)
Kircabi Lauenesdale (1090-7)

Kirkby Malham:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkeby Malgam (1250)

Kirkby Mallory:

Cherchebi (DB)
Kyrkeby Malure (1285)

Kirkby Malzeard:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kirkebi Malesard (c.1105)
Malassart (1155-95)
Kirkeby Malesard (1242)

Kirkby Moorside:

Cherchebi (DB)
Kirkeby Moreshered (c.1170, 1282)

Kirkby on Bain:

Chirchebi (DB)
Kyrkeby super Bein (1226)

Kirkby Overblow:

Cherchebi (DB)
Kirkeby Oreblowere (1211)
Kirkby Oreblawer (1242)
Kirkby Ferers (1291)

Kirkby Stephen:

Cherkaby Stephan (c.1094)
Kircabi Stephan (1157)

Kirkby Thore:

Kirkebythore (1179)
Kirkebithore (1223)

Kirkby Underwood:*Cherchebi* (DB)*Kyrkeby* (1242)**Kirkby Wharfe:***Chirchebi* (DB)*Kyrkeby upon Werf* (1254)**Monks Kirby:***Chircheberie* (DB)*Kirkebi* (Henry II)*Kirkeby Moynes or Monachorum*
(1305)**South Kirkby:***Cherchebi* (DB)*Sudkirkebi* (c.1124)*Suthkyrkeby* (1226)**West Kirby:***Cherebia* (DB)*Kirchebi* (1154-81)*Kirkebei* (1205)*Westkirkeby* (1289)**Abbreviations****DB** – Domesday Book.**ADi** – Catalogue of Ancient Deeds**Sources**

Appendix A: Historical forms of the Galloway and Carrick names are from the appendix to Brooke's article, 'Kirk- Compound Place-Names in Galloway and Carrick', the relevant volumes of *The Register of the Great Seal*, MacQueen, 'Kirk- and Kil- in Galloway Place-Names' and 'The Gaelic Speakers of Galloway and Carrick', and Maxwell, *The Place Names of Galloway*. Historical forms of the Dumfriesshire names are derived primarily from Fellows-Jensen, *Scandinavian Settlement Names in the North-West* and Johnson-Ferguson, *The Place-Names of Dumfriesshire*. Historical forms of the Cumberland names are from Armstrong *et al*, *The Place-Names of Cumberland*, Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* and Mills, *A Dictionary of English Place-Names*. Some additional forms of the Scottish names were taken from Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* and Johnston, *Place-Names of Scotland*.

Appendix B: This section contains all the *Kirkby* names which have Domesday forms, together with those that have historical forms dating back to the relevant period. All historical forms in this section are taken from Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* and Mills, *A Dictionary of English Place-Names*.

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