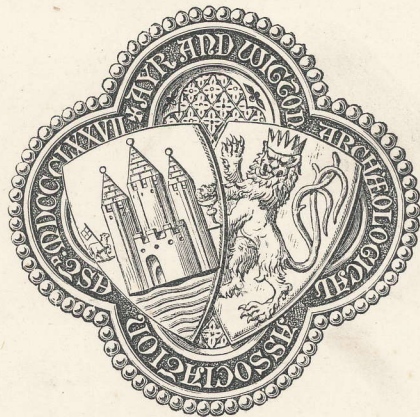


ARCHÆOLOGICAL  
AND  
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RELATING TO THE COUNTIES OF

AYR AND WIGTON

VOL. III.



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
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AYR AND WIGTON

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FOR

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## VIII.

### HOLY WELLS IN WIGTONSHIRE.

HOLY WELLS are generally in the vicinity of ancient ecclesiastical ruins. Not a few of them enjoyed, in the Middle Ages, the reputation of being under celestial favour. They were visited by pilgrims, even from far-away districts, out of devotion, or as an act of penance, or in quest of supernatural gifts. For more than a century after the Reformation they held good their renown, and won votive offerings from many a grateful devotee—so firm a hold had an old cult on this kingdom. Some of the wells were, not improbably, Druidical, that is to say, they had been used by the Druids in their worship. “It seems quite certain that the Druids worshipped at wells; and for a long time after the death of St. Patrick the clergy had to warn the faithful against the traditional Druidical superstitions at those wells.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Penitentiale* of St. Cummin, who died in 669, has this canon:—

Si quis ad arbores, vel ad *fontes*, vel ad angulos, vel ubicumque, nisi ad Ecclesiam Dei vota voverit, aut solverit, tres annos pœniteat, unum in pane et aquâ; et qui ibidem comederit aut biberit unum annum.

The Bobbio *Penitentiale*, which is Irish, repeats St. Cummin’s canon. In an Irish Homily, in manuscript of the eighth century, preserved at the Vatican Library, is the following sentence:—

Cum ergo duplicia bona possitis in Ecclesia invenire quare per cantatores, et *fontes*, et arbores, et diabolica flacteria precatorios aurispices et divinos, vel sortilegos multiplicia sibi mala miseri homines conantur inferre.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Moran’s letter, dated 9th July 1880.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Moran, in letter dated 9th July 1880, says:—“I copied these extracts when I was in Rome some years ago.”

It is obvious, from the warnings and discipline of the Irish Church, that Pagan rites were observed at wells which had been used by Druids before the establishment of Christianity in Ireland, and continued to be practised long after that event. If the Druids had a name and habitation in Wigtonshire, which is not improbable, it may be assumed that their sacred fountains were exorcised by the Celtic missionaries, who were the earliest to raise the Cross in Scotland. This assumption is apparently challenged by the discipline of the Irish Church. Many of its canons were framed against certain practices in connection with those springs. It is fair, however, not to forget the purpose of those ecclesiastical codes. They were drawn up, and put, no doubt, into execution against abuses. It will be observed it is chiefly against persons who worshipped at wells instead of at church, that the canonical punishments were devised. This is noteworthy. Further, even supposing those fountains had been sacred to Pagan ritual, the Church did not regard them outside the range of exorcism. The form of blessing a well, according to the *Rituale Romanum*, would imply as much. This is that form :—

## BENEDICTIO PUTEI.

V. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini

R. Qui fecit cœlum et terram

V. Dominus vobis-cum. R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

## OREMUS.

Domine Deus Omnipotens qui in hujus putei altitudinem per crepedinam fistularum copiam aquarum manare jussisti præsta, ut Te adjuvante atque bene ✠ dicente per nostrae officium functionis, pulsus hinc phantasmaticis collusionibus, ac Diabolicis insidiis, purificatus atque emendatus hic puteus perseveret. Per Christum Dominum. R. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

Mabillon gives a form of blessing a well according to a Bobbio MS.<sup>2</sup> This document is very ancient ; for, writing of it in 1724, Mabillon stated :—

Scriptus est codex ante mille annos.

The venerable MS. which contains the subjoined form is the *Missale Sancti Columbani* :—

<sup>1</sup> *Rituale Romanum Supplementum*, p. 43, Editio Mechliniae, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> *Museum Italicum*, tom. i. p. 275.

## BENEDICTIO SUPER PUTEUM.

Domine Sancte Pater Omnipotens Æterne Deus, qui Abraham, Isaac et Jacob patres nostros Fœderis fodere atque ex his aquam bibere propicia divinitate docuistis, Te supplices deprecamur, ut aquam putei hujus ad communis vitæ utilitatem celesti benedictione sanctifices, ut fugato ea omni Diaboli tentationis, seu pollutionis incursu, quicumque ex ea, deinceps biberit, benedictionem Domini nostri Jesu Christi percipiat. R. Amen.

Dr. Arthur Mitchell confirms what is implied, if not expressed, in the above forms, namely, that many Holy Wells were once Pagan. "Many of those Holy Wells were objects of adoration before the Christianising of the country. The early missionaries, by taking them over as lavers of regeneration, believed themselves to be doing wisely in trying to give a new direction to the respect paid to them. Their success, however, does not seem to have been complete and lasting."<sup>1</sup> Superstition held sway at those fountains. This may have arisen from the difficulty of abolishing established customs, and in some cases because the idea which the missionaries entertained in adapting them to their service had been distorted.

The following passage from Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba* shows that the Celtic missionaries blessed fountains worshipped by the pagans to expel the demons and consecrate them for Christian service:—

"Whilst the blessed man was stopping for some days in the province of the Picts, he heard that there was a fountain famous among this heathen people, which foolish men, having their senses blinded of the devil, worshipped as a god. For those who drank this fountain, or purposely washed their hands or feet in it, were allowed by God to be struck by demoniacal art, and went home either leprous or purblind, or at least suffering from weakness or other kinds of infirmity. By all these things the pagans were seduced and paid divine honours to the fountain. Having ascertained this, the saint one day went up to the fountain fearlessly, and on seeing this the Druids, whom he had often sent away vanquished and confounded, were greatly rejoiced, thinking that, like others, he would suffer from the touch of the baneful water. The saint then blessed the fountain, and from that day the demons separated from the water; and not only was it not allowed to injure any one, but even many diseases amongst the people were cured by this same fountain after it had been blessed and washed in by the saint."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Past in the Present*, p. 151.

<sup>2</sup> Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*, p. 45.

Holy Wells, so far as they related to the early missionaries, are Celtic. They are the expression of an Irish cult. "I do not know whether there was anything peculiarly Celtic in this devotion (Holy Wells), but at this day such are found in Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland."<sup>1</sup> Bishop Moran, an acknowledged authority on Irish Church history, wrote thus:—"Holy Wells seem to be most strikingly Celtic."<sup>2</sup> Ireland abounds in them; they are found all over that country, and frequently in clusters.<sup>3</sup> It is remarkable they are met with in considerable numbers on the Continent, and in those districts of England and Scotland where the Celtic apostles earned greatest renown.

The history of the Church in Ireland, in its earliest stages, may be read off from Holy Wells as from the pages of a book.<sup>4</sup> Their existence in Wigtonshire is an evidence of intercourse between the Celtic nation in the sister island and on the western shores of Scotland. A Scottish antiquary, the late Robert Love of Threepwood, F.S.A. Scot., told me that an archæological discovery in Ireland seldom failed to shed light on the history of this kingdom—both lands seemingly having drawn civilisation and religion from the same source. Assuming, not without reason, that Holy Wells are, in a Christian sense, a Celtic cult, it may be permitted to seek in Ireland for customs and rites in connection with them which are disused or forgotten in this realm. Therefore the trysts, fairs, and devotions on certain days, at the Irish Holy Wells, were observed at the now deserted ones in Wigtonshire.

*Primo*, Frequently the wells bore the names of saints. "Some have the names of saints attached to them."<sup>5</sup> This circumstance arises from one or several of the following reasons: (*a*) either because saints had used them in baptizing neophytes; (*b*) or had exorcised and blessed them; (*c*) or had done some notable deed at them; (*d*) or had their cells hard by them; (*e*) or had been buried near them; (*f*) or churches had been reared there in their honour. The titles they bore, centuries ago, remain intact in not a few instances, despite social and ecclesiastical changes; but too often those designations have lost their original form, and are at this day manifest corruptions.

Not names only, but wells themselves have disappeared, having been

<sup>1</sup> Bridgett's *Our Lady's Dowry*, p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> July 9, 1880.

<sup>3</sup> *Ossory Archæological Papers*, 1880, vol. ii. part i.

<sup>4</sup> Cusack's *Life of St. Patrick*, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> *The Past in the Present*, p. 151.

drained by industrious agriculturists. Some loose stones, and the roots of trees, mark here and there their sites. The Holy Wells in Ireland help to supply the want created in this district—Wigtonshire—by the ploughshare. They retain what is lost here.

*Secundo*, The Irish Holy Wells are seldom without trees hanging over them, on which votive offerings are fastened. This, I think, was the case in Wigtonshire, if the following description of St. Enoch's Holy Well, taken from *Old Glasgow*, be a representative one of those in Scotland: "It was shaded by an old tree which drooped over it, and which remained till the end of the last century. On this tree the devotees who frequented the well were accustomed to nail as thanks-offerings small bits of tin-iron, probably manufactured for that purpose by a craftsman in the neighbourhood, representing the parts of the body supposed to have been cured by virtue of the blessed spring, a practice still common in Roman Catholic countries. The late Mr. Robert Hart told me that he had been informed by an old man, a Mr. Thomson, who had resided in the neighbourhood, that at the end of the last century, or the beginning of the present, he had recollected this well being cleaned out, and of seeing picked out from among the débris at the bottom, several of those old votive offerings, which had dropped from the tree, the stump of which was at that time still standing."<sup>1</sup>

I presume, in this particular, the trite quotation *ab uno disce omnes*, may be accepted; so that, it may be assumed, Holy Wells in Wigtonshire were not unlike St. Enoch's Well in Glasgow. Indeed, there are instances, as will be seen, showing that the roots of trees still cling to the places where they existed in that district.

Patterns, that is to say Saints' days, and their accompanying festivities, are observed in Ireland, Holy Wells being the rendezvous on such occasions. I have made enquiries in different quarters, and correspondents have informed me that Holy Wells, in certain districts, are still, on Saints' days, places of meeting. The custom, however, is losing its once firm hold on that country. One correspondent gives a vivid description of scenes he had witnessed at Kilmallock, County Limerick, half a century ago, showing it was not always religion that attracted crowds around a Holy Well. It demands but a feeble effort of the imagination, helped by the descriptions afforded by letters and other sources of in-

<sup>1</sup> *Old Glasgow: the Place and its People*, by Andrew Macgeorge, p. 145.

formation from Ireland, to repeople the abandoned chapel green on a Saint's day in Wigtonshire. The young men of the parish, emulous of the reputation of the English bowmen, practised archery yonder; not far from the Gothic portal of the shrine merchants exposed their wares for sale; a dancing-party was here; and devotees knelt on those scattered stones which used to form the fringe of the margin of the well, sheltered by a tree, whose branches bore scores of ex votos.

A writer of the second century gives room for the thought that water was not foreign to the mind of the Church. "Nowhere is Christ found without water. He is Himself baptized in it. He inaugurates in it the first manifestation of His divine power at the wedding-feast of Cana. When He preaches, He cries 'If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.' He sums up His whole gift to man under the image of a fountain of water. When He gives instruction upon charity, He instances a cup of cold water given to a disciple. He sits down weary at a well, and asks for water to refresh Himself."<sup>1</sup>

Certain features which are effaced from the vicinities where sacred fountains were in Wigtonshire, may in part be restored by visiting or reading about extant wells in Ireland. But it must be owned, even by the most enthusiastic student, that the spirit—*genius loci*—is departed from them in Scotland. They are not, however, devoid of interest. Even the practices which are, in remote corners of this kingdom, performed at them may afford glimpses of the social and religious condition of a far-off Past,—those practices being fragments of heathen and mutilated Christian rites. It is likely that the spots in Wigtonshire where Holy Wells were, marked the route pursued by pilgrims bent on doing honour to the relics of St. Ninian at Whithorn. A well, in those days, could not be other than a sort of oasis to the wayfarer and the stranger. They may have shaped the roads by which the most distant parts of the country were linked together. Nor are they without interest to the topographer—being custodiers of names interwoven with the districts, and indicating the localities in which they are found, for their names, according to a bygone practice, were, sometimes, descriptive. Their history, if investigated, might fill up, now and then, a hiatus found on the pages of our annals. The list of Holy Wells in Wigtonshire, which I here append, is by no means an

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian :—*Tract de Baptismo ap Roma Sotteranea.*



exhaustive one: every parish has some of them, though, in most instances, only the faintest traditions, if any, linger around them. Virtue no longer goes forth from them; their sacred character is lost.

#### ST. COLUMBA'S WELL, KIRKCOLM.

Strangers will find, not far from Corswell Lighthouse, "a bubbling spring of pure water on a grassy bank not far above high-water mark, which bears the name of St. Columba's Well. Pious Roman Catholics who visit the well quaff its waters with some degree of reverence, and a tradition of sanctity still lingers about it. There is every reason to suppose that it is the Cross-well, or Holy well, which has led to the locality being called Crosswell, Corsewell, or Corswell. The association of St. Columba's name with the well is not improbable; the name of the parish, Kirkcolm, is but a corruption of St. Columba's Kirk."<sup>1</sup>

#### ST. BRIDE'S, KIRKCOLM.

This well lies between east, west, and south of Kirkbride. It is remarkable for its pure water, which never fails in the driest season. St. Bride was one of the most popular of the Celtic saints.<sup>2</sup>

#### ST. MARY'S, KIRKCOLM.

"Near the site of the ancient Kirk, called Kilmorie, on the shore of Loch Ryan. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Kilmorie, or the Chapel of the Virgin, is near an excellent spring of water, of old esteemed beneficial in many disorders. Superstition attached to it the infallible power of becoming dry if the patient for whom its water was sought had a mortal malady, but of appearing in abundance if the disease was curable."<sup>3</sup>

"St. Mary's Well, into which people used to dip their dishes, has disappeared, but the spring of water which supplied it still flows on. Within recent years it has been diverted into tiles, and forms a spout well."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Visitor's Guide to Wigtonshire*, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup> *Statistical Account*, vol. iv. Wigton, Kirkeolm.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Forbes' *Kalendar*, Feb. 11.

<sup>4</sup> M'Iraith's *Guide to Wigtonshire*, p. 109.

## ST. JOHN'S WELL, STRANRAER.

Probably in honour of the Evangelist of that name, and not of the Baptist. The annual fair of the burgh falls early in May, and on the 6th of that month is celebrated "S. Joannes apud Portam Latinam."

## ST. PATRICK'S WELL, PORTPATRICK.

The Ordnance Survey Map indicates the site of this well. It flowed where there was a quarry used for the harbour works. The writer of this notice heard from two men, John Mulholland and Owen Graham, dwelling at Portpatrick in 1860, that they had seen on the rock beside the well what tradition said was the impression of the knees and left hand of St. Patrick.

Besides this well there was another, thus described by Dr. Archibald: "There is a large cave, called the cave of Uchtrie Macken, close by the sea, near Portpatrick, accessible by six steps of a stair entering a gate built with stone and lime; at the end of which is built an altar, at least a structure after that figure, to which many people resort upon the first night of May, and there do wash diseased children with water which runs from a spring over the cave, and afterwards they tye a farthing or the like, and throw it upon the altar."<sup>1</sup>

## ST. CATHERINE'S WELL, STONEYKIRK.

This well is on an eminent site near Eldrig Hill. The ebb and flow of the tide influence this well. A graveyard formerly lay around or near the well. Human bones were found in the ground on which stands the threshingmill of Eldrig. The writer of these notes was so informed by the son or grandson of the occupant of the farm in 1867.

## ST. MEDAN'S WELL, KIRKMAIDEN.

"From the superstitious observances connected with this spot, it seems likely that it was the abode of some Druid or other recluse in times prior to Christianity, and in latter times it might have been the retreat of some monk, or disciple of St. Medan, who would probably take advantage

<sup>1</sup> *Further Account anent Galloway*, pp. 150-51.

of its locality and reputation to serve his own interested views. To bathe in the well as the sun rose on the first Sunday of May was considered an infallible cure for almost any disease, but was particularly efficacious in the recovery of back-gane bairns. And till no very remote period it was customary for almost the whole population to collect at this spot on the first Sabbath of May, which was called Co. Sunday, to bathe in the well, to leave their gifts in the cave, and to spend the day in gossiping or amusements. The well is a natural cylindrical hole in the solid rock, about four feet in diameter and six feet deep, filled with loose stones to about half its depth. Round its mouth are three or four small holes<sup>1</sup> which were used for bathing the hands and eyes, while the large one was used for the body generally. There is no spring; the well is kept full by the surf breaking over the rock at full tide and spring tides. The inner apartment of the chapel or Co.<sup>2</sup> is a natural cavity in the rock. The outer is of rude mason work, with a door and a window. The walls are greatly dilapidated, and the roof long gone. At its best it must have been a mortifying residence. Strangers, on a first visit, are still reminded of the custom of leaving a present or a gift at departure. A pin, a blade of grass, or a pebble from the beach, are now considered sufficient; though, no doubt, in the days of our hermit, more substantial offerings were looked for and bestowed."—(Rev. Mr. Lamb, Minister of Kirkmaiden, 1830.)

"The attendance on the well on Co. Sunday was so general that public worship in the parish church had to give place to it. The last minister of the parish to whom these superstitious observances proved an annoyance was Mr. Robert Callander. He, though not considered a powerful preacher, was a pious and good man, and made a point, while in health, of having service in the church on that day, even though the congregation were small. In May 1799, he, being from infirmity unable to walk on foot to the church, ordered his servant lad, before saddling his horse, to go and see if anybody was waiting. The lad finding only the beadle, precentor, and two others, the old man did not turn out. From that period the observance of Co. Sunday rapidly declined. During the last thirty years it has scarcely been named."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These hollows are "pot holes," formed by the action of the waves by rolling about the gravel stones and sand in hollow places in the rock.

<sup>2</sup> That is cove or cave.

<sup>3</sup> *MS. History of Kirkmaiden*, p. 40, by Mr. William Todd, schoolmaster, written 1854, in his 80th year.

Mr. Todd gives it as his opinion that originally the observances at St. Medan's cave had been pagan, and connected with the festival. He thinks other wells, etc., had been consecrated by pagan rites.

MONTLUCK, KIRKMAIDEN.

"In this gentleman's (Patrick M'Dowall of Logan) land, about a mile and a half from the parish kirk, is a well called Montluck; it is in the midst of a little bog, to which several persons have recourse to fetch water for such as are sick, asserting (whether it be truth or falsehood I shall not determine) that if the sick person shall recover the water will so buller and mount up when the messenger dips in his vessel that he will hardly get out dry shod, by reason of the overflowing of the well; but if the sick person be not to recover, there will not be any such overflowing in the least. It is also reported (but I am not bound to believe all reports) that in this gentleman's land there is a rock at the sea-side, opposite the coast of Ireland, which is continually dropping, both winter and summer, which drop hath this quality, as my informant saith, that if any person be troubled with chincough he may be infallibly cured by holding up his mouth and letting this drop fall therein."<sup>1</sup>

PETER'S PAPS, KIRKMAIDEN.

"This is a dropping cave. It is the cave to which Symson alludes in his large description of Galloway, where he says 'it is reported,' etc. Other caves are mentioned, and in rare instances were of late resorted to, but the infallibility of the cure is now very much suspected."<sup>2</sup> He refers particularly to the "Millar's Co.," a capacious dropping cave in the Clanyard Mill Croft, with large stalactites. The original name, if it had any, is unknown.

ST. BRIDE'S WELL, near KIRKBRIDE, KIRKMAIDEN.

ST. KATHERINE'S WELL, LOW DROMORE, KIRKMAIDEN.

ST. MARY'S OR LADY WELL, near LOGAN, KIRKMAIDEN.

CHIPPERDINGAN, at NEW ENGLAND BAY, KIRKMAIDEN.

<sup>1</sup> Symson's *Description of Galloway*, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Todd's *MSS.*, p. 32.

ST. KATHERINE'S WELL, OLD LUCE.

"This Well is on the edge of the highway, just opposite the Abbey, at the foot of a wooded bank. It is called *St. Katherine's Well*. When the highway was made, about fifty years ago, it was found that pipe tiles had been laid to convey the water to the Abbey. The old road to New Luce is at the top of the wooded bank, where a cottage bears the name of Auchenmanster, that is, the Monastery Field."<sup>1</sup>

ST. FILLAN'S WELL, on the Farm of KILFILLAN, OLD LUCE.

"St. Fillan's blessed Well,  
Whose springs can frenzied dreams dispel,  
And crazed brains restore."

"Here a white thorn tree, in the Jerusalem Fey, is supposed to mark the site of the old chapel. There had been a village there, and the Ordnance surveymen, in digging, found a place where the roof had been covered with slates, and marked that spot as the site of the chapel. A little way off, in a marshy place on the opposite side of the brook, on the South Milton farm, is a well, said to have been the Holy Well of the chapel, but I have not heard the name of any saint connected with it."<sup>2</sup>

THE LADY'S WELL (1), NEW LUCE.

On the edge of the Old Port William Road, a little to the east, is this Well.

THE LADY'S WELL (2), NEW LUCE.

"This Well is in a plantation between the highway and the river Luce, just opposite the fifth mile-stone from Glenluce."<sup>3</sup>

MOCHRUM.

"This loch is very famous in many writers, who report that it never freezeth in the greatest frosts. . . . Whether it had any virtue of old I

<sup>1</sup> Rev. George Wilson's letter, 25th June 1880. <sup>2</sup> Rev. George Wilson's letter, 29th July 1880.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Rev. George Wilson.

know not, but sure I am it hath it not now. However, I deny not but the water thereof may be medicinal, having received several credible informations that several persons, both old and young, have been cured of continued diseases by washing therein. Yet still I cannot approve of their washing three times therein, which, they say they must do; neither the frequenting thereof the first Sunday of February, May, August, and November; although many foolish people affirm that not only the water of this loch, but also *many other springs and wells, have more virtue on those days than any other.*"<sup>1</sup>

#### CHIPPERFINIAN, MOCHRUM.

"This is the name always given by the people, but in the *Statistical Account* and Ordnance Survey Map it is called Chapelfinian. The foundations of an old chapel are close beside it, and the word 'chipper' seems to have been regarded as a vulgar corruption of the word chapel. But it is given correctly in the map on the adjoining farm Chippermore, and seems to be a form of the Celtic word for a well, found in such names as Tobbermore and Tipperary. It is nearly six miles from Port William on the road to Glenluce. On the right hand, about 16 feet from the stone fence, the foundations of the chapel are seen, of about 20 × 15 feet, inside measure, the walls having been built with lime mortar. It has been enclosed by a wall or fence, the remains of which are seen about 10 feet off at the sides, and 5 at the east end. Two stones at the south-east angle, beside an old thorn tree, seem to mark the gateway; and at the south-west, close behind the highway wall, there is a circular hollow edged with stones. This seems to have been the well at some early time, and on the 6-inch map it is marked as a well, with the name in black letter 'Chapel Finian Well.' Separated from it by the thickness of the highway fence is the wall in its present form, which is a quadrangle built with stones level with the surface. A stone on the north side bears an inscription which I could not get at for the water. It is a date, cut in Roman letters which do not look old. I am told they were cut by a schoolmaster to give the supposed date of St. Finian. The Chapel Fey is to the south, the whole being at the foot of a lofty bank of boulder clay which marks the line of an old sea-beach, 25 feet above the present sea level. Three miles eastward

<sup>1</sup> Symson's *Description of Galloway*, p. 53.

is Loch Brain, and to the north the water of Malzie, which flows from Mochrum Loch to the Bladenoch, near Culmalzie."<sup>1</sup>

## ST. NINIAN'S WELL, PENNINGHAME.

On the roadside, right hand, going from Newton-Stewart to Wigton.<sup>2</sup>

## ST. MEDAN'S WELL, GLASSERTON.

With this well the following tradition is connected: The Lady Medan, or "Madana, was an Irish lady of great beauty and wealth, and had resolved to devote herself and her substance to the service of God. Sought in marriage by many, she rejected all suitors, and they gave her up in despair, all save one 'miles nobilis,' to avoid whose importunity she fled to the sea-shore, and got on board a little ship with two shields, and landed in the Rhinds, on the Galloway coast. There she spent some time in security in the performance of works of charity. Upon a rock are to be seen the marks of her knees, so constant was she in prayer. 'Miles nobilis,' however, found and followed her. Seeing no other means of escape she jumped into the sea, and, with two sacred shields, swam to a rock not far from the shore. The knight prepared to follow her; she prayed to the saints and the rock began to float, carrying her and her two maids across the bay to Fernes. When landing, she thought herself safe. The knight, however, soon discovered her, and came upon her and her two maids asleep on the shore. But the saints who watched over her caused a cock to crow preternaturally loud, and so awakened her. To save herself she climbed a tree, and addressed the disappointed 'miles nobilis' in reproachful terms: 'What is it in me that so provokes your evil passions to persecute me thus?' He answered: 'That face and those eyes;' upon which, without hesitation, she pulled them out and handed them to him. The knight, struck with penitence, left her in peace. She could find no water to wash the blood from her face, but the saints again befriended her, when up came a spring from the earth; which remains," says the legend, "to testify by its medicinal virtues the truth of the miracle."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. George Wilson's letter, 25th July 1880.

<sup>2</sup> Letter, William Black, sexton, Whithorn, May 8, 1880.

<sup>3</sup> *Lands and their Owners in Galloway*, vol. i. p. 505.

## CHIPPERHERON, WHITHORN.

One mile north-west from Whithorn; called *Chapelheron* in the Government map.

ST. JOHN'S, PORT-GLASGOW,  
November 24, 1881.

DANIEL CONWAY,  
E.C.C.