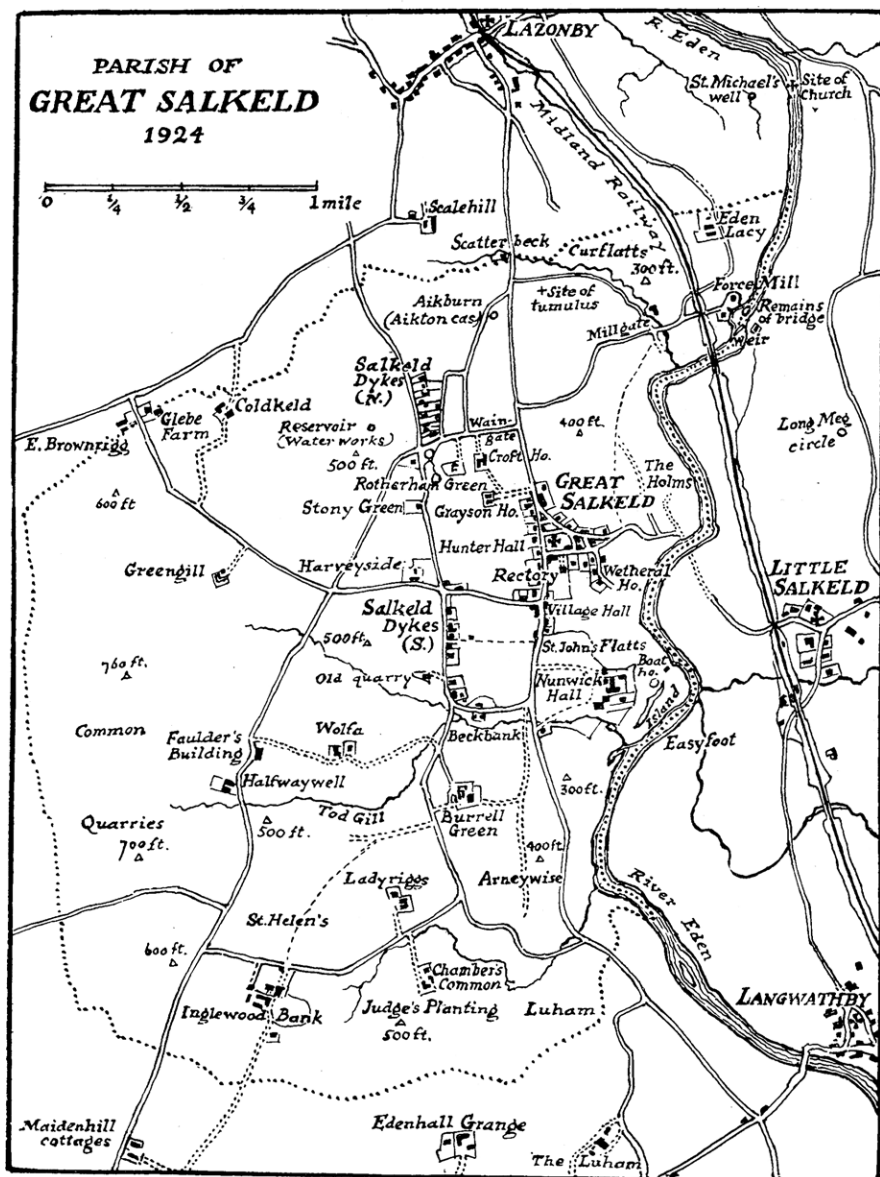


**PARISH OF
GREAT SALKELD
1924**

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ART. VI.—*Place and Field Names at Great Salkeld, Cumberland.* By C. J. GORDON, RECTOR.

Read at Carlisle, April 24th, 1924.

AT this time of rapid and far reaching changes, it seems desirable to put on record whatever may be worth remembering of local names and their assignable meanings. Here, a century and a quarter from the commencement of a general enclosure of Common lands, and eighty-four years since the statutory apportionment of parochial tithe rent charges, the present decade has witnessed more complete alterations in land and tithe ownership than can have taken place during the previous life-time of any of the existing inhabitants, and the old designations are liable to be forgotten or disused. This paper may serve the purpose of handing on a knowledge of some of them to succeeding times, while also inviting the favour of further suggestions for interpretation of obsolete words. Themselves but "enclosures from the great outfield of meanings," the customary titles of fields and places hold much that calls for comparison and research. While considering traditional nomenclature, with linguistic and historical interests attaching thereto, it may be convenient to approach the subject from particular view points, natural, industrial, personal, suggested by the names in use.

I. NATURAL FEATURES:—(a) *Land and Water.* *Salkeld Regis, Mucho or Great Salkeld*—has been so called to distinguish this township from that of *Little or Old Salkeld* in the parish of Addingham on the opposite bank of the Eden, the manor having been anciently in the hands of the King; and *Salkeld* is said to mean* the spring among the

* Prof. Sedgefield's *Place Names of Cumberland and Westmorland*, p. 96.

willows, from Old English *salig* or *salh* (willow) and Old Norse *kelda* (spring or brook). In compensation for a somewhat defective rainfall as compared with others in the district—owing partly to the elevation of Penrith Beacon dividing the frequent showers from the west—the soil of the parish is unusually full of springs of water welling up through underlying sandstone rock, and readily lends itself to any variety of culture. The whole area consisting of 3671 acres of land and 36 of water, abounds in titles suggestive of high or low-lying positions, from the extensive Holms or Meadows along its four miles of river up to the farm of *Cold Keld* whence the village, with its neighbouring hamlets at *Salkeld Dykes*, derives unfailing supplies of pure and abundant water. *Eden Banks*, *Island*, *Beckpool*, *Waterside Close*, are names that fix the position of certain fields with greater precision than the *Wet Close*, *Wet Meadow*, *Wed* (or *With*) *Holm*, or *Wetlands*, or *Bog*, more frequently met with in our lists. *Kellstead*, *Spring Close* and *Pond Hill* belong to enclosures on the upper levels. More than once *Clay Dubs* describes occurrence of pools of water more or less permanently held in position by shallow depressions in the stronger soils. *Grainer Syke* would indicate some overflow of running water over a hard bottom. The extensive *Luham* near the Edenhall boundary would seem to occupy the place of some former “lough” or lake, the waters of which were drained away to leave the fertile Common now divided out for benefit of many profitable holdings; as are the lands of *Easy Foot* across the river. *Easy Foot* (or *Fit*) is said to be an old Norse name for Clay Meadow.

Some of the lighter soils were given names suggested by distinctive colour or extent—as *Long Croft*, *Long Moss*, *Shortlands*, *Sandlands*, *Redlands*, *Brownrigg*. To the prevailing verdure there is evident allusion in *Greenfield*, *Greengill*, *Green Close*, *Green Lane*, and more simply, “*Greens*”; besides at least two others, to be mentioned

later along with personal or farm titles; while the harder subsoil makes its influence felt in *Stony green*, *Stonelands*, *Gravel Hill*, *Craggs Planting*; this last at Eden Lacy near the "Force," where pent up waters shoot rapidly beneath the overshadowing rocks once crowned with *Forceknot Castle*, whence guard could be kept over the Pack Horse Bridge which at this point through many centuries carried the traffic from Penrith and Dacre, and further west, to the road that climbs the steep side of the Pennines and leads through Alston, Hexham and Corbridge to Newcastle on-Tyne.

(b) *Wild Life*. The "Greengill Farm" just mentioned is known also as *Curlew*, the bird being frequent on that high table-land and all around. "Half-way-well" marks the mid distance between Kirkoswald and Penrith on the old road over the Fell, and seems but a poor substitute for the old designation, *Tod Gill Farm*, where the "tod" or fox may still be observed in time of snow emerging from quarry heights above Bowscar. *Hindwell Close* is another suggestive compound, reminiscent of herds of deer in former times inhabiting the Engle or English Forest, *Ingle-wood*. At *Wolfa* ("Wolf how") tradition says that the last fierce beast in the forest was run down and killed; and *Wolfa Bank* occurs, and *Far Wolfa*, about a mile away. *Cony Hill*, *Crowhill wood*, *Snipe Close*, convey their own description in like manner; while *Crakeld Holm* bears witness to abundance of water fowl along the river bank. It would seem hardly possible that presence of the *eagle* ("Earn") can at any time have been associated with the extensive belt of arable land, now divided out into several fields, known as *Arnewise* (*Arney Hill* or *Arney Withes*) or *Coatlap*—modern, from its curious shape; with *Near Arnywise* and *Mid* and *Far*; but "Earn," it appears, might sometimes mean "a cottage," and "Ern" a "place"; also, with slightly varied ending, "sown land," and this would be most nearly in agreement with

the actual character of the spot. To many of these names a derivation must be assigned from Anglian or Old Norse dialect; others may be of later mediæval origin. They all appear in the Tithe Award of 1840 as thoroughly established and of undisputed use. As long ago as the year 1120 *Watelands*, *The Croftes*, *The Fittes* and *Langrigg* were measured fields in a record of Great Salkeld tithes bestowed by Ranulph de Meschin upon the Priory of Wetheral; as also were *Ranylandes*, *Northfield*, *Hapeshowe*, *Halborwan*, *Kyngesflatt* and *Smekergilbanke*.*

II. TREES, FARM CROPS AND STOCK. (a) Turning next to the industrial aspect—forestry and farming—we find mention of trees abundant here in bygone days, then giving names to fields;—*Oak Planting*, *Akeburn*, *Ashes Close*, *Larch Close*, *Far Thornflatt*, *Bridge* (or? *Brid*) *Willows* (now in Little Salkeld Township, showing how the river has changed its course), *Alder Ing*—the “Ing” being low-lying meadow land. Here, then, are some common trees,—oak, ash, larch, alder, willow, thorn. But there is no mention of others,—sycamore, birch, beech elm, lime, hazel; though the first two are now, and probably have long been, fairly abundant everywhere about. We find also *Planting Brow*; and there is an *Orchard Close* in the case of each of the two largest and best appointed farms. A number of fine oaks and sycamores adorn the grounds of Nunwick; there are big elms in the village and in the Churchyard; but there are no considerable woods except one near Tod Gill, mostly of Scotch Fir, and this is in process of felling and removal as these words are written.

(b) Coming to agricultural methods and produce, we have numerous *Riggs* and *Flatts*, so called from the action of the plough in casting up furrows and ridges, or laying flat the turf turned over in its course. The curious name

* “Great Salkeld” by Loftie, 1900, p. 25.

Curflatts will imply no reference to level ground—it is a hilly field of 22 acres—nor to “Kirk,” as has been easily inferred from this being the largest of what were formerly Glebe fields, before the Church land was disposed of in 1920 (all except one field at the Rectory); the Curragh or Cairn of parish boundary would mark the dividing line between this and Lazonby. Then we find mention of *Hemplands*, *Well Card Close*, *Rapelands* (the Charlock). *Oatlands Close* and *Seed Gill* appear suggestive of the staple food production. There is no mention of Barley (“bere”) which used to provide the main ingredient of the people’s bread, nor of Rye, nor Wheat—as “Whitedale” has been recorded not far off.* Only very occasionally is a field of wheat to be seen in this parish now.

(c) But it is of the rearing and grazing of farm stock that we are most frequently reminded by the bulk of the field names here. Out of about six hundred enclosures of all descriptions there are Garths and Crofts and Closes by the score; as *Bull Close*, *Ox Pasture*, *Calf* (i.e. bullock) *Close*. In the unexpected appellation, *Cousin Gill* I rather suspect a misrendering of Cow Pasture in some older form; and *Huffa*—in other places “Hoff” or “Hoffa” (Hoffhow)—means the same, being so used at first from its convenient proximity to the “hof” or dwelling house of an extensive holding; but here it is nearly a mile from *Wetheral House*, the farm-steading to which it belongs, at the end of a byway in the village. As all those speak of the prevalence of dairy and cattle farming, so others do of tending sheep, as *Hoghouse Close* and *Ewe Hill*. *Smitter Gill* would mark, perhaps, the place found suitable for smearing the shorn animal with mark of ownership. Then we find *Shepherd’s Track*, *Near and Far Hullen* (of which in one case *Holland Field* is possibly an amplification) and *Wain Gate* and *Mell Gate*, as names of fields; where “gate” is of course, the road of access, and not the

* These *Trans.* o.s. xv. 76; Kirkoswald Field Names by Canon Thornley.

entrance or the bar across it, as in modern use;* and "Mell" may be a customary variant of "Mill," or else a record of the presence of coarse grass or "bent" among the herbage. On some of the smaller holdings, enclosures are distinguished only by direction in space; in one case we find *First field, West field, East field, South Field*; in another, *North Croft, South Croft, House Croft, Common*. By reference to Parish Valuation lists of a hundred years ago or more, four of which have been preserved in the Church Chest or privately, we are able to trace successive stages in the gradual process of enclosing the last of the common lands. An old oak gate, bearing initials of Timothy Nelson carved on one of its stone posts, is dated 1812. In 1831 "Uncultivated" was a usual term for any outlying portion of an estate; or "Unimproved," "Moorland," or "Fell," with the possessor's name attached; as *Nelson Fell*, united with other fields a generation later into *Lady Riggs*, with the last farm house to be newly provided here, and so called because of purchase money contributed by the owner's lady. "The Garden of Eden" was only a fancy title bestowed, not many years ago, upon a small enclosure near the river bank below the village, and now no longer used for garden purposes; and "Weary Lane" and "Hungeremont" are recent nicknames for the *Mill Gate* and *Faulder's Building*.

III. PERSONAL AND FAMILY NAMES. From occupations to names of occupiers there is a natural transition. The last of the Faulders sold out of Great Salkeld some fifteen years ago. Of a long line of owners of *Inglewood Bank* no trace remains, except that within the ancient Parish Church of St. Cuthbert several tombstones of Norman knights witness to the residence there of Forest keepers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and there is a coloured window given by surviving members of the

* Giving rise to unfounded supposition of the village having been formerly enclosed, with "gates" in the road at each end.

Thompson family from whom the house and two farms passed by purchase to the present owner. Similar records alone recall long residence during the last two centuries of Dalstons of *Beckbank*, and the Bowsteads; but *Salkeld House* at Town Head is said to have been built for one of the latter early in the nineteenth century. *Hunter Hall*, erected more than a hundred years earlier, westward of the Church, appears to be the only house in the neighbourhood of its pleasant style, with many large window openings better situated to the climate of a midland or southern county. Quite half the former ownerships in the parish have recently become incorporated into the principal estate, and the place of the old "Low House" is taken by the present *Nunwick Hall* erected for Mr. Heywood Thompson in 1893 from designs by a member of the Council of this Society, the late Mr. C. J. Ferguson. No explanation is forthcoming of the name "Nunwick," said to have been imported from a place near Alston; nor yet of *St. John's Flatts* the large adjoining enclosure, formerly two fields; nor is there of St. Helen's, a field at Inglewood. A smaller house of residence, pleasantly situated further down the river, *Eden Lacy*, preserves the memory of a family but recently extinct, well known as owning property on both sides of the Eden for two or three hundred years. Between the two last mentioned, but on higher ground and near the middle of the village, is the *Rectory House*, in all probability (with possible exception of Salkeld Hall) the oldest existing dwelling in all the district, bearing initials and date of Thomas Musgrave, Rector (Dean of Carlisle, 1682) by whom it was substantially restored and added to in 1674, when he was also Archdeacon of Carlisle, an office held by his predecessors here for four centuries before and by successors during nearly two more centuries.

The Rector who followed him, Archdeacon Nicolson, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle for another sixteen years,

wrote in February, 1704, of "having lived within a few months of twenty years with great comfort and satisfaction in this parish"; and called it "sweet Salkeld" when taking leave, having shown sincere affection for its open commons by often rambling over them, simpling the plants and herbs of which his catalogue is still preserved in the library at Rose—"Nicolson's Botany." Finding the village school (founded A.D. 1515) in ruins, he had it rebuilt; and William Nicolson's initials and those of other contributors (1686) are still to be deciphered on coping stones of an old boundary wall adjacent to the present building of 1856 and 1906. The full subscription list contains the names of individuals resident after whom there are still named fields or tenements belonging to families of position in the place, more than two centuries and a half ago. Church Registers show that from 1571 to 1697 there were Burrells of *Burrell Green*, where a well known sixteenth century "Luck"* lends additional distinction to the spacious old farm house. Then there is *Rotherham Green* with the letter "R" cut over "SS" in a stone above the door; the last of that name, Mr. Charles Rotherham, having died at the age of 89 in 1904. In the same subscription list occur the name of former owners of *Benson's Rood Close*, and *Carleton's Close*, and *Baty Close*, and *Churdon Croft*; and those of more than one Nelson, members of the family who still own and cultivate the *Town Head Farm*. *Wybergh's Close* (or *Wibours*) is probably a still older name. *Croft House* is one of the oldest and largest farms. To *Grayson House* and *Lowthian House* existing titles would seem to have been assigned much later; as also others to several separate enclosures—as *Doby Closes*, *Sewel Common*, *Bell's Teas Close*, *Olivant's Gate*, *Saunders' Luham*, *Fidler's Garth*, *Threlkeld Croft*, *Mattinson Croft* and *Harveyside*; the last two with houses of moderate capacity bearing the same name, but the lands

* These *Trans.* O.S. xv, 136; N.S. xiii, 134.

now alienated, and having several times changed hands. Another tenement to be noticed in the village is *The Highland Drove*; so called, no doubt, from the Scots drovers bringing their cattle to Penrith market by the same fellside route and river ford as the northern raiders followed in Border wars of the troubled fourteenth century. To certain smaller closes Christian names attach; as *Roger Court* and *Harry Dyke* and *Roderick How*, but without indication when or by whom they came to be affixed.

IV. ADDITIONAL AND UNCLASSIFIED. Two at least of the oldest of our enclosures bear the distinctive title, *Wandlands*. In last year's volume of these *Transactions* (N.S. xxiv, 155), "Wandales" (O.N. *vöndr* and *deill*) was described as a usual name for Norse settlements divided into convenient shares by rod or wand. Similarly, the *Whindales* here, numbering as many as ten deals or shares of modern ownership, will have been anciently held in common, unenclosed; and *Michaldales*, of which there are now no fewer than fifteen separate portions, would indicate the greater size of these as compared with *Small Shares*, of which there seems to be only one remaining. I take *Swaithes Close* and *Cross Acres* (or *Crosslands*) as plainly indicative of a field path at one time running by or over them; not, as Canon Thornley at Kirkoswald explained the word, from association with any supposed church or chapel there. *Near* and *Far Barfs*, perhaps from "Barugh" or "Beorh," a mound; *Meal Banks*, a sand hill; *Gale How*, the roomy hill top; *Whiry Hill*, and *Morah* (or *Moory*) *Hill*, may be mentioned together here, though possibly suitable for inclusion with titles derived from natural features; and *Garbrid* (so pronounced locally not "Garbridge" as written in the Valuations) interpreted as the Garth of broad or table-land formation. *Banty Beck* is the small field or wood, as well as the stream itself, where running water bends or winds riverward past Beck

Bank; near to which, *Gainbanks* also, and *Far Gainbanks*, spread out as fair pasture or plough land; while further down *Grime Holms* and *Little Grimestone* seem to contain allusion to some feeling about Eden Waters not open to definite interpretation now. *Hall Burns* ("Borrans") befits a patch of somewhat rougher ground in that vicinity. At a little distance *Halls Horse* (or was it once "Halh," meadow, and "Hause"—or possibly corrupted from the ancient "Halborran" already mentioned?) might indicate a neck of meadow at times surrounded by the river, or partly so; and close by that, *Dumflodder* may have some similar significance. The house to which several of these last enumerated fields belong is left without a name since the surrender of a licence under which it had been known for many years as an inn, "The Hare and Hounds." In this case, and in that of the *Glebe Farm* recently purchased by the tenant from the Vicar of Crosby Ravensworth, opportunity offers for fresh enterprise in the art of naming. The new owner of a North Dyke farm, formerly in the hands of Aglionby Trustees, has called it *Dufton House*. Fifty years ago the South Westmorland family of Chambre, or Chamber, associated their name with the farm house then erected beyond Lady Riggs on the Edenhall border, *Chambers Common*; with *Judge's Planting* after Sir Alan Chambre, the owner early in the nineteenth century. That southern boundary presents a topographical problem of its own, upon which at least one parishioner (as he informs me) would welcomelight from any documentary evidence forthcoming on either side:—By whom can have been erected the several successive lengths of the *Common Wall* of hard red sandstone dividing our Salkeld Luham from that of Edenhall for a distance of several hundred yards? Could that be answered a number of additional names might have to be included here. So much as has been set down may suffice to illustrate the reality and great

variety of interest to be derived from a study of this kind by one who has resided on the spot as I have, like my great predecessor, "within a few months of twenty years." With Emerson one may be allowed to feel how "Nature always wears the colour of the infinite; through simplest things wonders are brought to our own door,—men and women and their social life—commodity, labour, sleep, fear, fortune; and each phenomenon with its roots in the affections, of which words are the finite organs:—Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond; but no one of them owns the landscape." The character of our landscape was well conveyed by my immediate predecessor, historian of Great Salkeld, when he wrote* of Bishop Nicolson that

Here he could exercise his manifold gifts and tastes in the study of nature in some of its wildest and most picturesque forms. Even now, when all that is possible to till is under the plough, and well laid out roads and stone walls intersect it in many places, the upper part of the parish presents large stretches of uncultivated land. In the autumn the colouring of the whole district is glorious; highest of all there are dark masses of pines, then great patches of purple heather strewn with grey boulders; there is the bright red of the newly quarried freestone rock cropping up in all directions from beds of golden bracken; far below, the shining silver of the river, winding through the rich green of the Eden Valley, spread out like a map beneath the feet; while the deep indigo of the "everlasting hills," which form an unbroken barrier of fell and pike, bounds the horizon.

TABLE OF NAMES.

Great Salkeld	Dufton House
Little Salkeld	Eden Lacy
Salkeld Dykes	Faulders Buildings
River Eden	Force Mill
Beck Bank	Glebe Farm
Burrell Green	Grayson House
Chambers Common	Green Gill
Cold Keld	Halfway Well
Croft House	Harveyside

* Canon Loftie, *Great Salkeld*, Ch. xviii, *Inglewood Common*, p. 110.

Hunter Hall	Calf Close
Inglewood Bank	Clay Dubs
Inglewood Forest	Common
Lady Riggs	Coney Hill
Lowthian House	Cousin Gill
Nunwick Hall	Craggs Planting
Rotherham Green	Crakeld Holm
Salkeld House	Croftes
Town Head Farm	Cross Acres
Wetheral House	Crowhill Wood
Wolfa	Curflatts
The Highland Drove	Curlew
The Rectory	Dumflodder
The School	Easy Foot
	Eden Banks
Baty Close	Ewe Hill
Bensons Rood Close	Far Hullen
Bells Teas Close	Forcenott
Carleton Close	Gainbanks
Churden Croft	Gale How
Doby Closes	Garbrid
Fidlers Garth	Grainer Syke
Mattinson Croft	Gravel Hill
Nelson Fell	Green Close
Oliphant Gate	Greenfield
Saunders Luham	Green Lane
Sewel Common	Greens
Threlkeld Croft	Grime Holms
Wyberghs Close	Grimestone
Harry Dyke	Hall Burns
Roderick How	Halls Horse
Roger Croft	Hemplands
	Hindwell Close
Alder Ing	Hoghouse Close
Akeburn	Holland Field
Arneywise	Huffa
Banty Beck	Island
Barfs	Kellsteads
Beckpool	Kings Flatt
Bog	Langrigg
Bridge Willows	Larch Close
Brownrigg	Long Croft
Bull Close	Long Moss

Luham	Small Shares
Meal Banks	Smutter Gill
Mell Gate	Snipe Close
Michaldales	South Croft
Moorah Hill	Spring Close
Northfield	Stonelands
Oak Planting	Stoney Green
Oatlands Close	Swaithes Close
Orchard Close	Teas Close
Ox Pasture	Thornflatt
Planting Brow	Todd Gill
Pond Hill	Wain Gate
Ranylands	Wandlands
Rapelands	Watelands
Redlands	Waterside Close
Saint John's Flatts	Wed Holm
Saint Helen's	Well Card Close
Sandlands	Wet Close
Seed Gill	Wetlands
Shepherd's Track	Wet Meadow
Shortlands	Whiry Hill