

Glen Goyle

Location

Glen Goyle refers to the area of land immediately surrounding the stream that runs alongside Glen Road from the sea up to Cotmaton Road. The stream itself originates at Bickwell (Beeka's Well, according to the Dictionary of Devon Placenames).

Butcher's guidebook of 1810 refers to a low ham at the western extremity of [the fort field] is a pretty white house, built by Mr King of Bath and called King's Cottage. And in 1817 he writes, "In a narrow slip of ground, called a *ham*, immediately adjoining [to Belmont], which is watered by a serpentine stream, and by nature forming a lovely dell, is a pretty white habitation, called, from the gentleman who built it, *King's Cottage*."

The 1813 sale inventory for the Manor refers to an updated copy of the 1789 Day map, which seems to have been lost. However much of the indexing is the same, enabling us to identify a short access track to the Western Field, which ran up the west side of the stream, as Tinkers Lane, suggesting that prior to its occupation by Mr King, the ham here had been a favoured camping ground for visiting tinkers.



Woolbrook Cottage in 1826 seen from the beach by the bridge joining the Esplanade (known then as The Beach) to Peak Hill Road

History of ownership

Butcher states that Mr King built Kings Cottage, whereas Julia Creeke states that he transformed a previously existing farmhouse, and the Royal Glen website says that he built it in 1700. Whichever it was, it certainly did not exist in 1789, when the manor map was drawn, as being manor property it would certainly have been marked if it existed. Mr King's lease included the strip of land either side of the stream down to the coast, on which he built a new drive, replacing Tinkers Lane, on the opposite side of the stream. However, his ownership only extended to the upper end of the current Royal Glen Hotel, so did not include any part of the Glen Goyle footpath. At this time there was no continuation of the road northwards.

In 1817, Gen. Baynes bought Kings Cottage. In the Blue Plaque book, Julia Creeke records that the purchaser and initial occupier was Gen. Baynes' mother, Mary, and it is certain that she was the owner in 1839. However, the index entry for the deed of 1817 refers to the General, and the second 1817 edition of Butcher's guide describes Woolbrook Cottage as "the seat of Maj Gen Baynes". Since they were leasing the house from the manor, the most likely explanation is that it was a lease for three names (a standard form of lease in those days), the General being the first name, his mother the second, and his wife the third. As to occupation, we know that the Bayneses were in Canada in 1815 when their third child, George, was born, and in Somerset in 1820 when their youngest, Lucy, was born.

In December 1819, seven-month-old Princess Victoria moved into Woolbrook Cottage with her father and mother, the Duke and Duchess of Kent. Her father, then deeply in debt, had chosen the place both to flee creditors in London, and to make sure that his precious daughter, in line for the royal succession, remained in England. Just after Christmas, the Duke of Kent returned wet and cold from a walk, developed pneumonia and died. The next day, the Princess and her mother returned to London.

Gen. Baynes died in 1829 leaving his young widow, Ann, who remained in the house until she died in 1853, after which it was occupied by George Alexander. In 1867 it was advertised for lease. From 1878 it was an orphanage under the supervision Miss Singer. In 1883 it was bought by the Misses Culverwell and run as a boarding house, which became The Glen Hotel and ultimately the Royal Glen Hotel.

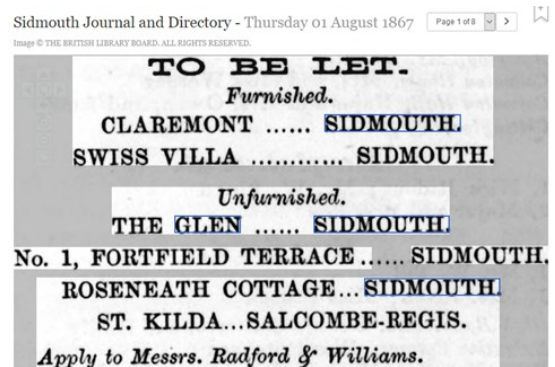
To the east, on the adjacent part of the Fortfield, Belmont was built about 1812. Its grounds had the same extent northwards as the current hotel and did not include any land adjacent to the stream. The 1888 map shows the stream had been dammed in this section. The ownership at this time needs to be checked but it appears that The Glen still owned both sides of the stream, though since the road had now been extended, things may have changed.

To the north of Belmont, the Back Fort Field was leased from the manor in 1839 by James Hook as a whole as far as the boundary with the Cotmaton estate, consisting of Old Cotmaton House, New Cotmaton House, Asherton and outhouses. This field abutted on the eastern side of the stream from the boundary of The Glen as far as the boundary of Cotmaton, and had ownership of what is now the Glen Goyle footpath from Manor Road to Seafeld Lane.

To the north and west of The Glen, again as far as the Cotmaton Estate, the Western Field was also leased as a whole, by Lousada in 1813 and by the Rev'd Hobson, owner of The Marino, in 1839. These fields were separated from the stream by a narrow belt of woodland marked in the 1839 title map. The 1888 OS map is consistent with this, but shows a footpath running through the Fortfield alongside Belmont, then following the stream north as far as the short Lane through to Seafeld Road. There is also a footpath shown crossing a footbridge into the gardens of Asherton. With the exception of the path crossing the Fortfield, these would all have been private paths.

Manor Road had been built by the time of the 1888 map, and the land either side was sold by the manor to private owners shortly thereafter – that to the east of Glen Road having been sold by the map revision of 1905.

The Glen Goyle walk, known as "Little Glen" at the time, was presented to the town by Balfour in 1905 as a through track from Manor Road to Seafeld Road. The top bit came into public ownership when the town houses were developed at the top of Cotmaton Road. Broseley Homes/Ideal Homes almost certainly gave the northern end of Glen Goyle to EDDC in 1978 as part of the planning permission. (Information from John Pendlebury, who was in charge of the company and still lives in Sidmouth). So the current position of Glen Goyle is that the bottom half is on a long lease to EDDC from STC (though STC say they have no record of this)



and the top half is owned outright by EDDC.

The section between the Belmont and Manor Road was bought by the Belmont Hotel as an extension to their garden, probably about 35 years ago now, or at least just after Brends bought the Hotel. Prior to this it had been neglected.

Biography of Major General Edward Baynes (1768–1829)

He entered the army as an Ensign in 1783. His early career was served mainly in the West Indies, including a spell as commander of a detachment of troops serving as marines aboard a frigate. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1790. From December 1794 to May 1806 he was aide-de-camp to Lieutenant General Sir James Craig whose duties took him to the Cape of Good Hope, Bengal, the East Indies, Gibraltar, Malta, Naples and Sicily with brief periods in England. Baynes was promoted to Captain in 1795, to Major in 1800 and to Lieutenant Colonel in 1802 and to brevet Colonel in 1811.

It was originally proposed to form a unit of fencibles (from "defensible") in the Glengarry district of Upper Canada in 1807. Many of the inhabitants were Catholic emigrants from Glengarry, Scotland, and some had served in the original Glengarry Fencibles, raised in 1794 and disbanded in 1802 shortly after the Treaty of Amiens had been signed, ending the war between Britain and Republican France. They had performed garrison duties in the Channel Islands and fought in the Irish rebellion of 1798. The fencibles would serve under the same terms of enlistment as regular soldiers but would be obliged to serve in North America only. In 1812 with war inevitable, Craig's replacement, Sir George Prévost, authorised the unit, appointing Captain George MacDonnell of the 8th (King's) Regiment to raise the "Glengarry levy", which initially was to have a strength of 376 other ranks. Recruits came from a wide area. Most were of Scottish origins or extraction. Recruits were granted a bounty of four guineas on enlistment and were promised 100 acres of land after the war. The efforts of the unit's chaplain, Alexander Macdonell, enabled the unit to grow to 600 men. Prévost raised the corps' status to that of a regiment and renamed it the Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles. He appointed his adjutant-general, Edward Baynes, as the regiment's Colonel, though he did not lead it in the field. Major Francis Battersby, who like Captain George MacDonnell was from the 8th (King's) Regiment, was promoted to be the unit's lieutenant colonel. MacDonnell was promoted to be the unit's major. Baynes set about recruiting men clothing and equipping them. He wrote to Prévost on 20 May 1812, "...I have purchased all the green cloth in this place (Quebec) and have commissioned a sufficient quantity to equip the regiment to render it efficient for immediate service." On 3 October 1812, two companies were stationed at Prescott on the Saint Lawrence River and were involved in a failed attack on Ogdensburg on the American side of the river. However, on 22 February 1813, George MacDonnell (now lieutenant colonel) mounted a successful attack across the frozen river. In summer 1815 the full regiment, together with the light infantry companies of four regular line regiments, formed a covering force on the Niagara Peninsula, then played a major part in the Battle of Lundy's Lane, and a detachment was present at the Battle of Malcolm's Mills, the last action of the war on the Niagara Peninsula. They were disbanded in 1816, but are commemorated by the Canadian Army's Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, an Army Reserve regiment, headquartered in Cornwall, Ontario, which incorporates the title "Glengarry fencibles" on its badge.

As adjutant-general of British North America during the War of 1812, Baynes was Lieutenant-General Sir George Prevost's principal staff officer drafting his orders and official correspondence. Baynes also corresponded personally with officers and officials in Canada and Britain. He conducted the negotiations of the Prevost-Dearborn Armistice of August 1812 and accompanied Prevost and Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo (commander naval units on Lake Ontario) to Kingston in May 1813. Noting that American ships and Dearborn's army were absent at the western end of the lake, he was delegated to command British forces on the Sacket's Harbour raid 27-29 May 1813. Following a successful skirmish against reinforcements, Baynes landed with the troops and put American militia and volunteers to flight, but they were unable to dislodge American regulars from buildings at the edge of the town and dockyards. Once American resistance intensified, he sought Prevost's concurrence to recall the troops and return to Kingston. His decision was unpopular but probably correct. Prevost appointed Baynes to negotiate a ceasefire proposed by American Secretary of State James Monroe at Champlain, NY, on 1 May 1814. However, his American counterpart

arrived with no authority to negotiate and the talks ended that day. On the recommendation of Prevost Baynes was promoted to major general in June 1814. This was resented by other commanders who had arrived with experience of the Peninsula War. During the Plattsburgh campaign of September 1814, Baynes served as adjutant-general of the British Left Division. The British turned back after their ships were defeated in the Battle of Lake Champlain, making it impossible for them to secure lines of communication. Commanders considered that Prévost and his staff (including Baynes) had planned and executed the operation badly. Baynes returned to England after the war in 1816. He was largely unknown in the British Army, which now had large numbers of veteran officers of the Peninsular War, and remained on half pay until his death, in Sidmouth, in 1829. He was buried at Salcombe Regis.

Biography of John Carslake(1785-1865)

The Carslakes owned the Cotmaton Estate at the northern end of Glen Goyle from the 17th Century. John Carslake was born in 1785. He joined the navy spending time in the West Indies before becoming midshipman on The Victory in 1803, serving with distinction at Trafalgar. In 1809, on board HMS Prosperpine blockading Toulon, the ship was taken and John was imprisoned at Verdun. Release came in 1814 with Napoleon's defeat, whereupon he married Thomasine Leigh. John and Thomasine rarely lived on the estate as their finances required the income from letting the several properties.

Names of the house, stream & valley

There is no record of a name for the stream or the valley until 1817, when Gen. Baynes leased Kings Cottage and renamed it Woolbrook Cottage, implying that the stream was called the Wool Brook. In the Blue Plaque book, Julia Creeke records that it was his mother who moved in first, and may therefore have chosen the name. Either way, it is a strange choice as it is the same name as the main tributary of the Sid that runs from Core Hill down through Stowford and Woolbrook Village to join the Sid just to the East of Exeter Cross. Since the Bayneses were newly arrived, it is possible that they mistook the name, or simply liked it.

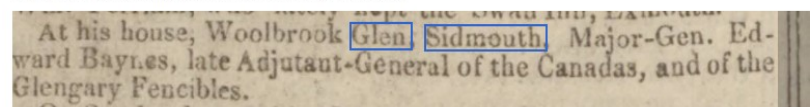
Others have suggested that the name of the stream is ancient and comes from Old English for "small" ("hwonli" is small in Old English) or 'Brook coming immediately from a spring, not yet joined by another' ("well" is a spring in Old English). Either of these names could apply to any stream in the Sid valley and is therefore a poor choice if the purpose of a name is to distinguish it from others. The house would then have been named from the stream. The first guide book to suggest that the stream had a name was Mogridge (1836). This may be contrasted with the other Woolbrook which was recorded as Ullebroke in the 12th century, which the Dictionary of Devon Placenames interprets as "Ulle's Brook", i.e. a personal name. However, others have differed on the origins of this name also.

The first reference to Woolbrook Glen, rather than Woolbrook Cottage, is in the obituary to Gen Baynes (right). As noted above, the house became The Glen from 1867.

Exeter and Plymouth Gazette - Saturday 14 February 1829

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The path from Manor Road to Seaford Lane was called Little Glen in 1905 when given to the public. The name Glen Goyle is obviously more recent than that, but its origin has not been found. Glen is Scottish for a valley, while Goyle is Devon dialect for a ravine.

Manor Road and Cunningham's Lane

The 1789 map shows no paths or tracks across either the Fortfield or the Western Field, though no doubt people crossed them anywhere when crops were not being grown. However, it does show a number of short tracks running into the Western Field from Peak Hill Road and Cotmaton Road, including Tinkers Lane, running up the west side of what is now Glen Goyle, and another running between where Witheby and The Marino would be built. In Butcher's 1810, 1817 and 1820 guide books a bridge is mentioned at the bottom of a field below Witheby – and it is shown in an etching in the 1817 edition. The etching also shows a path from Witheby into the field, but this is not oriented as a continuation of the access track. The 1839 title map shows Fortfield Terrace, together with a footpath running along the line of manor road and another running

from behind Fortfield Place to join it. The path crosses the bridge and then runs as a fenced lane up to join the short access track at Witheby. This path is described as a gravel walk in Butcher's 1828 guide, suggesting something created for pleasure. Julia Creeke, in Sidmouth's Long Print: "A Picture in Time", reproduces an early print showing the path looking towards the town and suggests it may have been created about 1825. However, she has also suggested that it may have been an ancient right of way cutting across the strip fields of the Western Field to get to Boughmore. Close inspection of the Long Print reveals that the path is present, indicating that it was there in 1814. Nevertheless, I would still hold to the view that it was created by residents of the new houses on Cotmaton Road, rather than by farm labourers from Boughmore.



Remains of the iron bridge under the modern Manor Road bridge at the bottom of the Western Field below Witheby



Witheby in 1817

Manor Road appears in the 1888 map, newly built and with the only houses those at the far western end (Redlands, Westbourne etc). By 1905, the eastern part had been fully developed with large houses whose names are familiar in the blocks of flats that have replaced them: Glenside, Kenandy, Abbeydale, Brinkburn etc.

Landscaping, Planting etc

The 1888 map shows that the lower part of the stream was dammed in several places to create pools and waterfalls. One of these is visible in the picture below.

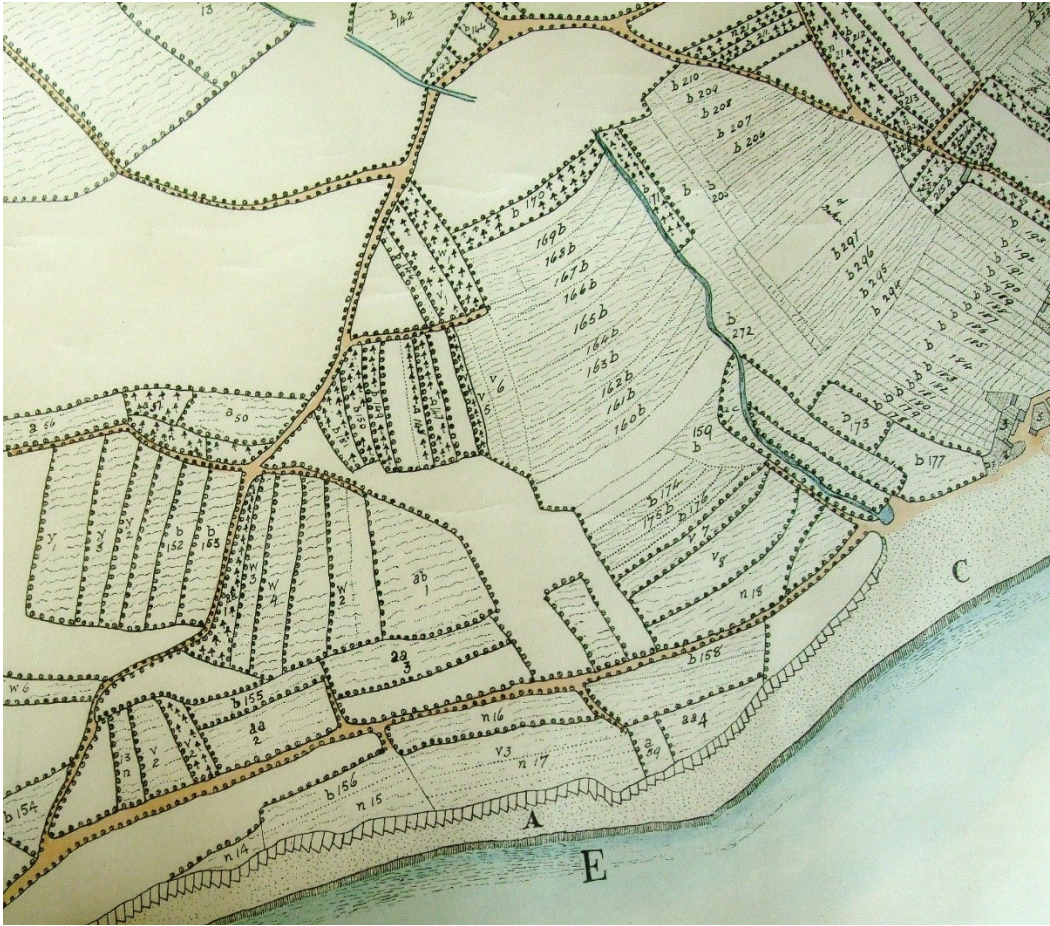


The trees make a contribution to the story. There are the two large Monterey Cypresses. They cannot be older than Victorian because they first arrived in the UK in 1838. Monterey Cypresses grow very quickly and they are probably only about 100 years old, planted when the area was developed by Balfour and Sampson. The oldest tree as you walk through the Glen is the Oak near the footbridge which is probably 200-250 years old, but that is inside the wall of Cotmaton House. The Oak beside the path across Manor Road inside Belmont is the oldest tree in the whole Glen, somewhere between 3-400 years old. Any others of similar or greater age have been lost either to development or Dutch Elm Disease. The manorial map shows the part between Asherton and what is now Manor Road, as a tree lined strip among the allotment strips and these are most likely to have been pollarded Elms because Elms were the main hedgerow tree in Regency and early Victorian times according to the guides, rides and other sources such as Elizabeth Barrett's diary.

In the early post-war period, the Goyle behind the Belmont was pretty overgrown. When Brends took over the Hotel they tidied it up and it was obvious that they intended the area nearest Manor Road to be a Woodland garden, damming the stream and bricking up the sides to create a pool. Spates in the stream soon silted this up so it became a rather muddy area.

Above Manor Road the area originally was a quite pretty area. On the right-hand side of the footpath some of the original plantings remained of shrubs and azaleas. On the other side were a few rhododendrons and down in the stream was a Gunnera and another water loving plant with a large yellow spathes and some astilbies together with ferns and some bluebells. Over the years there have been some vicious spates down the stream and these washed out all these plants. I think EDDC must have removed the Gunnera. As the trees have grown ever larger so the amount of light reaching the plants has decreased. The rhododendrons became more and more spindly and eventually were removed. The other shrubs have also suffered from lack of sun light and the badgers, who colonised the stream bank and each year invade all the gardens adjoining the Goyle, make a great mess in the process and further damage the plants.

When the upper section was acquired there were some handsome trees including a magnificent Monterey pine and a magnificent specimen of a Lime tree. The pine blew down in a gale and the Lime was felled.



1789



1839



1888



Now