

## 6. A Small Victory

Elizabeth Anderson

My interest in local history was first aroused by Dr G Pratt Insh at Jordanhill Teachers Training College but it lay in abeyance till I came to Lochwinnoch. A friend asked me to try to locate some "lost" farms. My research mushroomed into intense researches into Lochwinnoch's fascinating past.

Paisley Abbey Rental Book shows how old farms are, especially those in The Glen of Lochwinnoch – the part appropriated by the Abbot on a legal technicality from the family of Glen. That is to say the lands from the Kerse to the Calder, and upwards to the Locher which flows between the parishes of Lochwinnoch and Kilmacolm.

Most farms were recognisable in spite of the strange spelling, but one remained an enigma. Barmolloch, otherwise Balmaclow etc, etc just had to be near the Kerse, or Kaimhill, or Mavisbank (now part of Nerverstone), but no one could tell me of a farm with a name remotely similar. Help was at hand.

I moaned a little to Sylvia Clark about the complexity of research into the Orrs. She suggested some papers by V Hogarth Kerr to be found in Paisley Reference Library (where else?). On my second dip into these papers I found these magic words "William Orr in 1653 Fued from Lord Cochrane of Dundonald.....lands of Caim.....and all and haile the 10/- land of Barmolloch..... Barmolloch is not on any map. Later sasines identify it with Nerverstone, half a mile north of Wester Kerse and 3 miles south of Kaim".

The Abbey, of course, had lost possession at the reformation in 1560. I dashed to Lochwinnoch to look at the Rental Book, but it was in a glass case as part of an exhibition on genealogy. It was open at a page which told the world that the tenant of Barmolloch was Alessandro Norvil (c 15<sup>th</sup> century, I think). Norvill's toun – Nerverstone. SO WHAT? A small victory, but a satisfying one.