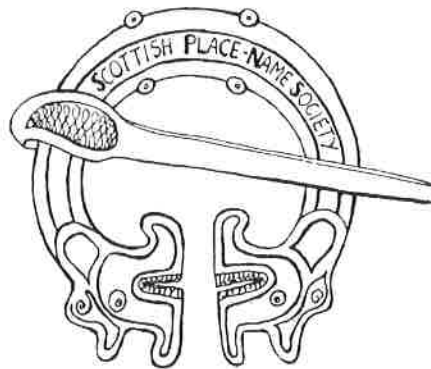


# SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME NEWS

No. 7

Autumn 1999



The Newsletter of the

## **SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY COMANN AINMEAN-AITE NA H-ALBA**

### **The postal address of the Scottish Place-Name Society is:**

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### **Membership Details**

Annual Membership £5, to be sent to Peter Drummond, 2 Albert Place, Airdrie ML6 6DT

### **Website**

<http://www.st-and.ac.uk/institutes/sassi/spns/index.htm>

**WELCOME** to issue 7 of *Scottish Place-Name News*, with notice of our fourth **Autumn Conference** to be held in **Aberdeen** on Saturday 6 November. Full details and registration form are included with this issue.

Readers may have noticed a kind of order emerging in the last few issues of *Scottish Place-Name News*, with topics relating to specific areas of Scotland being arranged alphabetically by the pre-1975 Counties, except for summaries of papers given at the May or November

Conferences, which always come first, in the order in which they were given. Those which deal with a specific area, however, are now cross-referenced under County.

### **AGM and CONFERENCE**

The Society's third AGM was held in the David Hume Tower, University of Edinburgh, on 8 May this year and was attended by around 35 people. It coincided with the Society's sixth day- conference.

**Committee:** The changes in the office-bearers are as follows: Treasurer **Carole Hough** is resigning after three years in office. The Convenor thanked her warmly for her hard work and key contribution to the Society in its crucial first three years. A new committee member, **Peter Drummond**, was elected, and will be the new Treasurer. No nominations had been received for the position of Convenor, which according to the Society's constitution should be held for no more than 3 years. It was therefore proposed that **Ian Fraser** remain in the post for a further year, and this was accepted by the AGM. At a subsequent Committee Meeting (June 1999), **Morag Redford** agreed to take over the office of Secretary from **Doreen**

**Waugh**, to whom warm thanks were expressed for her efficient work as Secretary over the past 2 years. The Committee now consists of:

**Ian Fraser** (Convenor)  
**Doreen Waugh** (Vice-Convenor)  
**Morag Redford** (Secretary)  
**Peter Drummond** (Treasurer)  
**Simon Taylor** (Newsletter Editor)  
**Maggie Mackay** (Carnegie Place-  
 Name Database Project Liaison)  
**Peadar Morgan**  
**David Munro**

#### Treasurer's Report

The outgoing Treasurer was pleased to hand over to her successor a healthy balance of £2,588.57. This largely reflects membership payments from the Society's 283 members, 23 more than a year ago.

#### Scottish Place-Name Journal

There was a brief discussion about the viability of such a venture, which would entail the raising of subscriptions, as well as a large amount of editorial work. Although remaining a long-term aim of the Society, it was generally agreed that the time was not yet ripe for such a venture.

#### Scottish Place-Name Database Report

*Simon Taylor gave a detailed report on the progress of this project, summarised here:*

One of the stated aims of the Society is the promotion of what will be an important national project - the Scottish Place-Name Database. The first stage is a Pilot Project in receipt of £26,000 funding from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. This stage is due to finish in March 2000, by which time it is intended to have in place a flexible and user-friendly relational database structure as well as a database manual, which will fully explain the database both to the potential user and data-provider. To this end the Project has contracted myself and Ed Dee, the principal computing officer at Edinburgh University Computing Services and an acknowledged database expert. We will be building on, refining and completing the

work started 6 years ago by Terry James and myself. It was decided to take this course because it was becoming increasingly difficult drawing on Terry James' expertise. He is based in Wales at the Royal Commission, and has played a fundamental role in the development of the Database project. He was generously devoting much of his spare time to the Database, but this spare time was getting less and less through a promoted post at work, as well as through illness. The Database Project owes him a deep debt of gratitude.

Ed Dee and I started working together on 20 April, and are meeting on average about once every three weeks. It is hoped to have the first draft of the user's manual ready by late autumn. This will then be put out to various interested parties, including the Scottish Place-Name Society Database working group, which at the moment consists of Dauvit Broun, Ian Fraser, Carole Hough, Anke-Beate Stahl, Doreen Waugh and myself, with Maggie Mackay in her capacity of fund-holder of the Carnegie Project. I would like to take this opportunity to thank this group for its support and input.

There is a considerable amount of existing electronic data which can be put into the database once the structural work is complete. This data will include all the medieval and modern parish-names throughout Scotland, with early forms and linguistic analysis of the names. It will also include the full toponymy of several individual parishes, ideally from different areas, representing different parts of the wide spectrum of languages and types of sources we have here in Scotland. By 'full toponymy' I mean at the least a collection of early forms and linguistic analysis of all the names appearing on the O.S. Pathfinder map.

Another aspect of the database which has been the cause of much time and effort on the part of the Database Working Group is the issue of copyright. Intellectual property rights and copyright concerning all electronic data is fast becoming a legal quagmire. Before the Scottish Place-Name

Database acquires any datasets it must be sure that this issue has been fully thought through, and to this end the Project has engaged the services of a copyright lawyer.

Discussions have also been taking place with both the Royal Commission, who are contributing a small sum of money to the Database Project, and Edinburgh University Data Library regarding distribution of the database on the web. These have been put on hold, but as soon as the structural work is complete it is intended to resume discussions.

Simon Taylor

*Full minutes of the AGM will be available before the business meeting at next year's AGM. Anyone wanting to see them beforehand, please send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary, c/o the Scottish Place-Name Society (address on p. 1).*

### MAY CONFERENCE

The Conference held at the same time as the AGM consisted of 3 longer papers and a forum which included short reports. There follow brief summaries of these papers.

### ALONG AN ATHOLL BOUNDARY

*The first paper was by John Kerr, of Calvine, Atholl, entitled **Along an Atholl Boundary**. This had been held over from the November 1998 Conference due to illness. Beautifully illustrated, with two projectors, the speaker followed an 18<sup>th</sup>-century boundary between the estates of Lude and Blair Atholl.*

The Commonly of Glen Tilt and Glen Fender in the south-east corner of Blair Atholl parish and its extent, within a defined boundary, was drawn in the 'Plan of the Common of Glen Tilt' in 1808 by a land surveyor, David Buist. By using this plan and its accompanying boundary charter, many of the place-names along it can be interpreted to reveal information about the topography and land usage of the area.

*Mon a C'larach (mòine na chlàraich: 'moss or bog of the plain') and Fea Garroe na Clarach (fèith gharbh na clàraich: 'rough bog-burn of the plain') define the type of terrain found on a wide expanse of upland over 200m above the glen floor. In contrast Fuaran Raon Dui (fuaran raoin duibhe 'spring of the field in shadow') highlights another glen feature. Because of its steep sides, rentals in the glen sometimes showed differences according to whether the farm was in the 'sunny' or 'shadow' part. Fuaran means 'spring' and sometimes a 'pool where cattle stood to cool themselves'.*

Many of the names here relate to cattle and sheep and their grazing areas, and also milk and butter, indicating their once vital role in the economy of the glens. For example Aldnaba (allt na bà: 'burn of the cow'), Slocht Vuilt (sloc a' mhuilt: 'hollow of the wedder'), with sloc meaning a den or place of shelter, and Drumnabeachan (druim nam beachan: 'ridge of the beasts') indicate livestock usage. Named boundary stones are at Beallach Rìgh nan Uan ('pass [bealach] of the sheiling of the lambs'), Beallach na Daorre (bealach na doire: 'pass of the thicket'), Clach Lude ('Lude's stone') and Tom Chlarich ('knowe of the plain'). The boundary crosses two fords: first Aan [àthan] na Hecrabeg: 'little ford of the enclosure') and second Aan n' Lui (àthan nan laogh: 'little ford of the calves' [or an laoigh 'of the calf']). Fasscarie (fas carrach: 'rough or rocky stance') indicates a location where livestock were penned, and there are two named head dykes, one on Drumnabeachan ('ridge of the beasts') and the other at Drumchat (druim a' chait 'ridge of the cat'). At its northernmost point the boundary turns sharply at Lurg na Cloich Ban (lurg na cloiche bàine or nan clach bàna 'shank of the white stone or stones'), a ridge of quartz high on the hillside.

Boundaries are an integral part of the landscape and some of these names have lingered for centuries. There is little romance in the names on the commonly

boundary, rather they are the naming of human purpose and endeavour.

John Kerr

*A more detailed study of this boundary appeared in an article by John Kerr entitled 'Along an Atholl Boundary', Nomina 13 (1990), 73-89.*

### EXPLORING THE PLACE- NAMES OF THE ANGUS GLENS

The second speaker was **David Dorward**, from St Andrews, who is compiling a database of the place-names of north Angus comprising the whole of the parishes of Glenisla, Corachy and Clova, Lethnot and Navar, Lochlee and the upland parts of Kingoldrum, Kirriemuir, Tannadice and Fernie, all of Angus north of the Highland Boundary Fault, most of which lies above the 500 foot contour line. Given its upland nature, names for relief features abound, especially those derived from Scottish Gaelic *monadh* 'hill, muir, upland grazing'. This is a Pictish loan-word into Gaelic, but in one important name we know that it goes back to the Pictish period: the Mounth, the name for the whole upland area between Angus and Aberdeenshire. Some hill-names containing *monadh* have been assimilated to the related word in English, 'mount', giving the somewhat inappropriate Mount Keen and Mount Blair. It is notable that *beinn* ('mountain, (peaked) hill') is of infrequent occurrence, Ben Reid and Ben Tirran being the only two convincing examples. Other 'ben' names may rather, because of their topography, represent the Gaelic *being* 'bank, ridge', a loan-word from Scots *bank*, such as Benscravie and Bennygray. The characteristic hill-name in Angus is undoubtedly *creag*, of which there are over 100. This is followed in frequency by around 80 eminences with the Scots *hill*, while Gaelic *càrn* gives almost 50 hill-names.

The Glens of Angus show a rich layer of Scots as well as of Gaelic place-names, containing elements such as *latch*

('bog-stream'), *grain* ('side valley or stream'), and *stripe* ('streamlet').

The database contains some 1200 headwords and since about half of these have one or more derivatives, the total runs to well over 2000 names, only a small fraction of the names that have existed in the past. Some exist in early boundary charters, but are no longer identifiable. Take a walk up any of the Angus Glens and you will come upon dozens of stone piles, representing some long-lost dwelling, which must at one time have had a name, and been surrounded by many names for small features such as fields and rocks. Many of these are irretrievable, but to find an elderly inhabitant who can recall one or two of them is, as you may imagine, one of the great delights in the game of toponymics.

*As mentioned in the last issue of Scottish Place-Name News, the Scottish Place-Name Society, through the efforts of David Dorward, and with kind permission of the estate of C. P. Will, has republished Will's Place Names of Northeast Angus, (Arbroath, 1967), which covers in great detail the parishes of Edzell, Lethnot and Navar, and Lochlee, adding a full index by David Dorward and a short introduction by Simon Taylor. Requests for copies should be made, along with cash or cheque for £5 (which includes p. & p.), to the Scottish Place-Name Society [address above p.1].*

### THE LAND AND ITS OCCUPANTS: CLUES AND CHALLENGES IN THE PLACE-NAMES OF EAST LoTHIAN

This was the title of the third paper, given by **William Patterson** from East Linton. A thought-provoking and wide-ranging survey of East Lothian, it drew on Mr Patterson's extensive knowledge of places and place-names in that toponymically rich but neglected county. Northumbrian (northern Anglo-Saxon) names arrived as early as the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD, and to the earliest stratum of these names may belong

the lost medieval *Lyneringham*, probably surviving in the field-name Laringham Hill between East Linton and Stenton. Another early Northumbrian name is probably Whitberry, surviving in Whitberry Point, a low, rocky promontory on the north side of Tyne Mouth. On Whitberry Point is a large, round mound. RCAHMS in 1975 deleted the record of this mound as a presumed Bronze Age cairn on the basis of information from the Tynninghame Estate factor that there had been a wartime installation there. However, OS maps before WWI show a 'cairn' there. It is likely that this cairn is the *be(o)rg* (berry) of the name, an Anglo-Saxon word which can mean both 'hill' and 'burial mound'. This name is not to be found on modern OS Pathfinder or Landranger maps. Nor is 'Kilmurdie', first recorded on 18<sup>th</sup>-century estate plans, applied to a small but prominent natural knove s.w. of North Berwick. The personal name Muiredach (modern Gaelic *Muireach*, English *Murdoch*) combined with Gaelic *cill* 'church'? If this was a genuine *cill*-name, it would be an important addition to the group of such early names in eastern Scotland. Another late-recorded name which might reflect early Gaelic church presence is the 18<sup>th</sup>-century field-name *Dysart* above Phantassie near East Linton.

Brittonic (Cumbric) names are of course more frequent and better documented, as this was the underlying linguistic stratum in East Lothian to which Northumbrian, Gaelic and, later, Scots, were added. Some of these names confirm the picture from modern archaeology that by Votadini times (i.e. late Roman period) East Lothian was already a relatively treeless and intensively farmed and managed countryside, with those place-names containing elements meaning 'tree' or 'wood' showing that these must have been rare enough to serve as a distinguishing feature. A remarkable example of continuity regarding woodland is Pressmennan (*Presmunet* 1160 *Melrose Lib.*) 'copse or small wood of the hill or upland', by Stenton (NT6273); Pressmennan Wood is today the site of one

of East Lothian's oldest fragments of woodland. More substantial woodland is indicated by Cumbric \**coet* (modern Welsh *coed*) 'wood, forest'. Apart from its well-known occurrence in such place-names as Keith (the territory containing Humberie), Pencaitland and Dalkeith (MLO), it might be found in Sauchet Water, the name of the burn which flows past Stenton. This may represent Cumbric 'willow wood', but unfortunately no early forms of this name exist.

### ANGUS

See the summary of the conference talk given by **David Dorward**, above p.4.

### ARGYLL: SUIL-SITES ON LUING

The Isle of Luing lies to the south of Oban in Argyll. A small well on the island called *Tobair-na-Suil* [OS Pathfinder form NM75 11] has traditionally been associated with medicinal properties for eyesight. This association may be mistaken and the original purpose of the well could be more interesting and more ancient.

On Luing there are two Celtic fortifications, Ballycastle fort and Dun Leccamore. At the time of the forts (between 200 BC and 300 AD) the island had apparently had an early-warning defence-related communication system with fortified lookouts at strategic places. Lookout duty would have required individuals with responsibility and good eyesight, precisely those young adults a community would have been least able to spare for a non-productive function. In the interests of minimum use of manpower the communication system had to be efficient and relay stations avoided.

Modern practice with a radio 'net' is to have all signals routing through a central HQ. Applying this principle to the situation of Ballycastle fort yielded the requirements for a theoretical communications HQ. This position had to have line of sight with two (possibly three) fortified coastal earthworks, an observation post covering a short section of coast blind to the lookout posts, a view of the S.E. sea

approaches to the island and, of course, sight of Ballycastle fort itself. Only one small area on a ridge fulfils all these criteria. In this area is a pit cut into the bedrock of the ridge. A radar survey earlier this year confirmed the pit was an artifact and that it originally was not very deep. After this discovery it was realised that not far to the north lay *Tobair-na-Suil*. Instead of an 'eye well' might this not have been the 'watcher's well'? The alternative meaning of *sùil* is 'cast of the eye in any direction'. It is easy to imagine how, over the years, knowledge of the original purpose of the well might have been lost and its association with eyesight arisen. After all, those whom it was for would have had the best eyesight in the community. The second Luìng fortification, Dun Leccamore, lies to the south of Ballycastle fort. This new position was not suitable for direct observation of all the supposed lookouts. In particular a western observation post would have required an intermediate relay. Near to one of the few suitable relay positions is Biennein Furachail meaning "watchfulness, watchman's, or lookout hill". Are there other *sùil*-placenames? Yes, there are and some at least may be associated with other iron-age communications - but that's another story!

Peter Lamont  
Luìng

The *Luìng Newsletter* has more about Peter Lamont's work on *sùil*-sites in Luìng, as well as a general article on Luìng place-names. Copies of all the Newsletters have been deposited in the National Library of Scotland. The relevant articles are:

King, H., 'What's in a (Gaelic) Name?', *Luìng Newsletter* vol.3 no. 8 (1983)

Lamont, P., 'Luìng Hillforts and the Missing Earthwork or Luìng's Early, Early Warning System!', *Luìng Newsletter* no.35 (winter 1997/98)

Lamont, P., 'Luìng's Early Defences Part II: Ancient Names?', *Luìng Newsletter* no.36 (summer 1998)

## EAST LOTHIAN

See the summary of the conference talk given by **William Patterson**, above pp.4-5.

## INVERNESS-SHIRE: RUM

Scottish Natural Heritage/*Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba* has brought out a well-produced little book with accompanying map on the place-names of **Rum**, by Peadar Morgan, Director of Comann an Luchd Ionnsachaidh and SPNSoc. committee member. Entitled (bilingually) *Rum: Island Place-Names/Rùm: Ainmean Àite an Eilein*, it achieves the aims stated in the brief introduction: to review all known island place-names setting out a correct or standard version for each of the named locations - very necessary given the 'remarkable variety of spellings' used in the many maps and books about the island. It also provides translations for the place-names and indicates how they should sound, using an easy to understand guide to pronunciation. Besides all the place-names, the map shows all walking and pony routes, as well as spot heights; scale is 1 inch to the kilometre.

Price £1 for the booklet; £1 for the map (£2.50 for laminated map). From SNH Reserve Office, Isle of Rum PH43 4RR Tel. 01687 462026.

## KINROSS-SHIRE: PERAMBULATING THE MARCHES

*This is a summary of the paper Perambulating the Marches: Disputed Boundaries and Division of Commonty as Sources for the Toponymy of the Lomond Hills given by Dr David Munro at the SPNSoc.'s Conference last November (1998) in Perth.*

The western portion of the Lomond Hills lying in Perth and Kinross (from 1685-1975 in Kinross-shire; till 1685 in Fife) forms a dramatic scarp- and dip-slope feature with a solid geology that comprises layer upon layer of sedimentary rocks capped by a volcanic lava sill of quartz dolerite. The names on today's maps covering this area are few and far between

but historic documents of two types yield a wealth of place-names from days when the hills were frequented by cattle-herds and quarrymen.

Much valued in the past for its natural resources of stone and grazing, that portion of the western Lomonds known as the Bishop Hill was the subject of a series of boundary disputes that occurred between 1389 and 1793. Though relatively infrequent, these disputes provide useful comparative sources for place-names on the boundary between the estate of Arnot and the lands of Bishopshire.

On 9 March 1389 the dispute between Sir Henry Arnot and the bishop of St Andrews culminated in the perambulation of the march between their respective lands. The 'more well-to-do, nobler and older' men of the sheriffdom of Fife gathered at Kinneston (*Kynnesktoun*), along with Bp. Walter and Sir Henry. A group of 22 men comprising 7 knights, 7 gentlemen and 8 commoners set off from the River Leven (*the watter of Levine*), the record of their perambulation describing some 19 key landmarks along the way [SRO GD 150/263 f.32r-v].

The same march was the subject of a long-running series of disputes during the 18th century. These are documented through legal processes that took place in Kinross Sheriff Court in 1724, 1763, 1764 and 1790. Witnesses in proof described the boundaries, recalling names that can be equated with those mentioned 400 years earlier. The Shoggle Boggle Well described by 80-year old John Thomson in 1724, for example, is likely to be the *Tulyn' of Bogill* noted in the 1389 perambulation.

While boundary disputes proved useful place-name sources on the open hill, they tend to focus purely on the names along the line of march. An under-utilised source for place-names over a wider area can be found in legal processes associated with divisions of commonry. An Act of the Scottish Parliament in 1695 provided for the dividing of common lands, a process that gathered pace during the 18th-century period of agricultural improvement.

The process of division of commonry could occur several times over a single piece of land, each division being recorded through legal processes in either the Sheriff Court or Court of Session. In 1729, for example, the Commonry of the Bishop Hill was divided amongst 7 farms and fairmtoun villages in Kinross-shire. Nearly 70 years later in 1795 the portion that had been allocated to Wester Balgedie was further apportioned through a division of commonry to 6 feuars in that village.

Each of these processes of division yields its own array of place-names describing not only boundary landmarks but also sources of water, tracks, quarries and other features associated with contemporary use of the land. Details of the Division of the Back Brae of Wester Balgedie in 1795 are recorded not only in written documents but also on a plan drawn by the vellum-maker John Birrell, a part-time surveyor living in the neighbouring village of Kinnesswood. His parchment plan records, for example, the *Kippit Hill*, the *Crook Road Head*, the *Lintwhite Moss* and the *Horse Heugh Burn*.

Documents associated with boundary disputes and divisions of commonry provide a rich source of place-names. Not only that, they are a window on aspects of social and agricultural change.

## LANARKSHIRE: GOVAN

A lively and well-informed debate anent the origins of this important name has been going on in the pages of recent issues of the Annual Reports of *The Society of Friends of Govan Old*. It all started in the 1996 Report, when Dr Thomas Clancy made the suggestion that earlier proposals for the origin of the name, deriving it from Old Gaelic *gobae* 'smith', or from the diminutive of OG *gop*, *gopán* 'little beak, promontory', must be rejected. Instead he proposed a derivation from Cumbric \**gwovan* 'small crest, hill or promontory'. In the 1997 Report this was challenged by Dr Alan Macquarrie, who re-asserted the *gopán* derivation. In the 1998 (Eighth)

Report Dr Clancy came back with a spirited and, to my mind, convincing defence of his original proposal. All three articles are well worth reading. *Copies of the Reports can be obtained from The Society of Friends of Govan Old, Hon. Secretary Mrs Irene Hughson, Banklug Farm, by Shilford, Neilston G78 3AY.*

### PERTSHIRE: ATHOLL

See the summary of the conference talk given by **John Kerr**, above pp. 3-4.

### PERTSHIRE: SANCTA CRUX WELL

John Wilkinson's piece 'A Pictish Healing Well in Perthshire?' (*Scottish Place-Name News* no. 6) has generated several responses. The name in question is the well which appears as **Sancta Crux Well** (OS Pathfinder Sheet 324 NO 049487), Dunkeld and Dowally parish, immediately east of the house or croft called Grewshill (OS Pathfinder Sheet 324 NO 048487). The well appears in 1657 as *Gruis Well*, and is known locally as Grews Well. Before summarising the different arguments and contributions, it is necessary to see what the Ordnance Survey Original Name-Books record about this name. These are the valuable and often illuminating notes taken about each name by the OS surveyors when making the OS first edition 6 inch maps in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Microfilm copies of them are kept at West Register House, Charlotte Square, Edinburgh and in the library at the RCAHMS, John Sinclair House, 16 Bernard Terrace, Edinburgh (accessible to the public).

It may also be relevant to find out what lies behind the place-name Coire a' Chaibeil ('corrie of the chapel') which lies less than a kilometre south-west of the Sancta Crux Well (NO044478). Again the OS Name Books should help here.

Many thanks to those who have written in. There will be more on this topic in the next Newsletter.

Editor

### INTERNET NEWS

*Henry Gough-Cooper, 'our man on the Internet', writes:*

Two new hot sites that should be of interest: the English Place-Name Society is now on-line (although still no sign of their proposed on-line dictionary). The site contains details of their publications and is at

<http://www.nott.ac.uk/english/research/EPNS/page1.htm>

What promises to be a breakthrough search engine: FAST Search "all the web, all the time" is at

<http://www.alltheweb.com/>

They intend to have all the web indexed in the next two years and thereafter be able to keep up with new sites.

Best of the rest:

The website of the Heritage Council of Ireland has now been substantially updated and can be found at  
<http://www.heritagecouncil.ie>

For second-hand books try

[www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)

[www.bibliofind.com](http://www.bibliofind.com)

[www.alibris.com](http://www.alibris.com)

The first two are by far the best: for instance, at ABE Books over eleven million titles are listed.

Dave Postles' (University of Leicester) interesting project to put early English Charters on-line is at

<http://www.le.ac.uk/elh/pot/wsussex/wsuss ex.html>

or start at

<http://www.le.ac.uk/elh/pot/medfram.html>

Finally, the Institut Geographique National now has a contact on its web site for place-name etymologies at

[www.ign.fr](http://www.ign.fr)

I tried this out (for my Kentigern wild-geese-chase [for which see next item]) and



they were most helpful. Perhaps our geographers would like to reciprocate?

### ON THE TRAIL OF KENTIGERN

In reconsidering John Morris' conjecture that St Kentigern was one-time bishop of Senlis. I have been investigating place-names outwith Scotland and Cumbria that appear to contain references to Kentigern or Mungo. So far, I have noticed three such: "Mungo's Grave", near Kelvedon, Essex; Llangendeirn, Carmarthenshire; and Tregondern near St-Pol-de-Leon, Finistere. Further suggestions are welcome, and fully referenced notes available from: HenryWGC@cs.com

The disconcerting "Mungo's Grave" was the name of a great sarsen boulder, still *in situ* in the 1950's, lying on the axis of a system of rectilinear fields and lanes of possible Roman origin. "Mungo's Grave" is unlikely to be a reference to the saint. Unrecorded until the 19th century, it may be a jokey reference to Mungo Park, the celebrated explorer who disappeared on the river Niger in 1806. Enigmatically, however, a Breton personal name *Mingghi* (stone+dog) occurs in Essex in the 12th century. It is to be wondered what historians a thousand years hence will make of "Hitler's Grave" in Galloway (NX515615) - complete with dated inscription!

Llangendeirne in Carmarthenshire (SN456140) is the only place-name in the British Isles exhibiting Kentigern's "full" name. The physical evidence of the churchyard suggests an early origin but the place-name can only be traced back to the 16th century and it has been suggested that Llangendeirne may simply reflect a late dedication to the founder's favourite saint. However, the names in *llan-* usually display a marked conservatism: Landawke (Llandauc) came to be dedicated to St Margaret of Scotland but preserves the original name "Doccus". Two Kyndeyrns appear in the Welsh genealogies, but the entry for Kyndeyrn map Kyngar is late and may be an attempt to "explain" a dedication to Kentigern at Llangendeirne.

With Trégondern in Brittany is associated, curiously, Roserf which appears to be *ros+serf* "Serf's hillock". In legend, Serf is Kentigern's "godfather". However, the etymologist of the Institut Géographique National, Paris, considers Trégondern to be *tref-konk-edern* "the hamlet of the bay of (saint) Edern" (private communication). An alternative etymology might be *tref + conderm* "Conderm's vill" (compare Llangendeirne, 1609 *Llangandern*) in which case, Conderm (or Condiern) would be the saint, or *machtiern* of the *lan* around which Trégondern was constituted. In the absence of earlier forms, it can only be tentatively suggested that the name of the eponymous founder of this estate might be Kentigern rather than Edern.

Henry Gough-Cooper

### OGAM INSCRIPTIONS REVISITED

This spring SPNSoc. member Dr Richard Cox of the Department of Celtic, University of Aberdeen, brought out what may well prove to be the most controversial book of the year in medieval Scottish studies. Entitled *The Language of the Ogam Inscriptions of Scotland*, with the secondary title 'Contributions to the Study of Ogam, Runic and Roman Alphabet Inscriptions in Scotland', it claims that many of the Scottish ogams were in fact written in Norse. More on this in the next issue.

Obtainable from Department of Celtic, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 3UB price £12.50 (hardback) + p. & p. UK £1.50. Elsewhere £2.50 surface, £4.00 airmail.

### PONT MANUSCRIPT MAPS: PRINTOUTS FROM DIGITAL IMAGES, PHOTOGRAPHS AND PHOTOCOPIES

At present digital images of Timothy Pont's manuscript maps (produced in the 1580s and 1590s) may be viewed only in the Map Library, National Library of Scotland.

Please telephone first if you wish to view the images in the Map Library, or require advice about technical requirements, to ensure that staff and equipment will be available (0131-226-4531 ext 3413).

Different sizes and qualities of printouts are available: prices quoted do not include VAT or postage/packing and apply until the end of March 2000.

### STANDARD PRINTOUTS

- Customised colour printouts using an inkjet printer (resolution 300dpi) - Size up to A4 (£1.40)
- Customised black & white digital photocopies (resolution 600dpi) - Sizes A4 (£0.48) and A3 (£0.56)
- Customised black & white digital photocopies (resolution 300dpi) - Sizes A1 (£2.10) and A0 (£4.20)

These printouts are suitable for research purposes but not for display or publication, when a higher resolution may be required. A3 and A4 sizes are recommended for enlarged details, but not for whole manuscripts. For A3 and A4 standard printouts, orders will normally be processed within 1-2 working days of the order, depending on staff and equipment availability. A0 and A1 printouts may take 1-2 weeks.

### HIGH QUALITY COLOUR PRINTOUTS

High quality colour printouts on glossy paper (resembling photographic prints) are available at a resolution of 720 dpi using an inkjet printer. These printouts are suitable for display or publication and can show finer detail. Although the Pont manuscripts are not in colour (except for some "grid" lines in red, believed to have been drawn to help copying and engraving) colour printouts do sometimes assist with interpretation, especially when different inks have been used.

Diana Webster  
Head of Map Library  
National Library of Scotland  
33 Salisbury Place  
Edinburgh EH9 1SL

### FLORA CELTICA SCOTLAND 2000

*A Millennium Project co-ordinated by the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.*

'Our natural resources, the traditional knowledge associated with them, and the habitats in which they are found, are fundamental elements of our national heritage. In Scotland the tradition of using native plants is strong, and it has defined much of the social, economic and natural landscape. Nevertheless, traditional businesses, products and crafts are now disappearing as their markets are overtaken, and knowledge is lost as people become more and more divorced from the land. At the same time, habitats are being destroyed, and resources once important in local economies are vanishing.

The Millennium is a time when people across the world will be re-examining their lives and cultures. It thus provides us with a timely opportunity to look back at our relationship with our native plants over the last thousand years, to examine our present use of these resources, and to consider their roles in our future.'

*Members of the SPNSoc. will realise that Scottish place names often record information about plants and their occurrence, particularly in the economic and natural landscape. If you are interested in plants in place names and believe that you have useful information to pass on to the Project co-ordinators, please contact the Vice Convenor, Doreen Waugh, who has further information about the Project. You should address letters to the Scottish Place-Name Survey, School of Scottish Studies and mark the envelope FLORA CELTICA.*

### NORTHERN IRELAND PLACE-NAME NEWS

The Place-Name Project at Queen's University - a cultural initiative documenting the history and origins of place-names in Northern Ireland - has won funding of more than £400,000.

The grant, from the Arts and Humanities Research Board, is the second major boost for the Project. It follows the award of a £100,000 grant from the same body earlier this year.

The new funding, allocated over a five-year period, will be used to produce a publicly available interactive electronic database on North Ireland Place-Names, as well as two more books in the Place-Name series.

The original Northern Ireland Place-name Project was established in 1987 within the Department of Celtic at Queen's University, Belfast and funded mainly through the Central Community Relations Unit. Funding ceased 2 years ago, and, until this new award, its future looked bleak. During this first phase the Project produced 7 superb volumes, each of which is an in-depth study of place-names from well-defined areas of Northern Ireland, 4 deal with different areas in Co. Down, 2 in Co. Antrim, and 1 in Co. Derry. A projected 8th volume will be on Armagh City, Co. Armagh. All are available in paperback, excellent value at £8.50 each (£20 hardback), obtainable from the Project secretary (address below).

Continuity between the first Project and the new one is assured by the fact that the new Director (Dr Nollaig Ó Muraile, Department of Celtic, Queen's University, Belfast) and Project Manager (Dr Kay Muhr) had similar roles in the first one.

**"Celebrating Ulster's Townlands" Exhibition:** The Ulster Place-Name Society has been funded by the Heritage Lottery to mark the Millennium by a travelling exhibition called "Celebrating Ulster's Townlands", which will be visiting Scotland in Spring 2000. An accompanying full-colour booklet will include more names than appear in the 12 panels themselves, as well as a list of books for further reading. The themes are place-name connections with landscape (inland and coastal), natural history (plants, birds, animals), geography, archaeology, mythology, history, maps,

Irish, Norse, English and Scots languages, families, local customs and folklore.

It will be at Glasgow University in March 2000, followed by Girvan in April. More details will be given in the next issue of *Scottish Place-Name News* (Spring 2000). If any SPNSoc. Member would be interested in helping with the exhibition while it is in Scotland, or even staging it in their own area (some time in 2001), please contact *Project Secretary, Mary Conway, Northern Ireland Place-Name Project, c/o Celtic Studies, 7 University Square, Belfast BT7 1NN Tel. 01232 273689; Fax 01232 324549; towns@clio.art.qub.ac.uk*

Please note that there is no hire cost for the exhibition, but whoever takes it is responsible either for collection or for delivery to the next taker.

### PLACE-NAMES AND WHITE SETTLERS

*White Settlers: the Impact of Rural Repopulation in Scotland* is the title of a book by C. Jedrej and M. Nuttall (Harwood Academic Publishers, Luxembourg 1996; paperback £12.99, 195pp.). A detailed review by SPNSoc. member Dr Mairi MacArthur of this 'sympathetic and positive' book can be found in *Scottish Affairs* 22 (Winter 1998), 129-33. There is a particularly good and important chapter entitled 'Contested Landscapes', which examines the elements which build up a relationship between people and place. The value of place-names is strongly spelled out as an astonishingly detailed repository of information about people and events, belief and practices. Incomers, who do not have the key to this local lore bank, understandably create their own set of associations, and the highly personal 'memoryscape' thus comes to be eroded twice over: once through the loss of locals and the disappearance of a particular way of life, and again by the superimposition of new names and/or meanings from outside. The careful recording and publishing of local place-names and their traditions therefore play a

crucial role in bridging the divide between the older population and incomers.

*Thanks to Mairi MacArthur for drawing this to the editor's attention. The above draws heavily on her review.*

### **MORE ON (NOT) THE MEANING OF LIFF**

In the last issue of *the News* (Spring 1999) I wrote a short piece on Adams' and Lloyd's very unserious and toponymically unilluminating *The Meaning of Liff* (1983). In response I was pleased to receive from SPNSociety preses Prof. Bill Nicolaisen an article he had written on the sequel, *The Deeper Meaning of Liff* (1990), entitled 'More Fun and Names' in *Sprache, Onomatopöie, Rhetorik, Namen, Idiomatik, Grammatik: Festschrift für Prof. Dr. Karl Sornig zum 66 Geburtstag* edd. Halwachs, Penzinger, Stütz, (Grazer Linguistische Monographien 11, Graz, 1994), 157-62 [!]. This is a more positive as well as more scholarly analysis of *Liff* than my own. It succeeds in assigning the different invented meanings of the 130 Scottish place-names to different categories, as well as making some very thoughtful points about the relationship between names and words. As it appears in an Austrian publication, it ends with 12 Austrian names 'lifficised' i.e. place-names 'de-nominalised' and assigned lexical meanings for which single words do not otherwise exist (neither in German nor English), for example *Söll* (noun) 'the itchy bit of skin under your wristwatch on a hot day'; and *traisen* (verb) 'to talk with great authority on a subject about which one knows absolutely nothing'. If 2 people *traisen*, then you have to hope that there is no-one around who is able to *inverinate*, which means, according to Adams and Lloyd, 'to spot that both people in a heated argument are talking complete rubbish'!

Editor

### **PROFESSOR ROBIN ADAM: A TRIBUTE**

On 10 July 1999 the death occurred of Robin Adam, Professor of Mediaeval History at St Andrews 1975-1987. He was

74. His obituary appeared in both *The Scotsman* (5 August) and the *Glasgow Herald*. He took an active interest in the history of Scottish landscape and settlement, and was therefore keenly involved in Scottish place-name studies, as well as in *Project Pont*. In 1997 he gave a paper at the Pont Seminar in Edinburgh on the Pont maps of Angus, a detailed examination of Pont 26, particularly its right hand half, recording place-names, people and the history revealed through the manuscript. As with everything he did, it was meticulously researched, skilfully put together, and thought-provoking. More recently he was researching Pont's depiction of Sutherland and north-west Ross, and was making a special study of place-names in that area, especially those containing the element *poll*. He was a frequent visitor to the NLS Map Library, and his knowledge, insights and enthusiasm will be greatly missed. His published works of particular relevance to Society members include: *John Home's Survey of Assynt*, Scottish History Society 1960; *Papers on Sutherland Estate Management*, SHS 1972; *Calendar of Fearn*, SHS, 1991; 'Meathie-Lour: A Parish Exploration', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 1993.

Chris Fleet  
NLS Map Library

### **POSTBAG**

I am horrified by the suggestion (noted in a report in *Scottish Place-Name News* no. 6), mercifully from Ireland, that street names might be open to change by local plebiscite. "Lakeside Park" is a glaring example of the 'genteel-ising' so greatly favoured by developers as a selling point.

The proliferation of 'Court', 'Close', 'Mews', 'Park', 'View' in private schemes, and even in those of local councils, is to be deplored.

No doubt the inhabitants did not want to be associated with James Connolly [the Edinburgh-born socialist Irish republican politician executed by the British at the time of the Easter Rising in 1916]. Such naming after political figures,

royalty, local landowners, was common practice in the 19th century. And what about O'Connell Street in Dublin? [as well as Connolly Station, Dublin's main station, named after the same James Connolly].

The trend today by enlightened authorities to search old farm- and track-names for new developments is admirable, although too often marred by tacking on some unsuitable term for 'street'. An example in Edinburgh is Peacocktail Close, where the first element commemorates a coal-seam in the Jewel colliery, but the 'Close' no doubt intended to suggest the aristocratic calm of the environs of an English cathedral, is totally unsuited to its position in a former mining area.

Dr May Williamson  
Edinburgh

### END-NOTE

*This was sent in by Mr David Wallace, a member from St Andrews:*

"So there lie the place names, slumbering like soldiers in Kaiser Frederik's underground fort; they are waiting for the correct watchword, the blaring trumpet, which will rouse them from their sleep and bring them to form their serried ranks," wrote the [Danish] historian H.V. Clausen in his monograph *Studies in the Ancient Settlement of Denmark* of 1916. To form serried ranks of place names one has to date them. But can one?"

This is taken from L. Hedeager *Iron-Age Societies: from tribe to state in northern Europe, 500BC to AD700* (translated J. Hines). 1992. p.187. There then follows (pp.187-90) a useful summary of toponymics and archaeology in Denmark, and how these disciplines can together help create a comprehensive picture of Iron-Age settlement in Denmark.

### GALL-GHAIDHEIL: THE WESTERN ISLES IN THE VIKING WORLD

This is the title of a multi-disciplinary conference, drawing together recent research, including toponymy, to be held 3-7 April 2000 in Stornoway. *More information from Mary MacLeod, Arc-*

*èolaiche nan Eilean, Museum nan Eilean, Francis St., Stornoway HS1 2NF (tel. 01851 703242). Anyone wishing to give a paper should contact Dr MacLeod by 30 September.*

### DIRECTORY OF MEMBERS

In Newsletter no. 2 (Spring 1997) a Directory of Members of the Society was published, with postal, fax and e-mail addresses, and notes on relevant interests and publications. This was followed by an up-date in Newsletter no. 3. It was intended to produce up-dates, with new members and changes of address, to be included in future Newsletters from time to time. However, at its meeting in Dec. 1998, the Society's Committee decided that it would be more practical to produce a separate Directory of all the membership as of Spring 1999, with the same details as in the previous Directories. This would mean that all the membership would be included in one document, rather than scattered throughout several Newsletters. These were prepared for the May 1999 AGM, and are available from the Society price £1 + 30 pence p. & p.).

### WHAT'S ON around Scotland?

#### • ABERDEENSHIRE

**6 November: Scottish Place-Name Society Day Conference in Aberdeen.** See separate Registration form attached.

#### • DUNBARTONSHIRE

**5 October: 'Place-Name Boundaries',** a talk to the Cowal Archaeological & Historical Society by Ian Fraser, 7.30 pm, the Camera Club, Castle Street, Dunoon.. Contact Sheena Fisher, tel 01369 704 593.

#### • EAST LOTHIAN

**11 January 2000: 'Lothian Place-Names',** a talk by Ian Fraser to the Cockenzie & Port Seton History Society. Contact Jean Johnstone, Tel 01875 810 520.

**25 March 2000: Family History Fair, Town House, Haddington.** This is a series of lectures and workshops given by a number of speakers, including Rosemary Bogwood, Ian Fraser (Place-Names), Dorothy Kidd (Scottish Life Archive), Ian MacDougall (Scottish Working People's History Trust), Diana Webster, NLS Map Library and Diane McNicoll, local surnames researcher.

- **FIFE**

**28 October:** 'Place-Names of Cupar', talk to the Cupar Historical Society (H. A. L.) by Simon Taylor. **7.00 pm, Age Concern, Provost Wynd, Cupar.**

- **KINROSS-SHIRE**

**21 October:** 'From Bogies Reed to the Lintwhite Moss: rediscovering place-names on the Bishop Hill', the Michael Bruce Lecture by David Munro, **7.30 pm, Portmoak Parish Hall. All welcome.**

- **PERTHSHIRE**

**8 October:** 'St Fillan and his association with Strathfillan and Glen Dochart', inaugural talk to the Strathfillan History Society by Simon Taylor, **7.30 pm, Village Hall, Crianlarich. All welcome.**

**27 October:** 'Place-Names of the Carse of Gowrie', a talk to the Carse Association for Continuing Education by Simon Taylor. **7.00 pm, West Carse Hall, Glencarse.** Contact Mrs Katharine De Maine, Westways, Glencarse, Perth PH2 7LF.

**29 October:** 'Perthshire Place Names', a talk to the Breadalbane Heritage Society by Ian Fraser, **7.30 pm, the Lesser Hall, Aberfeldy.** Contact the Secretary, Gillian Hull. Tel. 01887 840380.

- **ROXBURGHSHIRE**

**25 November:** 'Place Names from the Oral Tradition of Wester Ross', a talk to the *Gaelic in the Borders Group* by Ian Fraser: **7.45 pm, Kings Arms Hotel, Melrose.** Contact Anna Tucker. Tel 01578 722 433.

**8 February 2000:** 'Scottish Place-Names', a talk by Ian Fraser to the Dunbar Churchwomen's Guild: **7.30 pm, Dunbar Parish Church.** Contact Margaret Obrzud, Tel 01368 863882.

- **SUTHERLAND**

**19 February 2000 onwards:** 'Oral History, Names and Dialect in Caithness and Sutherland', tutor Doreen Waugh: one of the Aberdeen Centre for Continuing Education courses, in **Dunbeath.** For more information contact the Centre for Continuing Education, Regent Buildings, University of Aberdeen AB24 3FX, Tel. 01224 272449 or 01224 273599.

**PLEASE LET THE EDITOR KNOW ABOUT ANY TALK OR OTHER EVENT WHICH WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO THE MEMBERSHIP.**

*Please note that back copies of Scottish Place-Name News are available from the Society for £1.50 (which includes p. & p.).*

<p>Deadline for material for next Newsletter: 20 January 2000</p>
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