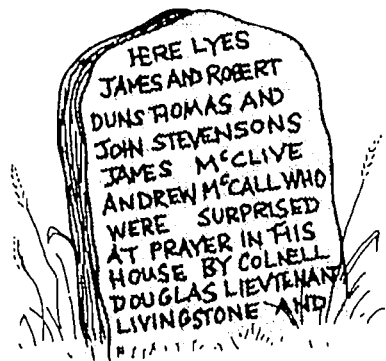


Historical Background

The Covenanters were Scottish Presbyterians who objected to English Episcopalian interference in their worship. They were called Covenanters because they supported the National Covenant of 1638 which pledged opposition to the English bishops. When Charles II was restored in 1660 many ministers left their parishes and held illegal open-air conventicles. Troops were sent in and violence erupted on both sides. Known locally as 'the killing times', one of the main persecutors of the Covenanters was John Graham of Claverhouse or 'Bloody Clavers'. Hundreds of Covenanters marched on Edinburgh but they were dispersed at the Battle of Rullion Green in the Pentland Hills on 22 November 1666. The Covenanters were routed again at Bothwell Bridge in 1670, and at Airds Moss near Cumnock, in 1680. The Rev. Richard Cameron, who fixed the Sanquhar Declaration to the old town cross in Sanquhar, was one of those killed in this last battle. The Rev. James Renwick took up the cause but was captured and executed in Edinburgh in 1688, at the age of 26. In the same year William and Mary came to the throne, relaxed the laws in an attempt to unite the country and the area became more peaceful.



Some other Covenanters' Memorials in Southern Scotland

DUMFRIES Troqueer Church: a tablet to Rev. Blackadder who died during imprisonment on the Bass Rock. Whitesands: a plaque to James Kirko, shot in Dumfries.

KIRKCUDBRIGHT The churchyard has a memorial to two hanged and beheaded Covenanters.

WIGTOWN A tall obelisk commemorates two women who were drowned for their faith: Margaret Wilson aged 18, and Margaret McLauchlan aged 63. Three other martyrs are buried here.

MONIAIVE An obelisk to James Renwick, born here in 1662.

MOFFAT A roadside memorial at the Devil's Beftub commemorates John Hunter of Corehead.

AYR A memorial to seven prisoners from Pentland, hanged by another prisoner, after the official hangman refused to do so.

GLASGOW The Cathedral has a memorial to nine martyrs: four were at Pentland, and five were hanged for refusing to answer questions.

EDINBURGH Greyfriar's churchyard still has the Covenanters' Prison which housed some 1500 men after the Battle of Bothwell Bridge. Open to the elements, many died before trial; others were shipwrecked off Orkney on the way to slavery in America.

*Produced by the Southern Upland Way
Ranger Service & the Graphics Team
Environment & Infrastructure*

Dumfries & Galloway

C O U N C I L
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The Killing

Times

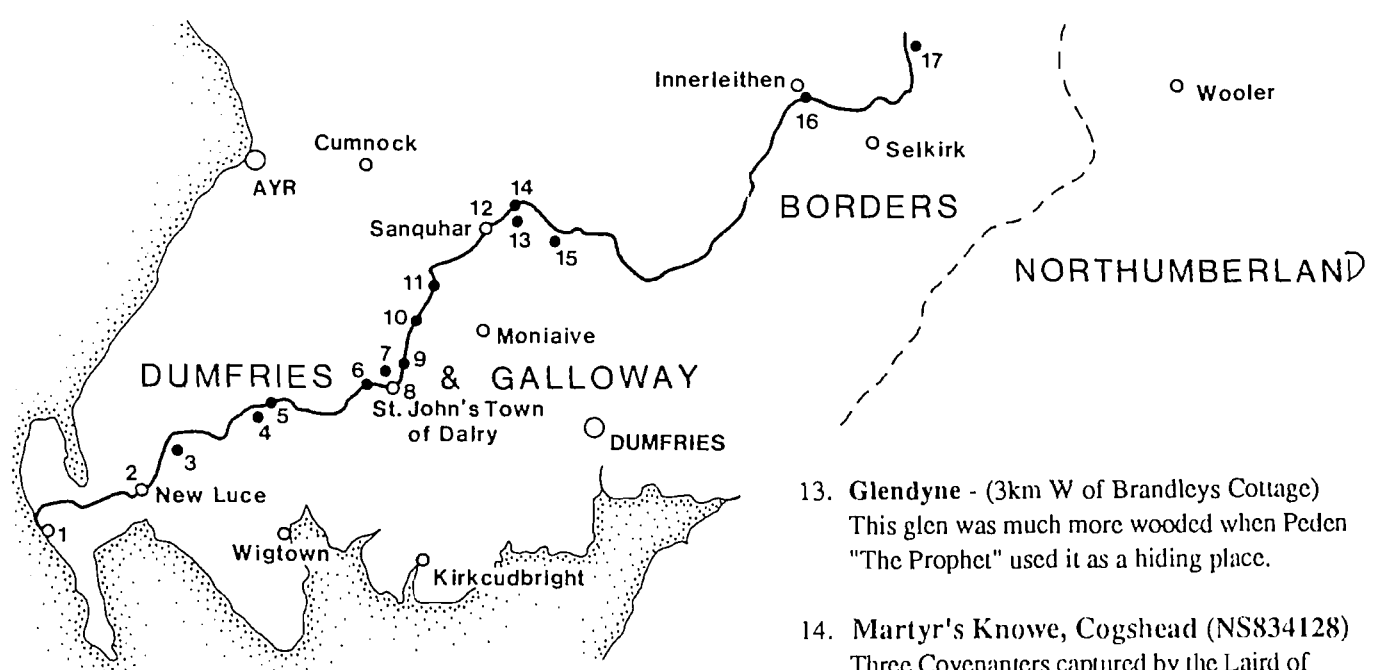
An Historical
Information
Leaflet about
The Covenanters



A Guide for Southern Upland Way

Places of Interest

- Portpatrick** - Many Covenanters sailed from this once busy harbour to safety in Ireland. Others sailed from Leith - as slaves for America.
- New Luce** - Alexander Peden was Minister here from 1659-62. He then preached in the Galloway hills.
- Linn's Tomb (NX244725)** - Said to have been a shepherd from New Luce, Alexander Linn was shot by dragoons near this spot.
- Glenvernoch (NX346753)** - Home of Margaret Wilson who was tied to a stake in Wigtown Bay and drowned by the incoming tide. The house was used to garrison soldiers and her innocent father suffered many indignities.
- Martyr's Tomb, Caldons (NX397788)** - A memorial in the woods commemorates six Covenanters surprised at prayer and immediately shot.
- Largmore (NX570823)** - Home of John Gordon. Wounded at the battle of Rullion Green, he reached home but died soon after. He is buried at Kells churchyard, 400m north of New Galloway. His son Rodger (who fought at Bothwell) had many narrow escapes from dragoons in this vicinity.
- Earlstoun Castle (3km N of Dalry)** - William Gordon of Earlstoun was killed near Bothwell; his son Alexander escaped and was free until 1683 when he was sentenced to death at Edinburgh. He was reprieved and released in 1688.
- St John's Town of Dalry** - The Pentland Rising started here in 1666.



- Ardoch Farm (NX634832)** - Robert Stewart of Ardoch was present when James McMichael slew the curate of Carsphairn. Hunted down on Auchencloy Hill, Stewart and John Grier are now buried in Dalry churchyard.
- Stroanpatrick (NX644920)** - A suspected informer by the name of Roan was killed near here by James McMichael whilst trying to escape from a group of Covenanters.
- Allan's Cairn (NS698008)** - George Allan and Margaret Gracie were shot on the Fawns of Altry, an area of open moorland 1km east of the Whigs Hole (NS671000) - a place for open-air conventicles. The monument was placed on the nearby junction of three parish boundaries.
- Sanquhar** - A tall obelisk in the High Street lies on the site of the old town cross where the Rev. Richard Cameron affixed the Sanquhar Declaration in 1660.

- Glendyne** - (3km W of Brandleys Cottage) This glen was much more wooded when Peden "The Prophet" used it as a hiding place.
- Martyr's Knowe, Cogshead (NS834128)** - Three Covenanters captured by the Laird of Drumlanrig and his soldiers made their escape here in a great thunderstorm.
- Enterkin Burn** (SW side of Lowther Hill): (i) In 1684 James McMichael, James Harkness and other Covenanters fired upon a group of soldiers who gave up their prisoners and fled. (ii) In 1688 McMichael's brother Daniel was shot at the foot of the Dalveen Pass. (iii) A few years later six Covenanters who had escaped from Edinburgh passing through the glen and effected the escape two more prisoners.
- Traquair House (NT330355) and the Minchmuir Road** - The Marquis of Montrose banged on the door of Traquair House in 1645 but was refused admission. He had fled along the high Minchmuir Road after his Royalist troops had been routed by a Covenanting Army at Philiphaugh (NT455282) near Selkirk.
- Covenanter's Well (NT535418)** - The well lies 300m SE of Bluecairn Farm, 7km N of M-Elrose