



University
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The Scottish Maidenwells

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“The geographical distribution of Maid(en)well appears to be restricted to southern Britain. I have found none in Scotland or the Isle of Man, and none in England further north than Lincolnshire, where the sole occurrence is in the south of the county. In this respect the name-type contrasts both with Maiden Castle, which is found mainly in the north, and with Lady Well, a formation represented extensively in northern Britain but also common as far south as Devon and Somerset.”
(Hough 2010: 29)



Scottish Toponymy in Transition (AHRC-funded;
2011-2014; PI Thomas Clancy)

Ordnance Survey Name Books
(<http://www.scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/>)

With thanks to Simon Taylor and John Wilkinson



Research Questions

- Is the Scottish corpus related to the English corpus?
- Do the Scottish names form a related group?
- Do the Scottish names have a religious connection?

MAIDENWELL, LAN

a fonte puella 1504

Maidenwell 1747

In 1504 the provost of Lochwinnoch collegiate church, who was also to be the rector of *Glasfurd*, had the great teinds of the township (*villagii*) of *Glasfurd*, from the Maiden's Well ('a fonte puella') to the lands of *Kittemuir*, extending to £45; and the glebe, except for a spot of ground and a manse assigned for the vicar etc.. *Glas. Reg.* p.508, quoted in *OPS* i, 102.

(THE) MAIDEN WELL, WLO

Maiden Well 1773

Maiden Wells 1832

(Maiden Well Stone; Maidenwell Brow)

“However, there is a chance that *Maiden* has been confused with *Medwin*, as the well is near to the headspring of the (North) Medwin Water below Crosswoodhill, named by the OS in its upper reaches as Maiden Burn, then Maidwin Burn.” (Wilkinson)

MAIDENWELLS, PER

Maidenwell 1843 OS 6 inch first edn

A Small row of Cottages Situated East from Parkside, With a pendicle of land attached, & Occupied by Charles Lonie and Mrs Anderson; it is the property of J. Murray Graham Esq. of Murrayshall. The Proprietor states that Maidenwells [with an 's'] is the Correct name (OS1/25/45/8)

Saints in Scottish Place-Names

Funded by a Leverhulme Trust Project Grant

St Baldred's Boat, East Lothian

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MAIDENWELLS, SETTLEMENT KINNOUL



GRID REFERENCE

NO 164 262 (accurate position)

SIX-FIGURE EASTING & NORTHING

316400 726200

NAMES

1 head-name linked to this place [?](#)

MAIDENWELLS

Maidenwell 1843, OS 6 inch first edn.

SAINTS IN THIS PLACE-NAME

Mary, Mary the Blessed Virgin, Our Lady (ns) ()

Mary the Blessed Virgin ()



MAIDENWELLS, PER

Maidenwell 1843 OS 6 inch first edn

Saints in this place-name

Mary, Mary the Blessed Virgin, Our Lady

Mary the Blessed Virgin

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MAIDENWELLS, PER

Maidenwell 1843 OS 6 inch first edn

Nearby places

Virginhall, Kilspindie (0.64 miles)

Lady Well, well Kilspindie (2.28 miles)

St Martin's Abbey, St Martins (2.44 miles)

Kinfauns, parish (2.49 miles)

St Ninian's Chapel, Kinfauns (2.49 miles)

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MAIDENWELLS FARM, KNR

Maidenwells 1859 OS Name Book OS1/25/33, 61
[all three informants, including the occupier,
James Saunders, give this form]

Maidenwell 1859 OS 6 inch 1st edn

en Maidenwells + SSE *farm*

Maidenwells contains ScEng *maiden* + ScEng *well*, ‘a well or wells associated with a maiden’.

“Carole Hough has argued that the name-type ‘Maid(en)well’ in England and Wales represents a dedication to the Virgin Mary (2010), and it is possible that this is the case here, although a note of caution is to be sounded: firstly the most northerly English example located is in Shropshire (Hough 2010, 41-44). And secondly, of the handful examples of this name-type located in Scotland, most if not all have overtly secular associations: for one example, see for example Maiden’s Well in the Ochils at NN970013, on or close to the PER/CLA border (Watson 1995, 99-100).” (Taylor et al. forthcoming)

MAIDEN'S WELL, PER

Maiden's Well 1866

OSNB: “A small spring well situated near the south side of the hillock called Maiden Castle”.

OSNB, s.n. Maiden Castle: “A small hillock or mound of earth situated in the throat or neck of Glen Quey at the south end. There is no tradition of any building ever being about it” (OS1/25/35/88).

MAIDEN'S WELL, PER

Maiden's Well 1866

“According to the *Dollar Chapbook* ... this was supposedly inhabited by the spirit of a maiden who could be summoned up at night, but would-be lovers with the temerity to attempt this were found dead beside the well in the morning. Haliburton however ... says the well was named after the captive princess who named the Burn of Sorrow &c (see under Burn of *Care*) as she was sometimes allowed to walk to the well to drink its water” (Watson 1995, 99–100).



MAIDEN'S WELL, ABD

OSNB: *Maiden's Well* (a well): OS1/1/69/69

MAIDENS WELL, ABD

OSNB: *Maidens Well (site of)*

“This was once a fine spring well but it is now run into a drain. It takes its name from two Old Maiden Ladys who used to live adjacent” OS1/1/68/64



Maidenwell, LAN

(The) Maiden Well, WLO

Maidenwells, PER

Maidenwells Farm, KNR

Maiden's Well, PER

Maiden's Well, ABD

Maidens Well, ABD

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