NORSE PLACE-NAMES IN SOUTH-WEST SCOTLAND

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INTRODUCTION

In the Scandinavian contribution to Scottish river-nomenclature, we can distinguish at least three different subdivisions. The first two become apparent when the geographical distribution of various elements of Norse origin is examined; one contains elements to be found in all areas where Norsemen settled, like ON. *ā* "a river", the other comprises those that show a more limited geographical scatter, like *gro*<ON. *grōf* "brook, pit, cave" in the island of Lewis, and *beck*<ON. *bekkr* "burn" in SW. Scotland. The third group consists of Scandinavian generic terms which did not directly enter into Scottish hydronymy but probably found their way into the names of Scottish water-courses as Scots or Gaelic loan-words from Norse; examples of this last category would be Scots *grain*<ON. *grein* "a branch" which occurs only in southern and eastern Scotland (thus partly qualifying for group two), and Gaelic *lón*<ON. *lōn* "quiet water" (for a more detailed study of the latter see Nicolaisen 1958:196-8).

Only the second of these groups which are ultimately of Scandinavian origin, is to concern us here, i.e. the category comprising certain name-clusters with a very limited geographical scatter; of these the relevant examples from the Western and Northern Isles are to be left aside so that we can devote the space at our disposal to the group of names of which the above ON. *bekkr* is representative, but certain names of the *grain*-variety will also have to be examined. *Beck*-names occur in the very south of Scotland, seemingly exclusively in LAN, ROX, KCB, and particularly in DMF; they appear to form a unit with others in *beck*, as they are found in the adjacent north-western counties of England as well as in other parts of England where Scandinavians settled (Yorkshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk), and this seems to indicate

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either that Norsemen belonging to the same group of settlers also came to those parts of Scotland in which *beck*-names occur or that the hydronymic usage of that term spread to these parts in post-Scandinavian times.

It is the object of this article to undertake further examination and clarification of this provisional statement about our Scottish *beck*-names and to find out how much research into place-names can contribute to the study of Norse settlement in SW. Scotland and its linguistic impact on that part of the British Isles. In this respect, it is advisable not to attempt too much and to restrict this inquiry to one aspect of the subject. For this reason, detailed analyses of individual place-names will be kept to a minimum and special emphasis will be placed on the geographical distribution of certain toponymical elements which seem to be ultimately of Scandinavian origin, in our area.

It is obvious that the evidence of our Scottish *beck*-names alone cannot carry sufficient weight to support or refute either of the two alternatives briefly outlined above. Their distribution may be striking enough from the point of view of hydronymic research in Scotland and may to a certain extent indicate the kind of result to be expected from an investigation of the wider field, but in order to be able to state these results with anything approaching definitive certainty, other elements depicting geographical features other than water-courses will have to be searched for in and near the area covered by our group of stream-names.

Quite a number of categories—apart from individual names of Scandinavian origin—offer themselves for investigation. It remains to select the most suitable and numerically most prolific in order to have a fairly dense network of names and to avoid drawing conclusions from insufficient evidence. Guided by this principle of selection this study will include names in *-by*, representing names of human settlements, names in *-fell*, as examples of mountain-names, names in *-thwaite*, showing the impact of human activities on the region and at the same time supplying another of the so-called West Scandinavian "test-words", the other being *bekkr* itself. Finally, one group of what has come to be known as "inversion compounds", i.e. Germanic compound names showing Celtic word-order with the defining element coming last, will be discussed; this group of names will be represented by names beginning with *Kirk-*.

This means that names containing elements like *-holm*

(<ON. *holmr*), *-garth* (<ON. *garðr*), *-gill* (< ON. *gil*), *-grain* (< ON. *grein*) or *-dale* (<ON. *dalr*) will have to be excluded although there are many examples of them, especially of the *holm-* and *gill*-names, in our region.

Printed sources for this kind of investigation are not numerous; they include Sir Herbert Maxwell's *Place-Names of Galloway* (Glasgow 1930), Colonel Sir Edward Johnson-Ferguson's *Place-Names of Dumfriesshire* (Dumfries 1935), David Christison's article "On the Geographical Distribution of certain Place-Names in Scotland" (*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 1892-3); in addition, there is an excellent thesis by Miss May Williamson on *The Non-Celtic Place-Names of the Scottish Border Counties* which, although successfully submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in 1943, has unfortunately never found its way into print and lies in typescript form in Edinburgh University Library. For the English side of our problem the appropriate volumes of the English Place-Names Society are referred to, as well as Sedgefield's *Place-Names of Cumberland and Westmorland* (Manchester 1915), Ekwall's *Place-Names of Lancashire* (Manchester 1922), Mawer's *The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge 1920), and Moorman's *Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire* (Leeds 1910), which cover counties not so far included in the series of the EPNS. Above all, however, this study is greatly profiting from consultation of the alphabetical index to the archives of our own Scottish Place-Name Survey which, as it is geared to the National Grid as used by the more recent editions of the Ordnance Survey, provides the necessary references to the co-ordinates of that network and thus makes the drawing of fairly accurate distribution maps of Scottish place-names possible, practically for the first time. At present, however, it is limited in so far as it only contains all the names mentioned on the one-inch Ordnance Survey maps and excludes all additional ones that might be found on the more detailed six-inch sheets or in oral tradition. Although incomplete, the collection used here is sufficiently comprehensive to show the overall pattern, and only minor adjustments should be necessary after a thorough scrutiny of the six-inch maps.

As geographical distribution and its implications become much more real and are much more easily understood when seen by the eye rather than when only explained in numerical proportions and percentages, the selected names have been plotted on maps which form the basis of the discussion below.

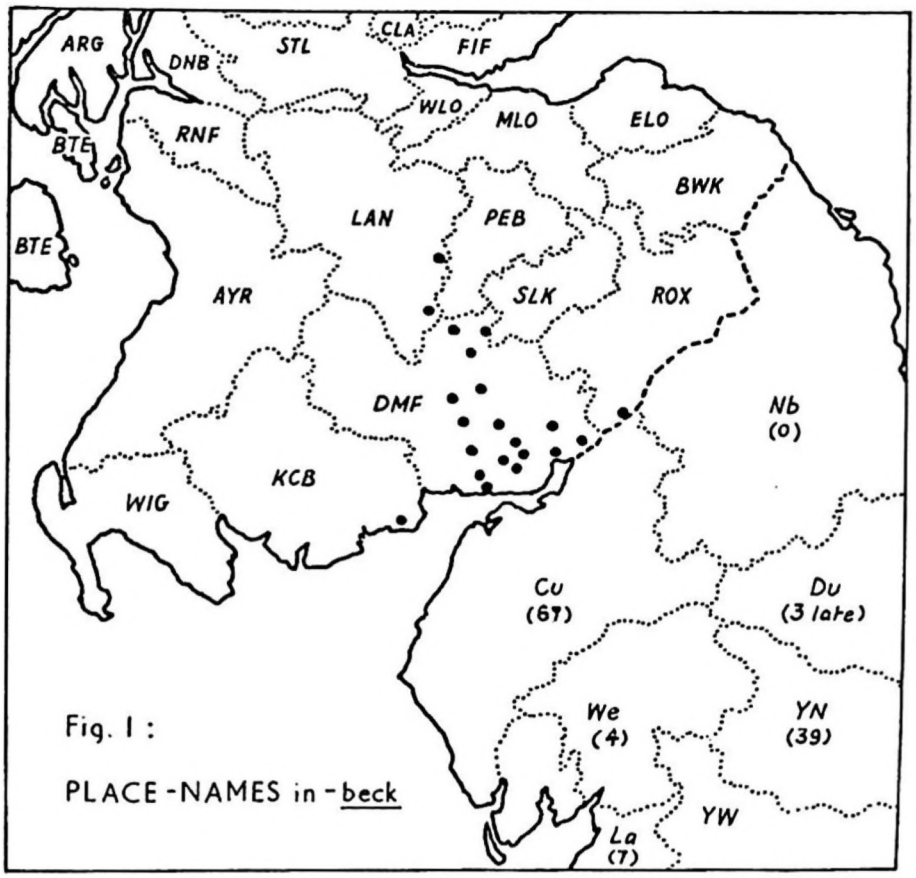
Unfortunately, the picture is incorrect and perhaps even slightly misleading is so far as—with the exception of the *Kirk*-names—these maps only show the geographical scatter of our names inside Scotland because the English material is not yet available in the same way, i.e. in the form of alphabetical indexes containing all names mentioned on the English one-inch maps, complete with grid-reference. The cut at the Scottish border is, of course, unnatural and it is hoped to discuss the combined English and Scottish evidence in a later and more comprehensive paper, based on fuller distribution maps. At present, the scatter of these place-name elements in England can only be hinted at and the figures given on the maps for the various counties will have to serve as a temporary substitute.

We will now examine the geographical distribution of the five selected elements in more detail.

(*a*) ON. *bekkr* "a stream"

The first map (Fig. 1) indicates the distribution of the Scottish *beck*-names, point of departure of this little study. Although they are found in four counties—DMF, ROX, LAN, and KCB—they form geographically a much closer cluster than such an enumeration indicates, with DMF forming the centre and the examples from the other counties situated just across the DMF-border. In most cases, the names still apply to water-courses, in others they now serve as names of human settlements on the banks of these streams as well, or as those alone. In others again they have become part of the name of another geographical feature, like *Elbeckhill* in the parish of Wamphray DMF. The defining elements in these names are usually of non-Scandinavian origin, mostly Anglo-Saxon but also Norman, as in *Butcherbeck Burn* (*Bochardbech* ante 1329 Duke of Buccleuch MSS.), and Gaelic, as in *Gille-martinebech* of 1194-1214 *ibid.*, now "lost", or *Craigbeck*. Some Scandinavian elements occur, as for instance in *Allerbeck* whose earlier form *Elrebec* (*c.* 1218 *ibid.*) points to an original ON. *elri bekkr*, or possibly in *Fishbeck* and *Greenbeck* where *Fish-* and *Green-* might represent the Scandinavian cognate rather than the Anglo-Saxon word. For our own investigation it suffices to say that genuinely Scandinavian compound names in *-beck*, i.e. compounds in which the preceding element is also Norse, do occur in our region which means that speakers of a Scandinavian language or languages must have settled here.

The majority of names, i.e. those with defining elements other than Norse, is more difficult to assess. The question is whether they indicate that a Norse language was still spoken up to and after the Norman invasion or whether the word *beck* passed into the local Lowland Scots dialect and remained productive in this way. I think that there are probably examples



illustrative of both sides of this question: *Beck*-names containing Anglo-Saxon or Gaelic personal names, like *Archerbeck* and the "lost" *Gillemartinebech*, may have been coined by Norsemen living in the neighbourhood of these streams, and even *Bochardbech* may belong here. On the other hand, names like *Mere Beck*, *Kings Beck*, *Muckle Hind Becks*, *Muirbeck*, and such as *Beckfoot*, *Beckhall*, *Beckton*, and *Beck Burn*, with tautological addition of Scots *burn*, are indicative of the second alternative and must have been created by English rather than Scandinavian speakers. Even *Craigbeck* may contain the Scots loan-word *craig* rather than its Gaelic original, and in *Allerbeck*

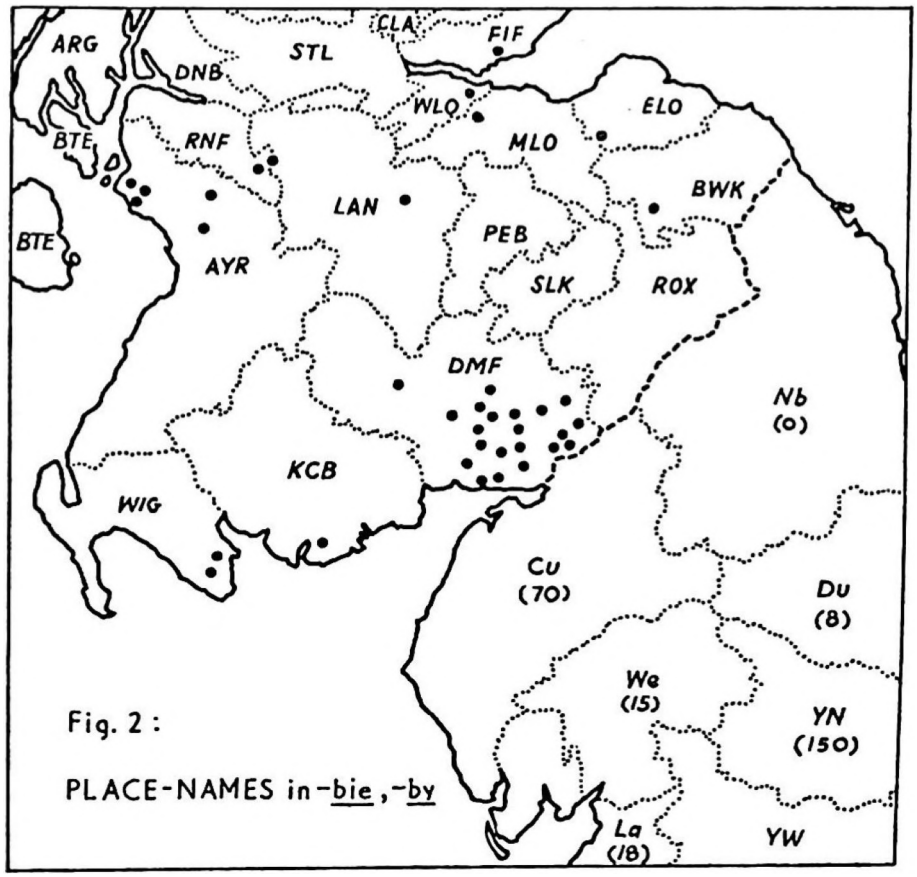
the Anglo-Saxon term replaced the Norse one as we have seen above. We do well, however, to bear in mind that neither the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* nor the *Scottish National Dictionary* mentions a word *beck* in the meaning of "stream, water-course", and it may well be that this word was never really established in local dialect usage, something which cannot be said of the North of England where, in some districts, *beck* has replaced earlier *burn* in toponymical and appellative usage. Alternatively, *beck* may have been obsolete in the local Dumfriesshire dialect by the time our, rather scanty, early literary sources begin.

On the English side, according to A. H. Smith (1956:I,26), *bekkr* "is extensively used throughout the Danelaw and the North Country (except for Nb), taking the place of *brōc* and *burna*". In this respect, compare for instance the name *Linburn Beck* Du, with pleonastic usage of *beck* (Mawer 1920:XIX), with the above *Beck Burn* KCB. There are at least 67 instances of *beck*-names in the neighbouring Cumberland where it is said to be "the most common stream-name element among names which have survived" (Armstrong *et al.* 1952:498), and 4 in Westmorland. The North Riding of Yorkshire shows 39, and Lancashire has at least 7. There is also one in Derbyshire, just across the Yorkshire border. It has, on the other hand, "not been noted in early names in Nb and Du" (Armstrong *et al.* 1952:498; see also Mawer 1924:4). Marstrander (1932: 269) mentions *Claveg* and *Strenebeck* for the Isle of Man.

It is obvious that our Scottish *beck*-names in and near Dumfriesshire are part and parcel of this Northern English group of names containing the same element, and form the most northerly section of the more general *beck*-area. Further proof of this is to be found in the fact that there are identical equivalents on both sides of the border: The Scottish *Merebeck* has at least 3 equivalents in Cu and one in YN; apart from the *Troutbeck* in DMF there are 4 in Cu and one in We; *Ellerbecks* occur in Cu (4), La and YN, as well as in DMF, represented by the *Allerbeck* mentioned above, and by *Elbeckhill* whose first part is *Elrebec* in 1194 (Duke of Buccleuch MSS.); and *Butcherbeck* (*Bochardbech* ante 1329) links up with *Butcherby* in Cu.

In addition, the English examples show exactly the same kinds of compound as our Scottish instances: (1) Genuine Scandinavian names, (2) Names in which the first part of the compound is of Germanic but not of Norse origin, and (3) Names compounded with Norman-English elements. There

seems, however, to be a much higher percentage of names belonging to the first category, i.e. genuine Scandinavian names on the English side of the border, and our own Scottish names look as if they are, on the whole, a little later than their English counterparts. Only names in which the defining element is without doubt of Norse origin as well, can, of course, be taken as proof of Scandinavian settlement.



(*b*) ON. *býr, bœr* "a farm-stead, a village"

We now proceed to examine names which denote primarily human settlements, and not water-courses. Of all the Scandinavian generic terms used in this connection, the element *býr, bœr* is to be representative (Fig. 2), an element whose etymology and original meaning has been widely discussed (see, for instance, Smith 1956:I,66-72, for a summary and literature) but does not concern us here; it is sufficient to say that it is always connected with permanent buildings in our

area and could either be translated as "farm" or "hamlet" or "village", according to the size of the settlement.

As was the case with our *beck*-names, the Scottish stronghold of names in *-bie, -by* is DMF. We do, however, get a few scattered outliers in other parts, as the distribution map indicates, and there is a pronounced little cluster in Ayrshire, in the Ardrossan area. *Býr* also occurs in a few individual and apparently unconnected examples from Argyllshire and the Hebrides, as well as in Caithness, but as it has never been an important ingredient of the Norse contribution to the place-names of the Western Isles and the adjoining mainland, these have no direct bearing on our problem. MacBain lists most of them in his paper on "The Norse Element in the Topography of the Highlands and Islands" (MacBain 1895:224).

Apart from an almost identical geographical distribution of their main group, our Scottish *by*-names resemble *beck*-names in other respects. Their linguistic and lexical make-up shows very similar features, and again fully Scandinavian names stand side by side with names containing Anglo-Saxon, Norman and Gaelic elements, in particular personal names. Their English counterparts are numerous, and although more widespread than names containing *beck*, conform on the whole to the pattern outlined for them. The English counties of particular interest to us as centres of *beck*-names, are full of names containing *by*. YN has 150 of them, Cu has over 70; there are at least 15 in We, and La produces three more than this number; Db has a minimum of 10 *by*-names. Scottish-English identical equivalents are numerous, the most remarkable example being *Sowerby* which is on record in all the English counties mentioned, except We and Db, and appears twice in our area as *Sorbie*—one in DMF and one in WIG—and, in addition to two further instances from AYR and FIF (!), also occurs four times in ARG, including one example each from the islands of Mull and Tiree; *Surby* I.o.M. also belongs here (Marstrander 1932:111-12, 290). Perhaps the frequency of this particular name whose original form must have been an ON. *saur-býr* "mud village" or "swamp village", gives us an insight into the type of colonisation undertaken by the Scandinavian settlers responsible for all these names. If our interpretation is correct (see also Smith 1956:II,97), they speak of hard-working newcomers trying to make a living out of poor soil, under adverse conditions. (Or could *saurr* sometimes refer to the mud flats covered by water at high tide and dry at low

tide?) One other explanation must, however, be borne in mind, i.e. the one put forward by Guðmundsson for the Icelandic counterparts of our *Sowerbys*. Basing his argument on the opposition *saurr-sýr*, on the particular meaning "manure" which the word can have, on the significant distribution of the Icelandic examples, and on their association with the goddess Freyja, he thinks of them as centres of a fertility cult (Guðmundsson 1942:58-69). If this interpretation can be confirmed, the importance of this group of names in the study of pagan religious practices amongst the Scandinavian settlers in this country would be extremely great.

Another common name is *Crosby* "cross-farm", attested for all the four English counties under consideration, and for the Isle of Man (Marstrander 1932:158, 270), and appearing on the Scottish map as *Corsby*—with metathesis—in WIG, AYR and BWK. The *Newbys* and *Al(d)bys* are common to both the Scottish south and the English north, and the DMF *Mumbie<Monkeby* 1552 (Bullock's Map of the Debateable Land on the West Borders), has its English counterpart in the Yorkshire *Monkby*, whereas WIG *Applebie* is paralleled by places of the same name in We and Db. There is quite a number of identical parallels of this kind (c.f. *Bombie*, *Canonbie*, *Denbie*, *Esbie*, etc.) which do not require discussion in this context. A notable absentee from the Scottish contingent is *Kirkby*.

The overall picture, however, is the same as that established above for names in *beck*. Again our Scottish group of names forms the northernmost part of a much wider scatter south of the border. They are by no means to be ascribed to the same stratum of settlers that created the few *by*-names in the Inner Hebrides and in ARG where this element is of no great significance whatever, unless it demonstrates the almost total absence of permanent buildings at that time, which is unlikely; for *beck*-names share the same fate in this region and this can hardly be due to the lack of water-courses of a suitable size. For our area in the very south of Scotland one could say, and particularly for DMF, that it is more than likely that the burn flowing past a *by*-place will be a *beck*.

(*c*) ON. *þveit* "a clearing, a meadow, a paddock"

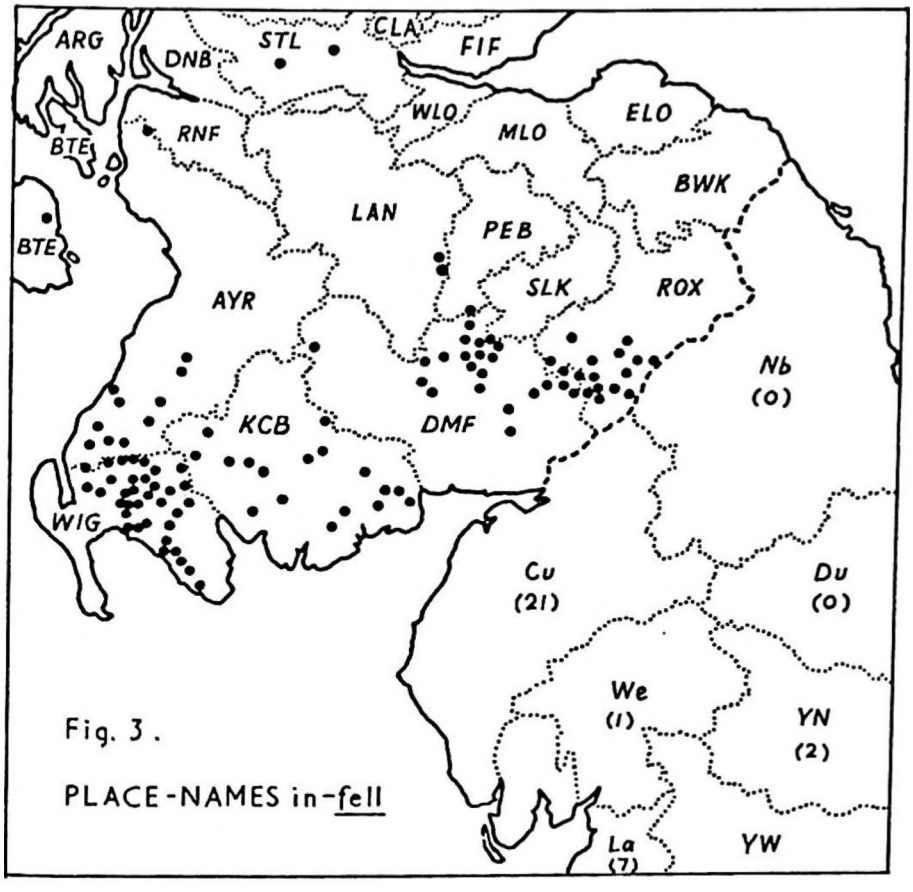
It has proved to be unnecessary to plot the distribution of the third category of names under review, i.e. those containing the element ON. *þveit* "a clearing, a meadow, a paddock",

for apparently all the Scottish examples—and there are more than 30 of them—are to be found in DMF, and I do not know of a single instance outside that county, either amongst the still extant or the recorded but seemingly "lost" names. It must suffice to say that in our Scottish names this element usually occurs now as *-that* or *-what*, as in *Howthat*, *Murthat* and *Slethat* on the one hand, and *Robiewhat* and *Thorniewhats* on the other. *Murraythwaite* and *Thorniethwaite*, however, conform to the normal modern English end-product of names in *þveit*.

In England it occurs most frequently in our usual four counties, the figures being Cu about 80, We 30, La 40, YN 30; it is also common in the western parts of YW, but is rare in the remaining Danelaw counties for which Smith (1956:II,19) mentions 4 in YE and 7 in Nt; Db has another 7, three of them in field-names (Cameron 1959:III,709 and 752). The usual identical parallels are not infrequent, and on the whole *þveit*-names—there is apparently no example in the Isle of Man—neatly fit into the pattern drawn above. It is doubtful whether their particular geographical distribution is only due to the abundance of forest and waste-land in the north-west of England, as Smith maintains (1956:II,219). Undoubtedly it is connected with this geographical condition but, in addition, the particular type of settler, i.e. his way of conquering unprofitable land and of increasing his area of land under cultivation, must be taken into account too, a settler who, as far as can be established, seems to have been the same who built the *bys* and called the streams near them *becks*. As is the case with *by* and *beck*, *thwaite* must have been productive as a place-name element for many a century and can probably tell us very little about the immediate and direct linguistic impact of the first Scandinavian settlers on the regions in which it occurs. This is particularly true of the English north where it is still alive in the regional dialects in the meaning of "a forest clearing", although the south of Scotland does not seem to share this dialect usage. Like *beck* and *by*, *thwaite* enters into many a hybrid compound which might have been formed at any time after the Anglicisation of the Scandinavian settlement area. Its very limited geographical distribution is, however, of considerable significance, even if it only indicates the borders of the area where, for a time, it penetrated into the active local dialect vocabulary; unless, of course, its usage was restricted to place-names in this part without any reflection in local living speech at any time.

(*d*) ON. *fjall, fell* "a hill, a mountain"

From the water-courses, the human habitations and the results of human colonisation and cultivation, we now proceed to the mountainous regions of our area and consider a term particularly applied to hills, ON. *fell* or *fjall*. This appears in South and South-West Scotland as *fell*, and there are numerous instances of it, as can be seen from Fig. 3. One look



at the map shows that *fells* are much more widely distributed over our part of Scotland than the three categories which we have discussed so far. The different emphasis, however, is worth noting. Particularly striking is the large number of instances in WIG, as well as the frequent occurrence of this element in KCB. There are no *becks* and no *þveits* in these two counties, and only 3 *bys* is coastal districts meagrely represent an element so common in other areas once occupied by Scandinavians.

Not unexpectedly, Cu furnishes the highest number of *fell-*

names in England; the EPNS volume lists 21 of them (Armstrong *et al.* 1952:472), whereas La has 7, YN 2, and We shares one with Cu; there are none in Nb and Du. In the Isle of Man we have *Snaefell*, *Stockfield* and *Masool* (Marstrander 1932:270-1).

It looks as if only very few of the names containing this element can be said to go back to Scandinavian settlers themselves. Very often the first element is the name of another geographical feature in the vicinity, in many cases of English or Gaelic origin, which gave its name to the *fell*, amongst them *Balmurrie Fell* and *Glenkitten Fell* in WIG and *Ewenshope Fell* in DMF. Even *Borgue Fell* WIG probably belongs to these later names although *Borgue* is, of course, purely Scandinavian itself, going back to an original ON. *borg* "a fort, a stronghold, a fortified hill, a fort-shaped hill". However, *Borgue Fell* is not an original compound dating from the time of early Scandinavian settlers but *Borgue* had already been in use as a well-established place-name before the hill was called after it. It is quite possible that this *fell* was the original *borg*, the "fortified or fort-shaped hill", that gave its name to the human settlement nearby. An exact parallel is the place-name *Burrow*< *Borg* (Marstrander 1932:266) in the Isle of Man.

The English examples show similar signs of lateness, although Gaelic elements are completely lacking, of course, and it seems that—as was to a lesser extent the case with *beck*—here we have to deal with a toponymical element whose ultimate Scandinavian origin cannot be doubted but which passed into the local dialect as a loan-word before becoming one of the distinctive features of the place-nomenclature of South and South-West Scotland, as well as of North-West England. Only when Lowland Scots began to supersede Gaelic in the south-west, did this element enter Wigtownshire toponymy and did it reach the North Channel in a westward movement. Nevertheless, its seedbed must again have been the area straddling the Solway Firth, i.e. the Scottish county of Dumfries and the English county of Cumberland. The earliest example on record mentioned by the *Dictionary* of *the Older Scottish Tongue*, stems from 1448, and the *Scottish National Dictionary* quotes literary examples from the beginning of this century.

ON. *fell*, *fjall* is, of course, a well-known feature of the hill nomenclature of the Hebrides where it normally appears as *-val*, but also as *-al* usually after *s*(*h*). Examples would be

Liaval (Lewis), *Bleaval* (Harris), *Eaval* (North Uist), *Stulaval* (South Uist), *Hartaval* (Barra), *Heishival* (Vatersay), *Roineval* (Skye), *Orval* (Rum), *Oiseval* (St. Kilda), and on the other hand *Roishal*, *Uishal* (Lewis), *Haarsal* (South Uist), *Preshal* (Skye), and *Minishal* (Rum). It also occurs in the Northern Isles where its reflexes are often *Field* in Shetland (cf. *Fugla Field*, *Hamara Field*, *Mid Field*, *Tonga Field*, *Valla Field*) and *Fiold* in Orkney (cf. *Fibla Fiold*, *Low Fiold*, *Sand Fiold*, *Vestra Fiold*), but these instances are unconnected with *fell* as we find it in South and South-West Scotland (apart from their ultimate etymological identity, of course).

(*e*) "Inversion Compounds" in *Kirk-*

The last group of names to be examined in connection with the subject of this paper not only contains a certain Norse place-name element, namely *kirkja* "a church", but also illustrates a phenomenon which in linguistic circles has come to be known as "inversion compound", i.e. a Germanic compound name showing Celtic word-order. This is a phenomenon to which Professor Ekwall practically devoted the whole of his monograph on "Scandinavians and Celts in North-West England" (Ekwall 1918).

Apart from having produced the current Scots equivalent of English *church*, *kirkja* does, of course, feature in Scottish place-names in the normal way in cases like *Whitekirk* ELO, *Muirkirk*, AYR, *Mearnskirk* RNF, *Falkirk* STL, *Brydekirk* DMF, *Ashkirk* SLK, and *Selkirk* itself, where it is preceded by the defining element. It is also extremely common as a defining element and is then followed by the generic term, as in *Kirk Burn* LAN, *Kirkcleuch* DMF, *Kirkhill* ABD, and many others, but these are genuine Germanic compounds which do not fall into the category under discussion. We are also not concerned with the type *Kirkliston* WLO, *Kirknewton* MLO, *Kirk Yetholm* ROX, etc., which is paralleled by names like *Kirk Deighton*, *Kirk Hammerton* and *Kirk Leavington* in Yorkshire; these are, in a way, shortened versions of the more elaborate **Kirktown of Liston*, **Kirktown of Newton*, etc., or of some such fuller name, although they may be structurally allied to our group of names.

What does interest us here is the type *Kirkbryde* WIG and KCB, when there is *Brydekirk* in DMF, or *Kirkoswald* in AYR, when there is *Oswaldkirk* in YN. Both these names actually have exact parallels in Cumberland. But even if they cannot

be compared with examples of "normal" Germanic word-order, names compounded of other saints' names and *kirk* nevertheless qualify for our category, and instances like *Kirkchrist*, *Kirkcolm*, *Kirkcowan* in WIG, and *Kirkanders*, *Kirkcormack* and *Kirkcudbright* in KCB belong here. With regard to them, it has been possible to plot all the Scottish and English examples on the map (Fig. 4). It is absolutely clear from this

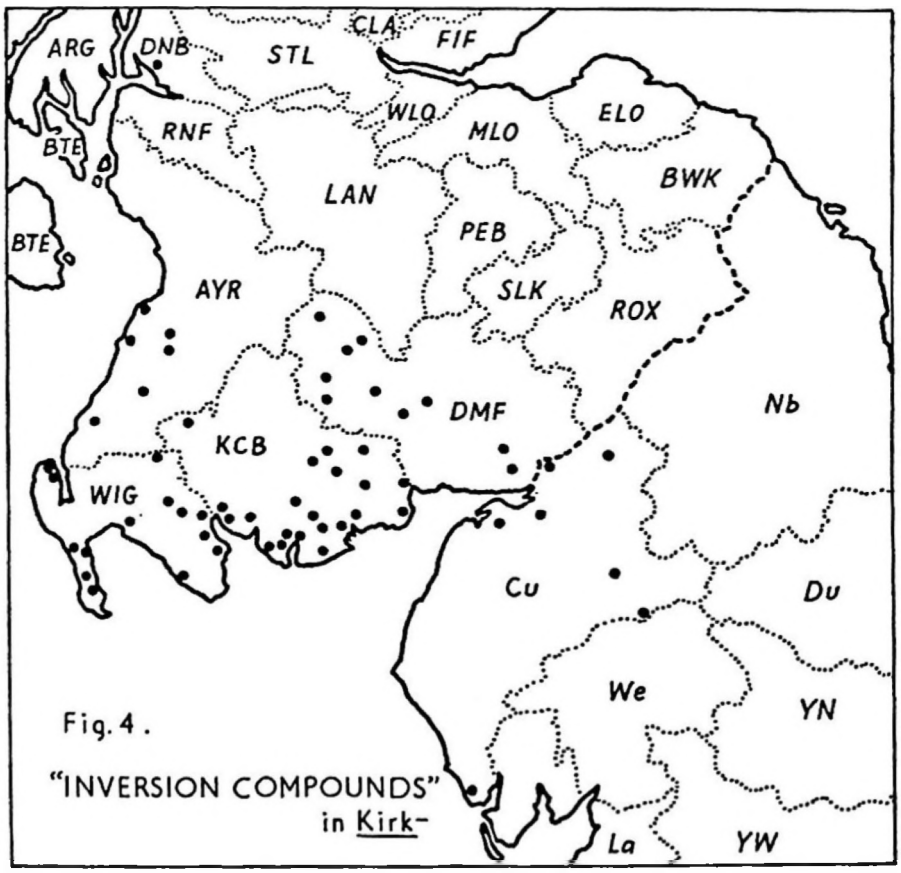


Fig. 4.

"INVERSION COMPOUNDS" in Kirk-

distribution that these names are limited to the south-west of Scotland and to the very north-west of England, but their scatter significantly differs from that of names in *beck*, *by*, *þveit*, and *fell*. Whereas these latter name-groups form rather extreme and small appendices to the large bulk of English names containing the same elements, "inversion compounds" with *Kirk-* show exactly the opposite distribution of weight. They are essentially a south-west Scottish feature, with a few scattered additional instances from the English county immediately adjacent to that part of Scotland. The emphasis lies no

longer on DMF but on WIG and KCB, and practically all the names are to be found in coastal districts or in easily accessible river-valleys. As Macqueen pointed out in his admirable paper on "Kirk- and Kil- in Galloway Place-Names" (Macqueen 1956), the linguistic background of the Galloway names in *Kirk-* is predominantly Gaelic. He comes to the conclusion that Gaelic must have been established in Galloway before the Norse settlement began. He does, however, reckon with the simultaneous arrival of Norse and Gaelic speakers in Galloway, and it looks as if, to a certain extent, these may have been responsible for the creation of the first of these "inversion compounds" in *Kirk-*. It seems to be equally clear, on the other hand, that not every *kirk*-name of this type goes back to these early times, say the early tenth century. Macqueen himself considers the possibility of *Kirkmaiden*, *Kirkmadrine* and *Kirkmabreck*, which contain *mo* "my", being part translations of an earlier **Kilmaiden*, **Kilmadrine*, **Kilmabreck* and assumes (1956:142) these translations to have been made "by Scandinavians acquainted with Irish and the function of *mo*", at an early date. This may be so, but when one of the *Kirkbrides* in the Rhinns of Galloway is still locally known as *Kilbride*, and when *Kirkcormack* KCB is sometimes *Kilcormack* in records (Macqueen 1956:141) and *Kirkpatrick* (*-Fleming*) appears as both *Kirkepatric* in 1189 (Bain's Calendar I,197) and *Kilpatrick* in 1296 (*ibid.* II,198), it is difficult to imagine that our *Kirk-* names always go back to the earliest period of Scandinavian, or rather Norse-Irish settlement from Ireland. A similar case is *Kirkdominie* in AYR, which is on record as *Kildomine* in 1404 in a MS. charter in the possession of the Earl of Cassillis, according to Chalmers who had no doubt (1824:539) that *Kil-*domine was afterwards changed to *Kirk-*domine. In 1541 the Register of the Great Seal refers to a *Kilquhonell* in Garrick, which takes its place beside the *Kirkconnels* of DMF and KCB.

Examples from other parts of Scotland support this consideration, although purely documentary evidence is not always conclusive; according to Watson (1904:121), *Kirkmichael*, in ROS was known in Gaelic as *Cill Mhìcheil*, and Ekwall states (1918:57) that the old name of the parish of Strath in Skye used to be *Kilchrist* or *Christiskirk* in 1505 (see also Mackinlay 1904:84, and Forbes 1923:223), but was *Kirkchrist* in 1574. *Kilmorie* in the island of Arran, is, again according to Ekwall (1918:57), *Kilmory* in 1483 but *Kyrkmorich* in 1595, and from Jackson's book on Manx phonology (Jackson 1955:

84) we learn that one of his informants calls *Kirk Bride* in the Isle of Man, *Killey Bridey*; similar Manx versions seem to have prevailed for all the *kirk*-names in the Isle of Man as long as Manx was extensively spoken in the island (Moore 1890: 204-13; Kneen 1925:7, 61, etc.).

It appears to be self-evident from all this that we must expect to find a number of late part-translations amongst our *Kirk*-names in which *Kirk*- transplanted *Kil*-. Other *Kirk*-names may have been formed at a later date following an established pattern. Some may be much later than the time during which a Scandinavian language was still current in our area. Sometimes the second element may provide some clue as to the originators of a certain *Kirk*-name. The information it supplies may not always be of a linguistic nature, and that seems to be why linguists have paid so little attention to the hagiological implications of the saints' names that form the second parts of these compounds, apart from their linguistic analysis. Certainly, scholars like Watson, Mackinlay, and others, have identified most of the saints to whom the dedications expressed in our names were made, but as far as I am aware, these names have never been utilised in the identification of the linguistic people who created our "inversion compounds" in general, and those in *Kirk*- in particular. Names like *Kirkbride*, *Kirkcolm*, *Kirkconnel*, *Kirkcormack*, *Kirkmirran*, *Kirkpatrick*, etc. obviously point towards the Irish church, and *Kirkmabreck*, *Kirkmadrine*, and *Kirkmaiden* are just as clearly basically Gaelic in thought and construction. Even if such a form has not actually come down to us on record, we can more or less assume that the original first element in these names was *Kil*-, rather than *Kirk*-. These are essentially Gaelic names, with a Gaelic religious background, and there does not seem to be any reason why they should be attributed to Scandinavians, unless as part-translations adopted by Norse incomers when they reached this Gaelic speaking area. Even this possibility, however, seems to be less plausible than the explanation that *Kirk*- supplanted *Kil*- not in Scandinavian, but in Anglian mouths. In this respect, names like *Kirkoswald* and *Kirkcudbright* may be keys to a solution of this problem. Both, St. Oswald, the Northumbrian king and saint who was slain in 642, and St. Cuthbert, the influential seventh century missionary and Bishop of Lindisfarne who belonged to the Lothians or the Scottish Borders, are great figures of the church in the English north-east, and although their cults very probably reached South-West Scotland before the

arrival of the Scandinavians, one would hesitate to attribute the linguistic origin of these dedications to the Norse newcomers.

This does not mean that all *Kirk*-names of this kind are completely un-Scandinavian; it only implies that many of them may be post-Norse. They and other "inversion compounds" undeniably speak of linguistic contact between Scandinavian and Gaelic speaking people in our area, but do not necessarily prove that the Norse raiders and settlers imported this type of name from the Viking colonies in Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Hebrides from where they are supposed to have reached the shores of North-West England and South-West Scotland. There is, of course, the evidence of "inversion compounds" containing first elements other than *Kirk-*, a comprehensive list of which has been compiled by Ekwall (1918) for North-West England. A certain number of these is to be found in the part of Scotland under discussion. *Crossraguel* in AYR, for instance, again points to a religious context (apart from its vicinity to *Kirkoswald*), and *Torthorwald* DMF, containing Gael. *tòrr* "a hill" and the ON. personal name *Þorvaldr* (Williamson 1943:323), must have been coined by Gaelic speakers describing the property of a Scandinavian neighbour; this again stresses the fact that the inhabitants of our area at this time must have been predominantly Gaelic. A possible example of complete adaptation of the Gaelic principle of word-order is *Westerkirk* DMF, which is on record as *Wathstirkir* in 1305 in the Liber Sancte Marie de Melros; it is probably to be derived from ON. *vað* "a ford" and the pers. n. *Styrkárr* (Williamson 1943:324). There are others which cannot be analysed in detail here, but on the whole the Norse "inversion compound" which shows total adoption of the Gaelic principles of formation is the very rare exception rather than the rule.

In general, the Scandinavian impact on the place-nomenclature of our area is much purer and shows no signs of the strong influence of Goidelic speech on the language of the Norse immigrants which Ekwall claimed it to possess (1918: 51; 1924:33). Purely Norse names which show no trace of Irish influence whatever are, for example, *Borgue* KCB (*Borg* 1469 Register of the Great Seal)<ON. *borg* "a stronghold"; *Stoneykirk* WIG (*Stennaker* 1534 Logan Papers)<ON. *steina aker* "field of stones"; *Applegarth* DMF (*Apilgirth* 1275 Registrum Episcopatum Glasguensis)<ON. *apaldr(s) garðr* "apple-orchard"

which has two identical parallels in Yorkshire (in all cases OE. *æppel* "Apple" has probably later replaced ON. *apaldr* "apple tree"); *Float* WIG (*Flot* 1540 Register of the Great Seal)< ON.*flǫt* "a piece of flat ground"; *River Fleet* KCB<ON. *fljót* "a river" (but possibly OE. *flēot* "an estuary"); *The Wig* WIG<ON. *vík* "a bay". In addition we have the four elements discussed above, as well as numerous other names containing either one or two Scandinavian words. The distribution and the importance of these elements may vary, but their ultimate connection with Scandinavian speaking immigrants cannot be denied.

It may be well, however, to remember Christison's observation (1893:280) "that many individual place-names may not have been introduced by the race from whose language they are derived. If the meaning of a convenient term is known to an intruding race, it may be adopted by them and continue to be spread to the present day. In this way probably a good many of the existing *Gills*, *Becks*, and *Grains*, for example, may have arisen".

SUMMARY

Summing up our preliminary and very tentative findings, we should like to stress again the fact that the distribution of the elements *bekkr*, *býr*, and *þveit* suggests close connection with a larger area south of the English border, particularly Cu, We, La, and YN. A substantial proportion of the names containing these elements may go back to the original Scandinavian immigrants, others must definitely be ascribed to later times, some of them post-Norman. The case of *fell* is slightly different in so far as this element does not seem to have entered the toponymy of our area during the early period of Scandinavian settlement, but rather as a local dialect word borrowed from Norse, peculiar to North-West England and South-West Scotland. In the latter part, it forms a later stratum in place-nomenclature, occurring in comparatively young formations and overlaying older Gaelic, Scandinavian and Anglian strata.

The names containing these elements are not due to Irish-Norse settlers from Ireland, but to a different stratum of Scandinavian settlement. It is difficult to believe that DMF should have been settled direct from Ireland or the Hebrides. It rather looks as if it was settled by Scandinavians a little later than the larger region in Northern England, when the Norse sphere of influence expanded. There is a certain West

Scandinavian flavour about these names—if "test-words" mean anything—but there is also *Denby* in DMF, which in 1304 (Bain's Calendar) is recorded as *Daneby*; this is paralleled by four *Danbys* in YN, and it looks as if we have to take into account a certain East Scandinavian element in the Norse population of these parts of the British Isles. The movement of this Norse settlement must have come from south and south-east of the Solway and from across the English border, rather than direct from across the Irish Sea. That, at least, seems to be the verdict of the place-name evidence in this area, as derived from our distribution maps.

The "inversion compounds" in *Kirk-* have to be interpreted differently. They cannot be separated from an essentially Gaelic background. Some of them may be attributable to Norsemen from Viking colonies in Ireland and in the Isle of Man, who reached Galloway and parts of Carrick from the early tenth century onwards and, seemingly, also settled in the extreme English north-west. One would like to exclude the Hebrides from the possible places of origin of these Scandinavian settlers, as, apart from the Skye example noted by Ekwall and quoted above, there does not seem to be the slightest indication of a development of a similar type of compound name. It is very likely that Gaelic speakers from Ireland arrived simultaneously with the Norse immigrants and introduced the Irish-Gaelic element in the nomenclature under review. This is an explanation also given by Ekwall (1940: XXI) in his modified statement on words and names of Irish-Gaelic origin in the north-west of England. The first *Kirk-*names, depicting dedications to Irish saints, and the widespread juxtaposition of *Kil-* and *Kirk-*names in the Scottish south-west, may be due to close linguistic contact between these two groups of settlers, as well as with the already existing Gaelic speaking inhabitants of the district. The first cases of substitution of *Kirk-* for *Kil-* (and *vice versa*?) may also be ascribed to this early period, but once the pattern had been established and once *kirk* had gained sufficient currency in the Anglian dialect of the district, the precise linguistic background of our *Kirk-*names becomes obscure and we must assume them to have been created, re-created and translated for a number of centuries, owing to this threefold linguistic contact Gaelic-Norse, Gaelic-English, Norse-English, rather than to genuine bilingualism.

It would be of considerable interest to see what a closer

analysis of all types of "inversion compounds" in the place-nomenclature of our area may have to say on the movements of people and their languages into this part of Scotland, and particularly on the immigration of Scandinavians which is practically unrecorded. It would also be desirable to establish a more factual knowledge as to the geographical origin of these Scandinavians, beyond the rather vague speculations on which we have to rely at present.

Abbreviations

ARG	Argyllshire	Nb	Northumberland
AYR	Ayrshire	Nt	Nottinghamshire
BTE	Buteshire	OE.	Old English
BWK	Berwickshire	ON.	Old Norse
CLA	Clackmannanshire	PEB	Peeblesshire
Cu	Cumberland	RNF	Renfrewshire
Db	Derbyshire	ROS	Ross-shire
DMF	Dumfriesshire	ROX	Roxburghshire
DNB	Dunbartonshire	SLK	Selkirkshire
Du	Durham	STL	Stirlingshire
ELO	East Lothian	We	Westmorland
EPNS.	English Place-Name Society	WIG	Wigtownshire
		WLO	West Lothian
FIF	Fife	YE	Yorkshire East Riding
KCB	Kirkcudbrightshire	YN	Yorkshire North Riding
La	Lancashire		
LAN	Lanarkshire	YW	Yorkshire West Riding
MLO	Midlothian		

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