

NAMES ON THE COAST

In the past, the communities of the Causeway Coast did not end at the sea, but stretched to include people living on the West Coast of Scotland. The sea was central to trade and communication rather than acting as a barrier.

Almost every landing place, spring, cave, bay, rock and headland has been named. An intimate knowledge of the coastline was vital for fishing and the gathering and processing of seaweed, not to mention smuggling. As these industries have disappeared, the need for the names has lessened. Many have fallen out of use, despite being an aid to navigation.

CAPPLECARRY CLIFF

Interpreted as ‘the rock encrusted mare’ or ‘the mangy horse’ because of its appearance.

KATE’S ROCK AND ESTHER’S HOLE

Believed to refer to spots where individual women gathered dulse and limpets and did washing.

CARRICK-A-REDE

Carraig a Róid – ‘rock of the road’ or Carraig an Raid – ‘rock of the casting’



This rocky outcrop interrupts the summer migration of the Atlantic salmon as they travel west along the coast. Engraving by Rev. W. Hamilton, 1786, courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

LACADA POINT

Leac Fhada - ‘long flagstone’

Misinterpreted as a Spanish name, Lacada was identified as the likely location of a Spanish Armada wreck. By coincidence the wreck of the Girona was found here.

Spaniard Rock at the west end of Port na Spaniagh. The name commemorates the wrecking of the Spanish Armada on the North Antrim Coast.

PORTMOON

Port Muáin – ‘Muáin’s port’



Portmoon, one of several old salmon fishing stations dotted along the Causeway coastline. The fishing bothy has been restored and is now used by local kayakers.

Many names for landing places were clearly established when Irish was the dominant language. Several survive in Gaelic form, unusual in North Antrim.

PORTNALUG

This was a good place to collect lugworms, which were used as bait for long-line fishing in the winter.

PORTCOON

Port Cung – ‘narrow port’



Portcoon Cave. Local legend tells of a hermit who vowed to spend the rest of his days in prayer and fasting in this cave. He was only saved from starvation by accepting food offered to him by a seal. Courtesy of Andy McInroy.

PORTNABOE

Port na Bó – ‘the cow’s port’

Possibly named for a rock shaped like a cow. Now sometimes called Camel’s Rock or Hump.

PORT NA TRUIN

‘the port of the miserable wretch’

PORT NA GAEITHE

‘the windy port’

