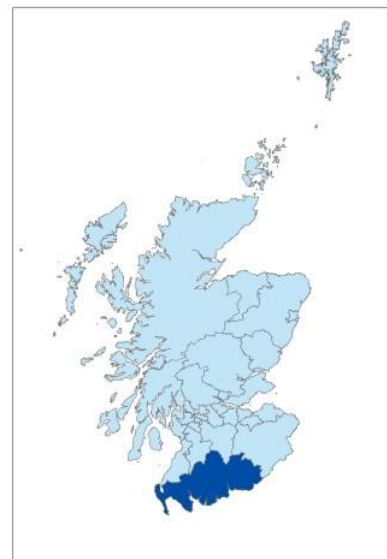


LYNSEY HALLIDAY (RCAHMS) – DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

July 26, 2013 Historic Environment Scotland Buildings, Day of Archaeology 2013
#myarchaeology, Anthony C. Wolffe, Canmore, Dumfries and Galloway, Lynsey
Halliday, RCAHMMS, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Scottish
Archaeology

I'm Lynsey Halliday, one of the collections trainees here at RCAHMS on the yearlong Skills for the Future Programme. My role here at RCAHMS is to develop archival skills, including cataloguing archaeological documentary archives and architectural drawings. I have recently catalogued a collection of Anthony C. Wolffe material, an architect with an impressive portfolio of architectural work in Dumfries and Galloway. While working with the A.C Wolffe collection, I discovered a batch of unidentified photographs. Investigation revealed that several of the photographs were of [Parton Village](#), which is situated alongside Loch Ken and the River Dee in Kirkcudbrightshire in Dumfries and Galloway. As you can see from the photograph it is a little idyllic 'L' shaped village.



Dumfries and Galloway.
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General view of Parton Village, taken from the ESE.
Copyright RCAHMS (DP082914)

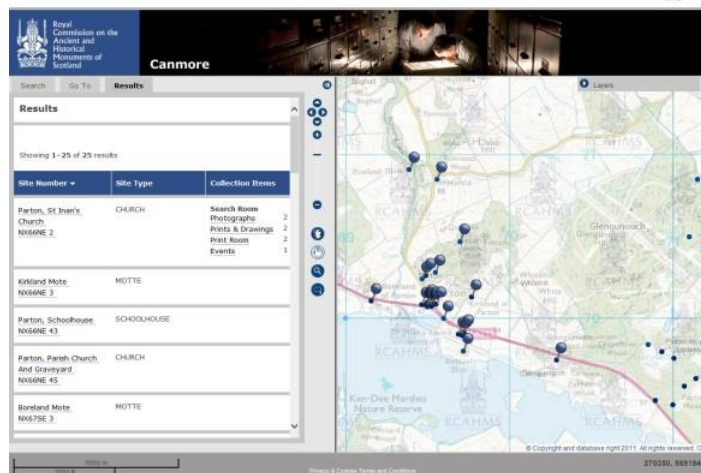
Struck by this quaint terrace of cottages, I wanted to find out more about them. The place name of Parton is first recorded in approximately 1275, and is probably derived from the Old English 'paerr-tun'. The existing cottages were built by B. Rigby Murray in 1901 when flooding made it necessary to raise the level of the previous cottages, which had housed the slate quarry workers. The slate quarry (behind the cottages) is thought to have been exploited from the 1750's

onwards. The cottages built by Rigby Murray are still lived in today. There is little visible evidence for the earlier settlement, in part due to the ephemeral nature of its buildings. Indeed comparatively little is known, and the remains which can be identified and dated are scattered and only form an incomplete narrative.

So what of the surrounding area?

Using RCAHMS [Canmore mapping](#) database, I was able to explore and hone in on the landscape surrounding Parton village to identify any interesting features.

The fertile landscape around Loch Ken and the River Dee, which surround Parton was used in antiquity to cultivate crops; a pre-Improvement field system has been identified and is depicted on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map of Kirkcudbright in 1852 (Sheet 31).



Canmore Mapping displaying sites in the area around Parton Village. 'Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2011'

Within the vicinity of Parton village is the [parish church](#) built by Walter Newall in 1834. To the east of the parish church lie the [ruins of its predecessor](#), a church said to have been built in 1592. The church was dedicated to St Inans, and so was known as Kilennan. The pulpit dated 1598 now resides in the National Museum of Antiquities.



*First Edition OS map (Kirkcudbright 1852, sheet 31)
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and database right 2011'*

Directly to the south of the parish church is [Kirkland Motte](#), a mound, probably artificial, rising from a slightly elevated plateau situated between Parton Village and the River Dee. [Mottes](#) are the surviving earthworks of timber castles, of which there was a high density in the Dumfries and Galloway region. There is a second of these medieval defensive structures to the west of Parton Village. [The Motte at Boreland of Parton](#), formed from a natural rocky hillock, is situated in an angle of the Boreland Burn, which defends it on the north and east sides. An external

rampart around the base of the hillock defends the south and west approaches.

With the road through Parton funnelled between Glengunnoch Hill and Loch Ken, the two mottes may have had a role in controlling movement and passage along the valley of the Dee. This strategic position may have been of significance in a long period of contention between Galloway and the Kings of the Scots.

Parton Village today is a charming row of terraced cottages within a rural landscape, as we have seen however this idyllic settlement is one borne out of a tumultuous past. Our past is our cultural heritage, and every place has a past, even this little row of cottages. This is what I find so fascinating about archaeology; the stories it can potentially uncover.

This is what I've chosen for Day of Archaeology, but why not tell us your favourite archaeological sites in Scotland on Twitter using [#MyArchaeology](#).