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An innovation at the SPNS's spring conference at New Galloway was the follow-up tour on the next day, to places of toponymic interest in the Glenkens. This scene shows some of the party returning to the bus from a hillock named Knocktinkle, south of Dalry. A suggested explanation for the Gaelic name is Cnoc (an) Timchill, *one of three so named places in Galloway, all with broad views of the hunting grounds of the Forest of Buchan. Here* cnoc *is a 'knoll' and* timchioll, *'circuit', would refer collectively to a group of beaters hemming in the game, with Knocktinkle being the mustering point. The farm buildings just visible below the horizon left of centre are at Fintloch (*fionn tulach*), standing on White Hill, an approximate translation. Tulach is a very rare element in Galloway Gaelic place-names. The rugged hills in the distance are the Rinns of Kells, a name which draws on* rinn *('promontory'), a characteristic feature of the range, and less certainly* coille *('woodland'), referring to ancient forest commemorated in the names Forrest Lodge, Fore Bush and Backhill of Bush.*

EDITORIAL

It is easy to work out from a glance at an atlas why the usage in English of the name 'Sea of Japan' is not enthusiastically endorsed by Koreans; it may even be a rare matter on which Koreans north and south can agree. Harder to make sense of is why some folk, instead of delighting in the linguistic diversity and complexity of place-names in Scotland, are reluctant to acknowledge it. Thus, for instance, all manifestly Germanic names must be of Norse rather than Old English provenance; or plainly Gaelic names in the south of Scotland are attributed vaguely to a stratum of Celtic older than a brief and marginal incursion of Irish into Argyll in about the 9th century AD. Maybe there is a fear that conceding the Gaelic origin of Ballencrieff or Auchendinny would be a slippery slope to the wasting of billions on bilingual road signs and to thousands of accidents to drivers disoriented by visual overload; or enforced Gaelic medium education in the schools of Coldstream and Langholm.

Those whose interest in Scottish place-names is about learning or unravelling a little more of the truth are at risk of being accused at some point of pursuing a political agenda, by someone more ideologically comfortable with a 19th century version of Scottish ethnic and linguistic history. If that happens, it may be best just to explain that much in the subject is still unclear and we find an even-handed pursuit of knowledge the most rewarding approach, even if the results conflict with common beliefs; and we can be reasonably confident that most people with any interest at all in the subject share that view.

WIGTOWNSHIRE AND CARRICK PLACE-NAMES: A COMPARISON

Conference organiser **Michael Ansell** summarises **Professor John MacQueen**'s talk at New Galloway.

Professor MacQueen began his talk by quoting William Watson[1] 'Everything goes to show that the introduction of Gaelic and the decline of British followed much the same course in both districts' (referring to Carrick and Galloway). However the talk was confined to a comparison between South Ayrshire and Wigtownshire, these being areas for which Prof. MacQueen had more place-name data available. The lecture was then based on an analysis of one or two difficulties with the position as outlined by Watson. In describing these, Prof. MacQueen examined the distribution of certain place-name elements in South Ayrshire and Wigtownshire. These were the Gaelic land measure terms *peighinn*, *leith-pheighinn*, *fairdean*, *dabhach*, *ceathramh*, together with the landscape features *sliabh* and *carraig*. He compared this with the Brittonic *tref* and other Brittonic elements.

For the purpose of this summary, the gist of the argument may be put by recounting the position put forward relating to each of the above place-name elements. Prof. MacQueen firstly demonstrated divergence from Watson's position by examining the Brittonic element *tref* which he explained as being derived from Welsh law relating to a communal farm of 256 acres and therefore indicative of farmed settlement. He pointed out that the simple term 'Threave' may represent local centres of some weight and gave the example of Threave in Kirkcudbrightshire which, located in a strongly defensible central position, remained for long a place of importance. The difference in distribution of this term was shown to be dramatic across the area in question with a very

[1] *Watson W. 'History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland', 1926, p.191*

considerable number surviving in the Carrick and South Ayrshire river valleys, particularly those of the Girvan Water and Ayr. However only three are to be found in Wigtownshire and one, Ochiltree is close to the Carrick border. Prof. MacQueen suggested that this indicated that Brittonic may have survived much longer in Carrick and South Ayrshire than in Wigtownshire.

A significant contrast in distribution was next demonstrated by an analysis of the Gaelic element *ceathramh,* a quarterland. Prof MacQueen emphasised the Irish origin of this land division and showed how its distribution provided a mirror image of the distribution of the Brittonic *tref* element mentioned above. Only one *ceathramh* name was shown to be over the watershed in Carrick (Colmonell parish) whereas there are many examples in Wigtownshire.

The interesting differences in distribution of some other place-name elements were next examined. Prof. MacQueen demonstrated that the Gaelic land unit names *peighinn*, *leith-pheighinn*, *fairdean*, were also largely confined to South Ayrshire with some remarkable concentrations in the same Carrick river valleys where he had earlier demonstrated *tref* survival clusters. The Germanic origin of these terms, though borrowed into Gaelic and forming a part of a land holding system stretching up the west coast of Scotland into Argyll and the Hebrides was mentioned in the context that this suggests a later arrival of this land unit naming system. Prof. MacQueen stressed that the contrast in place-name distribution of these elements suggested something fundamentally different had taken place in settlement north and south of the watershed that forms the historic boundary between Carrick and Galloway. The picture he glimpsed from this and other evidence was that of an earlier and densely settled Gaelic province of Wigtownshire which was aligned strongly with Ireland and Irish patterns of land-holding, in contrast to the late surviving Brittonic areas in Carrick. This suggested a different political reality in the zone north of the watershed which was more open to later influence by settlers bringing in a new land holding system, this time derived from Argyll and the Hebrides. He considered that the new influence could have arrived in Carrick and South Ayrshire with the Gall Gaidheal which would fit with late Brittonic survival prior to a rapid and thorough Hebridean Gaelicisation. His point however was that this

Gall Gaidheal tide seems to have slowed at the watershed between Galloway and Carrick. South of this, in Wigtownshire, existed a Gaelic-speaking province but of a somewhat different, more Irish orientation.

Further support for this differentiation was cited by Prof. MacQueen with respect to the place-name element *dail*. He agreed with Watson that this prefix may be a Brittonic survival or a borrowing into Gaelic and the fact that there are 46 *dail* names (albeit coined in Gaelic) in Carrick and South Ayrshire compared to just 4 in Wigtownshire suggests a stronger Brittonic legacy in the north.

While the distribution of *dabhach* was looked into by Prof. MacQueen the relative scarcity of this element (3 in Carrick and 1 in Wigtownshire) precluded any specific conclusions. Indeed it might be that this element in South West Scotland does not relate to a land-holding unit but simply to a topographical feature or even fish-traps as noted by Maxwell.[2]

Prof. MacQueen concluded his paper by noting that the distribution of the Gaelic elements *sliabh* and *carraig* are massively concentrated in South-West Scotland, in Wigtownshire and especially the Rhinns. He has elsewhere proposed that the distribution of these elements indicates early Gaelic settlement, possibly contemporaneous with the Dalriadic settlement of the inner Hebrides and Argyll. While he acknowledges the occurrence of *sliabh* more widely in Scotland he considers that the sheer weight of the presence of these elements where *sliabh* forms the generic has to be taken as something of significance for early Gaelic settlement.

SLIABH *IN IRISH PLACE-NAMES: ITS MEANING, DISTRIBUTION AND CHRONOLOGY, AND SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR SCOTLAND AND MAN*

[2] *Maxwell, H. 'Studies in the Topography of Galloway', 1887, p. 144*

Ireland is covered in detail in an article to be published in *Nomina* 2009, only the key points are given here. The concluding remarks about implications for the study of Scottish and Manx place-names, not included in the *Nomina* article, are given in greater detail.

The word *sliabh* is one of the most common generic elements in Irish hill and mountain names. Along with *binn, cnoc, cruach* and *mullach,* I made it the object of study for a Masters dissertation in 2004 ('Five common generic elements in Irish hill and mountain names', M.A. dissertation, Queen's University Belfast, 2004). An article summarizing the key findings is forthcoming in *Ainm,* the journal of the Ulster Place-Name Society). These are the five most common elements in the names of major Irish peaks over 400m in altitude. Like the other four elements, *sliabh* is found widely throughout Ireland and can be applied to hills and mountains of greatly varying heights. It is also one of the most complex elements in terms of its semantic range and the grammatical structures into which it enters. This in itself is sufficient reason to examine the element *sliabh* in Irish place-names in some detail.

Furthermore, *sliabh* has engendered more than a little debate in Scottish toponymy, primarily because of a theory concerning early Gaelic settlement in South-West Scotland proposed by John MacQueen (1954, 2002) and developed by W.F.H. Nicolaisen (1976, 2001, 2007). Since this theory relies heavily on an analysis of Irish names in *sliabh* which has, in my view, rightly been challenged by Simon Taylor (2002, 2007), it is no harm, also for the benefit of Scottish place-name studies, to review the available Irish evidence for this element. I see this controversy as having been exacerbated to some extent by a shortage of published work on the Irish evidence, and, in particular, the lack of a thorough analysis of the meaning and distribution of *sliabh* in place-names, at least until the 1970s. This allowed Sir Herbert Maxwell to make the rather contentious statement in 1930 that "in Ireland *sliabh* always signifies a mountain, but in Galloway it is applied to moorland" (Maxwell: 1930, 76). I should emphasise that it is the first half of this statement with which I take issue. Of course, *sliabh* is often translated into English as *mountain,* but it must be borne in mind that in Hiberno-English *mountain* has precisely the sense of 'rough pasture' or 'moor' ('In Ireland, wild pasture', *Chambers English Dictionary*, 1990). The

first major contribution to an analysis of the names in *sliabh* (along with *binn* and *cruach*) was an article written in Irish by Éamonn de hÓir, Chief Officer of the Place-names Branch of Ordnance Survey Ireland, published in the journal *Dinnseanchas* in 1971.

The etymology of *sliabh* has already been covered in some detail by Simon Taylor in his article in *JSNS* 1. The focus in this paper is on the semantic range of *sliabh* in Irish place-names, the geographical distribution and chronology of its various senses, and I shall conclude with some remarks about the implications arising from the Irish evidence for the study of this element in Scotland, particularly Galloway, and in the Isle of Man.

Treatments in dictionaries and place-name works

Sliabh (genitive *sléibhe*, plural *sléibhte*) is defined in Dinneen's Irish-English Dictionary as 'a mountain or mount, a range of mountains; a mountainous district, a heathy upland or plain, a piece of moorland, oft. low-lying; in Anglo-Irish, a piece of a "mountain", cf. S. an tSíorraidh, Sheriffsmuir (Sc.)' (Dinneen: 1927). These definitions highlight the variety of meanings of *sliabh* in Irish. In what follows it is important to bear in mind that Hiberno-English *mountain* also has a broad semantic range. As well as referring to a peak, it can denote 'moorland' or 'rough pasture'.

An account of place-names containing the element *sliabh* is given by Joyce in volume 1 of *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places.* Most of his examples relate to what he calls 'principal mountains' and ranges, but he acknowledges its occurrence in names of low-lying areas. He also highlights the variety of anglicisations which can disguise this word (Joyce: 1869, 379-81). 280 names in *slíab* attested in early Irish texts are listed in Hogan's *Onomasticon Goedelicum.* Not all of these are places in Ireland, and there are quite a few duplicate entries due to variant forms of names (Hogan: 1910, 604-12).

Semantic range of *sliabh* in Irish place-names

From my own examination of the place-names evidence, I have found that the three principal definitions of *sliabh* offered by dictionaries can all be found in Irish place-names as well, namely:

> (1) a mountain or hill
> (2) a range of mountains or hills
> (3) a moor or area of upland; an area of rough (mountain) pasture.

Within these categories further nuances can be recognized. For instance, the first group can be further sub-divided into:

(1a) a mountain or hill standing alone
(1b) a peak forming part of a range.

Naturally, whether a mountain is considered to stand on its own or form part of a larger group is a question of degree of isolation, so assigning peaks to group 1a or to 1b can occasionally be a subjective choice. Nevertheless, the majority of names can be assigned to a group without too much difficulty.

Within the scope of my MA dissertation I collected a total of 143 names in *sliabh*. Since this study focused on names of peaks and ranges, the vast majority of these names belong to categories 1 and 2. More recently I have collected instances of *sliabh* in townland names, many of which illustrate sense 3. Out of a total of 165 townlands, 6 of these contain *sliabh* as a simplex, 83 show it as a generic followed by a qualifier, 6 have it as a generic in a close compound, 13 have *sliabh* plus a suffix, and 57 have the element as a specific. Between the 143 names of peaks and ranges and the 163 townland names, there is an overlap of 16 names which refer to both a peak and a townland named after it, such as Slievemore on Achill, Slieve Gullion and Brackagh Slieve Gallion. However, the remaining 147 townland names mostly exemplify *sliabh* in sense 3, a moor, area of upland, or an area of rough pasture.

The distribution of the various senses can be summarised as follows: about half of the names collected in category 1a are from Ulster. Sense 1b is typical of Ulster, occurring most frequently in the Mourne Mountains of Co. Down, where the majority of high peaks have anglicized names in *Slieve–*. It is hardly to be found in Co. Galway or South Mayo. It is also uncommon in Cos. Cork and Kerry. Sense 2 of *sliabh*, a range, is chiefly found in Munster, areas bordering on Munster, and North Connacht. A number of these names apply to areas with few distinctive peaks and might be better described as extensive upland areas rather than ranges, e.g. *Sliabh Mairge* and *Sliabh Luachra*. Sense 3, like 1b, 'a moor or area of upland' is very well attested in Ulster, especially in County Down. However, there are many examples from other areas, such as the townlands of *Sliabh Búrca* in Connemara and *Sliabh na bhFeadóg* in Kerry. Whilst examples of *sliabh* sense 3, 'moor, area of upland', tend to be less remarkable and poorly attested compared to the major mountains and ranges, they are just as numerous, a point which has sometimes been missed by Scottish toponymists when drawing on Irish evidence. [The article in *Nomina* will include maps giving a fuller picture of the distribution of *sliabh* in its various meanings.]

Chronology

Sliabh is undoubtedly a word of considerable antiquity since place-names containing it are amongst some of the earliest documented in Ireland: *Sliabh Mis* (Slemish, Co. Antrim) is mentioned in A.D. 771. In this year a battle on the mountain between elements of the Dál nAraide is recorded in *The Annals of the Four Masters* [*i Slébh Mis*]. *Sliabh gCuilinn* (Slieve Gullion, Co. Armagh) is mentioned in A.D. 830 [*moninni Sleibi Culinn*], as is *Sliabh Liag* (Slieve League, Co. Donegal) [*i Sleibh Liacc*].

The antiquity of *sliabh* seems to be confirmed by its occurrence as a generic element in close compound names with the structure NOUN + NOUN, such as *Croitshliabh* (Crotlieve Mountain and Cratlieve, both Co. Down) (Tempan: 2009, 67). Dónall Mac Giolla Easpaig, who has analysed this group in detail, has argued that this structure was unproductive by the Early Christian era and may have ceased to yield new names as early as 400 A.D. (Mac Giolla Easpaig: 1981, 152). However, in the case of *sliabh* none of the attestations for names with this structure are as early as those cited above.

A clearer indication of antiquity is given by the qualifying elements with which *sliabh* is found. In several names *sliabh* is combined with names of pagan deities, e.g. *Sliabh Eibhlinne*, Cos. Limerick/Tipperary, from the name of the goddess Ébliu (Ó Maolfabhail: 1990, 248), with figures from mythology, e.g. *Sliabh Bladhma*, Cos. Laois/Offaly (from the name of a Milesian invader), with early Irish historical figures, e.g. *Sliabh Dónairt*, Co. Down (named after a saint contemporary with St. Patrick), and early population groups, e.g. *Sliabh Ara*, Co. Tipperary (in the territory of the *Araidh Tíre*). (Note: see Tempan, 'Towards a Chronology of Topographical Elements in Irish Place-Names: Some Strategies for Establishing Relative Chronology', forthcoming in Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress for Onomastic Sciences, York University, Toronto, 2008, for more on the structures associated with *sliabh* and the element's dating.)

An analysis of names whose first element is *sliabh*

('Logainmneacha dár Céad Eilimint Sliabh') was carried out by Alan Mac an Bhaird in 1978 while working for the Place-Names Branch of the Ordnance Survey in Dublin. To date this remains unpublished. In his study of this element, for which historical forms were gathered from a wide variety of sources in Irish and English, Mac an Bhaird found that, of the 330 names which he collected, 57 were recorded before 1200 A.D. Given the large percentage of Irish mountain names which are not recorded before the first Ordnance Survey of the early 19th century, this figure of 57 names is remarkably high. Although no equivalent statistics are available for the other 4 common hill-name elements to enable an accurate comparison, it is beyond doubt that none of them would approach this figure.

However, it is also clear that some of the names are more modern. Those containing a definite article, such as *Sliabh na mBánóg* (Slievenabawnoge, Co. Dublin) and Slieve-namona (Co. Antrim), represent a structure which only begins to emerge in the ninth and tenth centuries, and may be a good deal more recent (Flanagan: 1980, 41; see also Toner: 1999). *Sliabh an Nóglaigh* (Nagles Mountains, Co. Cork) cannot be older than the twelfth century, when the Anglo-Norman family of this name arrived in Ireland (De Bhulbh: 2002, 382).

The relative dating of the various meanings of *sliabh* is less clear-cut. All of the early names in *sliabh* cited above belong either to sense 1a, 'a mountain or hill standing alone', or to sense 2, 'a range of hills or mountains or an upland area'. However, there is one important name which also offers evidence for the early presence of *sliabh* in sense 3, namely *Sléibhte* (Sleaty, Co. Laois) which exemplifies the plural form of the word. In the Additions appended to Tírechán's compendium of Patrician churches in the Book of Armagh there is a document which records how the church of Slébte placed itself under the jurisdiction of Armagh (Ó Cróinín: 1995, 156). The events recorded in this document took place in the late seventh century and the Book of Armagh itself is dated to the early 9th century. As Sleaty is located in the bottom of a major river-valley, that of the River Barrow, I suggest that *Sléibhte* may have referred originally to a number of divisions of rough pasture.

In summary, we have seen that some names in *sliabh* are of considerable antiquity and that the element remained productive over many centuries. *Sliabh* has at least three meanings in Irish place-names, with further connotations being possible. This clearly gives the lie to Maxwell's contention that "in Ireland *sliabh* always signifies a mountain" (Maxwell: 1930, 76, s.v. Coransluie) There is some evidence for all three principal senses from the earliest times. The element is widespread throughout Ireland, though some of the senses are restricted to particular regions. One very important implication for Scotland is that it is not very productive to look for names in *sliabh* with a particular sense in order to demonstrate especially close links between particular Scottish regions and Ireland, since there is no single sense specific to Ireland.

Turning to Scotland, I would like to make a few comments about the usage of *sliabh* in Galloway. Nicolaisen (2001, 52) has argued that "that there is scarcely any doubt that *Slew-* means hill rather than moor in the Rinns of Galloway." Yesterday I cycled out from Stranraer and I had a look at some examples in the Rhinns. Firstly, I think it is rather telling that not one of the 35 names listed by Maxwell with *sliabh* as a generic is marked on the Landranger (1:50,000) map of the area. One name, Craigslave, which probably has it as a specific, is marked on this series. 25 names are recorded by Simon Taylor as being marked on the Pathfinder (1:25,000) series, while 10 others can only be located by using even larger scale maps. This in itself suggests that we are dealing mainly with names that can be considered part of the micro-toponymy, rather than significant hills.

Secondly, I believe that Maxwell was right to interpret *sliabh* in Galloway as 'moorland', even if some of these places are now being cultivated, as this may be due to later drainage and reclamation of wet ground. However, Maxwell seems to have been keen to give interpretations which would accentuate the early date of some of these names, such as *Slewmag* and *Slickconerie* (which is not on the Rhinns but north of New Luce). I do not have a solution for *Slewmag*, but Maxwell's interpretation is far from economical. He took it to contain eclipsis, i.e. *Sliabh m-Beag,* 'small moor'. Eclipsis after a neuter noun is an early feature, which can be seen in Irish examples such as *Sliabh gCuilinn* and *Sliabh gCua,* but I am not aware of any Irish examples which show eclipsis affecting an adjective. It is more likely that such a name would have produced an anglicized form **Slewbeg.* This can be compared

with three instances of Drumbeg in Galloway cited by Maxwell, and it should be noted that *droim* is also an old neuter noun – it causes eclipsis in Irish names such as Dromara from Ir. *Droim mBearach*, 'ridge of heifers' – but *Droim Beag* is consistently anglicized *Drumbeg* in Ireland, like the Galloway examples, or *Drombeg*, showing no trace of eclipsis. As for *Slickconerie*, in which Maxwell (1930, 247) interprets the second element as *Conaire*, "one of the oldest personal names in Irish history," I believe that MacQueen (2002, 35) is right in preferring *conair*, 'a way or path', in which case the name need not be particularly early.

In the Isle of Man, *slieau* is used both of areas of moorland and of mountains. Some of these rise as high as 488m in the case of Slieau Freoghane. Many of them appear on the Landranger (1:50,000) map of the Isle of Man, and I would argue that this is precisely because they are names of major peaks in many cases. In this respect, the usage is similar to that found in the Mourne Mountains.

George Broderick has argued, in vol. 7 of *Placenames of the Isle of Man* (2005, 344-45) and more recently in the Margaret Gelling festschrift (2008, 172-73), that *slieau* is a pre-Scandinavian element in Manx nomenclature. This seems to depend on little more than a similarity of pronunciation between Ulster, Galloway and Man (which does bear scrutiny) and a much vaguer similarity between the specific elements used to qualify certain Manx names in *slieau* and some of the names cited by Nicolaisen for Galloway and Ireland. I share the reservations about this expressed by Jacob King in his review of *PNIM* (2007, 164-65). I suggest that a chronological and structural analysis would be much more meaningful. Again, as with Galloway, it is noticeable that there are no instances of eclipsis and no specifics of an overtly pagan or even early Christian character. In fact, the majority of the names cited include common adjectives of size, shape and colour, which could date from any period. Broderick contends that these specific elements form part of a group "shared by Ulster Irish, Scottish (Rinns of Galloway), and Manx place-names." A total of thirteen Irish names are presented, each with one or two historical forms from 17th century sources, but in fact only two of these thirteen names in the column headed 'Ireland (Ulster)', are actually from Ulster, namely *Slewgole* (Co. Cavan) and *Slewgullen* (Co. Armagh). Two

are from Leinster, five are from Connacht and four from Munster. All of this does not preclude the possibility that some Manx names in *slieau* may be early, but a convincing case has yet to be made.

As a post-script, I would like to add that I am currently working with Dr. Alan Mac an Bhaird, now living in Andorra, to get his study of 330 names in *sliabh* published with the permission of the Place-Names Branch in Dublin. As well as searching a large number of sources for historical forms, he also carried out structural and chronological analyses of this corpus of data.

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http://www.pointer-ni.gov.uk Pointer database hosted by OSNI, with place-name data supplied by Northern Ireland Place-Name Project. Currently off-line, but to be restored on a new site.

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PLACE AND FOLK-NAME ELEMENTS IN THE POEM 'ÒRAN BAGRAIDH'

Òran Bagraidh is a Gaelic poem (the title means 'A Song of Defiance') which first appeared in print in a book of songs and poems supposedly collected in North Uist. The principal source of the material therein was one Angus John MacDonald who hailed from the island and emigrated to Australia when in his 50s. He was given the title 'Gaelic Editor' in the book which is called 'From the Farthest Hebrides'[3] and whose General Editor was the Canadian Professor Donald Fergusson. The book itself received highly critical reviews by D.S. Thomson[4] and V.S. Blankenhorn[5] which elicited a response from Prof. Fergusson and a counter from Blankenhorn in 1980[6]. Space and time here prohibit going through the cases for the

[3] *Fergusson, D. (Gen. Ed.), 'From the Farthest Hebrides', 1978*
[4] *Glasgow Herald 14 Dec 1978*
[5] *Scottish Review No. 16 1979*
[6] *Scottish Review No. 18 1980*

prosecution and defence, suffice to say that a guilty verdict to the charge of falsification and 'confectionisation' would probably be carried. However the prosecutors acknowledged that it was likely that some genuine material would be contained in the book but they were so incensed at what they took to be flagrant abuse that they could not see the merit in sifting through it. Blankenhorn in particular drew attention to what she regarded as the over sentimental and flowery literary style of AJM's 'concoctions' in the book and by implication proposed a basis for sifting wheat from chaff. This is where matters may have been expected to rest however the fact that the poem *Òran Bagraidh'* contains place-names apparently from Galloway and nearby South Ayrshire provided the justification for further investigation. Added to this, the fact that it transpired that this particular poem was taken very seriously by the Rev. William Matheson who went so far as to make a new English translation of it as well as reconstructing the Gaelic version with copious notes signifies at the least that more work on it could be justified[7].

The poem *Òran Bagraidh* and associated notes are on pages 90-92 of the book mentioned above. In the notes AJM provides details of its supposed provenance. Clearly the biggest obstacle to our taking this poem seriously is that this is its sole attestation. It is not recorded anywhere else, as far as I am aware and, as Blankenhorn pointed out, the retention of historic oral tradition within one family exclusively is implausible, oral transmission not working in that way. A further problem is that AJM's notes make clear that the song was sung by Donald MacRury whereas the version in the book is essentially garbled and unsingable, especially the last few verses. In fact as Ronnie Black has pointed out[8] it seems clear that there is some kind of manuscript background to the poem, contradicting AJM's notes in this respect. On balance then I conclude that while there are significant doubts remaining about *Òran Bagraidh* its having been taken seriously by such as Willie Matheson and Ronnie Black, its very roughness and garbled nature (contrasting with the more transparent concoctions in the book) merit further investigation into the place-names and folk-names therein.

To the poem itself then, what does it seem to be about?. The first verse seems to set the scene

[7] *NLS Acc. 9711, Box 14, No.1*
[8] *Personal Communication*

mentally and geographically, harking back to halcyon days in locations near Loch Doon AYR. However something dreadful happened one morning that changed everything, potentially connected with Cassillis. The second verse lays into the *Sliochd na Feannaig*, vowing revenge in no uncertain terms while the third praises the (presumably murdered) leader's royal ancestry, peaceful and noble manner. Verse four connects the tribes *Muinntir na Dubhchos* and the *Sliochd a' Mhaduidh*, praises them as warriors and rejoices in traditional hunting, fishing and feasting in the Glenkens KBT. The final verse is a garbled lament and further cry for revenge. This is not a pleasant composition, it is dark, depressing and bitter. Rev. Matheson connected the heavy event with the murder by Craufurd of Kerse of Gilbert, 2nd Earl of Cassillis on the banks of the Pow burn in the sands just north of Ayr in August 1527. As Armstrong's 'New Map of Ayrshire' 1775 states, 'there is a dangerous quicksand on the road at the foot of the Pow Burn, to avoid it keep as near to the sea as the tide will allow'. This would have created a predictable ambush spot.

There seem to be genuine place-names in the poem and also simple descriptions of places which may or may not have had the status of a place-name. These are listed below alongside my suggested locations and some earlier forms where available:

Cumar an eas dom	Ness Glen, Loch Doon AYR	
Bealach na Slogh	Glenmuck? AYR	Glenmuk 1632
Beinn Beithich	Benbeoch, Dalmellington AYR	Benbeuch 1594
Caisteal caiseal a' chro	Cassillis AYR	Castlys 1363, Cassillis 1450
Rath na righinn	Motte at Dalry? KBT	
Draoinich	Auchindrain AYR	
Ruigh raoin	Roan?, Kirkmichael, AYR	
Loch a' Bharr	Lochinvar KBT	Lochinvar 1581
Carrsa Fearn	Carsphairn KBT	Carsfairne 1682
Gleann na Seamraig	Glenshimmeroch KBT	Glenschynnero che 1474
Dail Righ	Dalry, KBT	Dalry, 1511, Dalrie 1662

The parish church (St John the Evangelist) at Dalry, on the slope overlooking the river meadows of the Water of Ken; it is neighbour to a motte, out of picture to the left.

The potential folk-names contained in the poem are listed below:

Muinntir na dubhchos	Kindred of the black feet	Kennedies
Sliochd na feannaig	Tribe of the crow	Craufurds?
Cinneil sliochd a' mhaduidh	Tribe of the wolf or dog	MacLellans
Sluagh na gruaigi ciar	Tribe of the dusky hair	Douglases?

It seems quite clear that the *muinntir na dubhchos* was a Gaelic name for the Kennedy clan. John Mac Kennedy of Muntercasduff was mentioned in a charter of David II (1329-1371)[9] while Gilbert Kennedy of Bargany had the lands of Sanct Michaelis Muntercasduff (Kirkmichael) in 1464[10]. Further evidence of this association can be seen from the early forms of the Kennedy holding of Auchencrosh near Ballantrae AYR.

Form	Date	Source	No.
Ballmoircastell	1429	RMS ii	128
Ballowymercastell	1429	RMS ii	128
Ballndrcasdow	1491/2	Wigtown Charters	163
Balmontircasty alias Auchincroshe	1541	RMS iii	2400
Balmowcasti alias Auchincros	1631	RMS vii	1886

As regards the *sliochd na feannaig*, Willie Matheson suggested in his notes that this might refer to the Crawfurd family who had a base at Kerse, across

[9] *RMS I app. 2 No. 914*
[10] *Paterson, Ayr II p.347*

the River Doon from Cassillis. There is no direct evidence confirming this assertion however and it must remain an open question as to which family is meant here.

There is slightly more, though still circumstantial information as to the provenance of the *sliochd a' mhaduidh*. In Carsphairn parish KBT occurs a cluster of place-names which contain the specific element *madadh*, a word with various possible canine meanings (dog, wolf, fox). These include the Polmaddy Burn, Castlemaddy, Sheil of Castlemaddy, Holmhead of Castlemaddy and Northside of Castlemaddy. This area essentially is the glen of the Polmaddy Burn and is inside the former boundary of the Forest of Buchan, an ancient hunting district controlled by the Kennedy clan. The poem implies a connection between the 'folk of the wolf' and the 'tribe of the black feet'. The cluster of *madadh* names in this area seems to indicate a potential area for the *sliochd a' mhaduidh* based in the North West Glenkens. Further Glenkens canine links might be inferred by the place-name Balmaclellan, from Gaelic *Baile mac 'ille fhaolain*, the village of the son of St Fillan's servant. St. Fillan or *Faolán* means 'little wolf'. To this day the surname MacLellan is common in the Glenkens. It may be that this family and the *sliochd a' mhaduidh* are one and the same.

Polmaddy Burn and surroundings from John Thomson's Atlas of Scotland, 1832. The present Polmaddy and A713 road through it are downstream of the locations in 1832. The older more direct road shown in fainter lines south of Carsphairn is part of the 'Pack Road' path marked on more recent maps. The hint of a sliabh *name in (Upr.) Slongashill, now Stroangassel, is not supported by the 'Strancastle' on Roy's Military Survey, c1750. (Thanks to NLS for online maps.)*

I have not been able to make any connection between the Douglases and the *sluagh na gruagi ciar* as suggested by Matheson.

This leaves us for now with the questions as to who composed the poem, if it is indeed genuine and how could it have moved from Galloway to North Uist? While accepting that the jury is still very much out as to the genuineness of the poem itself the most likely origin for it if it was really a SW Scotland composition would be in the Glenkens due to the location of the place-names and potentially some of the folk-names therein. It would also most likely have been composed by a bard attached to a wealthy sympathiser of the Kennedy family (if we accept Matheson's theory as to the murder of the 2nd Earl of Cassillis). In fact there have been two Kennedy family branches recorded as residing in the Glenkens itself, one of Knockgray near Carsphairn is too recent while the other at Knockreoch and Knocknalling has been on record since 1476. This would be the most likely location for the poem to have been written, possibly around 1550 or so (this date accords with comparisons of the style Ronnie Black has made with MacGregor elegiac poetry[11]).

As for its transmission to North Uist, the book 'From the Farthest Hebrides' claimed the North Uist men picked it up from visits to Arran. Arran is within sight of the potential murder location. Another possibility is a MacLellan family connection; the name is common in both the Glenkens and North Uist. Is it mere coincidence that the main settlement in North Uist is *Loch nam madadh*?

Michael Ansell (summarising his talk at New Galloway)

SCOTLAND'S –HAM AND -INGHAM NAMES: A RECONSIDERATION

Note: county abbreviations are: BWK Berwickshire; ELO East Lothian; WIG Wigtownshire; SSX Sussex; BRK Berkshire; GLO Gloucestershire; DRH Durham; NTB Northumberland; CMB Cumberland; WML Westmorland; YER Yorkshire East Riding; YWR Yorkshire West Riding; LNC Lancashire; YNR Yorkshire North Riding.

Nicolaisen's chapter on 'Early English Names'[12] is the necessary starting-point for any study of the toponymy of what, in Anglian times, was the northern part of the great kingdom of Northumbria. At the heart of that chapter is a careful consideration of a range of names that

[11] *Ronnie Black, personal communication*
[12] *W F H Nicolaisen (2001)* Scottish Place-Names: their study and significance *2nd edn, ch5.*

may be considered to be among the earliest Anglian names in Scotland. Out of this discussion, Nicolaisen drew three – Coldingham BWK, Tyninghame ELO and Whittingehame ELO – as being of a type that, in southern and eastern England, correlate closely with archaeological evidence for a relatively early phase of Anglo-Saxon colonisation, dating from the period before conversion to Christianity. In the second edition, he added a fourth, Peninghame WIG. Although this has been widely accepted by place-name scholars, and is frequently cited by archaeologists and historians, it has always seemed to me a surprising finding, and I take this opportunity to explain my doubts and to suggest some possible alternative approaches to the interpretation of these and related names in southern Scotland.

Firstly, we need to consider the generic, *-hām* 'home/ hame', a settlement and its associated landholding – which in early mediaeval times could be substantial area, comparable to a later parish. It was the main habitative term in use among the early Anglo-Saxons, until around the mid-8th century, when changes in landholding patterns and fiscal arrangements gave rise to a new range of place-naming terms, among which *tūn* is most salient.[13] We also need to note that *-hām* remained in use in Old English, after it had ceased to be a standard habitative term, with specific reference to religious houses and their landholdings.[14]

Turning to the connective *–ing-*: four uses of *–ing* have been identified in Old English name-formation.[15] Among these, *–ing3* is the patronymic usage – X-*ing* 'son of X'; the plural X–*ing³as* meant more broadly 'descendants, kin, dependants of X', we might say 'clan MacX'.[16] Nicolaisen found no names in Scotland formed simply with this suffix, like Hastings SSX or Reading BRK (from the dative plural, *æt Rædingum*).[17] Nevertheless, we will again need to note a possible ecclesiastical association: the plural *–ing³as* can also be used of religious

communities: the *Berclingas*, for example, were the monks of Berkeley GLO: as with *hām*, this 'monastic' usage may be later than the true patronymic.[18]

Names like Hastings and Reading were once thought to be among the earliest, but there is no correlation between these and pagan Anglo-Saxon burials, and they are nowadays associated with the development of Anglo-Saxon landholding in the post-conversion period.[19] However, names formed with the genitive plural *–ing³a-* plus *–hām* do correlate well with archaeological evidence for pre-Christian Anglo-Saxon settlement, especially along Roman roads or navigable waterways.[20] It was this pre-Christian *–ing³ahām* formation that Nicolaisen saw in Whittingehame, Coldingham and Tyninghame and later in Peninghame.[21]

Now Coldingham BWK and Tyninghame ELO are each recorded from the 11th and 12th cts in forms with a vowel between *g* and *h*, and in at least one case for either name, the vowel is *–a-*.[22] There can be little doubt that these are *-ing³ahām* formations, but are they of the same, pre-Christian, origin? The early *–ing³ahām* place-names are concentrated in the east and south-east of England. There are probably no *-ing³ahām* names in DRH, NTB, CMB or WML.[23] The northernmost certain examples are in YER, YWR and LNC. Moreover, as we have seen, there are apparently no *–ing³-as/-um* names in Scotland: is it not odd if the earliest stratum of Anglo-Saxon settlement names from England is present in southern Scotland, but the later strata are absent?

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[13] *A H Smith (1956)* English Place-Name Elements part one*, EPNS XXV (Cambridge), pp 226-9; G Fellows-Jensen (1990) 'Place-Names as a Reflection of Cultural Interaction',* Anglo-Saxon England 19*, pp 13-21*

[14] *V Watts (1994) 'The Place-Name Hexham: a mainly philological approach'* Nomina *17, pp 119-36 at pp135-6; M Higham* On Names, Places and People*, pp73-80.*

[15] *Smith (1956), pp282-5 and 298-303.*

[16] *Ibid. pp290-1.*

[17] *Nicolaisen (2001) pp89-93 and 95-8.*

[18] *E Ekwall (1960)* Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names *(4th edn Oxford), p39; J McN Dodgson (1977) 'The Significance of Place-Names in –ingas, -inga- in South-East England' in K Cameron (ed.)* Place-Name Evidence for the Anglo-Saxon Invasion and Scandinavian Settlements *(Nottingham 1977), pp 27-54 at p28; G Smith '–ingas and the Mid-Seventh Century Diocese' in* Nomina *31(2008) pp67-88 at pp75 and 84-5.*

[19] *Dodgson (1977) pp 27-54.*

[20] *B Cox (1973) 'The Significance of the Distribution of English Place-Names in* Hām *in the Midlands and East Anglia'* Journal of the English Place-Name Society *5, pp 15-73.*

[21] *Nicolaisen (2001), pp93-5 and p xx.*

[22] *Ibid, at p94.*

[23] *For DRH, see V Watts (2002)* A Dictionary of County Durham Place-Names *(Nottingham); for Yorks, M L Faull (1974) 'Britons and Angles in Yorkshire'* Studium *6, pp 1-24.*

Can there be any other explanation for Coldingham and Tyninghame? St Cedd's monastery at Lastingham YNR was known to Bede as *Laestinga-eu.[24] It was evidently re-named, presumably after Bede's time, incorporating the early 'clan' name *Laest –ing³as, but using it to name the monastic community. So *Laest–ing³-ahām was the 'house and landholding of [the religious community known as] *Læstingas'.[25] Something similar could have happened at Coldingham. This was known to Bede as Coludi Urbs, doubtless translating Coludesburh.[26] Colud is a personal name, and burh (here possibly meaning 'monastery') indicated the site of the double house, probably at Kirk Hill on St Abbs Head, which was burnt soon after 686. Later, again apparently after Bede's day, a nunnery was established at Coldingham. Applying the analogy of Lastingham, could the new name have been given at that stage, *Colud-ing³a-hām meaning the 'house and landholding of [the religious community known as] *Coludingas'? At Tyninghame the monastery was founded some time after the death of St Baldred (recte probably Baldhere) in 756. Again, the name *Tīn-ing³a-hām may have been given at that point, 'the house and landholding of [the religious community known as] *Tīningas [dwellers on the R Tyne ELO]'?

View at St Abb's Head, supposed location of the 7th century double monastery of Coludesburh. *North Berwick Law, the Ochil Hills, the Paps of Fife, the Bass Rock and Largo Law would have been familiar landmarks then, though not the nuclear power station and cement works in distance on left.*

Turning to Whittingehame, we encounter a different usage of –ing, -ing², a place-name forming suffix.[27] This occurs here in a form with an archaic locative inflexion, -ing²ī-: -ing²ī + hām

gives us the pronunciation [inᵈʒəm] in *Whittingehame* ELO, which means the 'hām (landholding) at the place named after Hwīta', identical in origin to Whittingham NTB and Whicham CMB.[28] Nicolaisen recognised this, but he nevertheless attempted to force Whittingehame into the –ing³ahām class. However the forms he proposed, *Hwītingiahām or *Hwītinᵈʒahām ('the settlement at Hwīting [= at the place named after Hwīta])' are impossible in Old English, and Whittingehame, *Hwītinġ²īhām, has nothing to do with -ing³ahām.[29] Whittingehame is probably a 7th century name, but not necessarily pre-Christian.

In the first edition of *Scottish Place-Names*, Nicolaisen counted Penninghame WIG among 'non-genuine examples' of –ing³ahām, even saying that it 'may or may not contain the element hām',[30] but in the second edition he wrote 'Peningham in 1287 in *Bagimond's Roll* shows it to be a genuine –ingahām name and a witness to an early Anglian presence in Galloway'.[31] The early forms do confirm that it is certainly –hām, but neither the Bagimond's Roll form nor any later mediaeval records show any evidence for a vowel between –g- and -h-, and Penninghame is a good hundred miles from the nearest certain examples of -ing³ahām.

Penninghame may have been closely associated with Northumbrian Whithorn: it became a large mediaeval parish, with a grange (and possible residence) of the Bishops of Whithorn.[32] With this in mind, Carole Hough's proposal, that the name was not an –ing-hām formation but *Pening-hām 'a hām assessed at a penny' is attractive.[33] Early modern forms are often Penyhame etc., and the pennyland was an important unit of land-valuation in 12th to 13th century Galloway. Northumbrian silver peningas were minted in York in the late 7th to late 8th centuries: eight were found during the excavations at

[24] *HE* III.23.
[25] *Watts (1994), pp134-6.*
[26] *HE IV.19;* Coludesburh *in OE Bede and A-SC* E.
[27] *Smith (1956), pp285-90.*

[28] *J McN Dodgson (1967) 'The –ing- in English place-names like Birmingham and Altrincham'* Beiträge zur Namenforschung NF2, pp 221-45 and idem (1967) *'Various forms of OE –ing in English place-names'* Beiträge zur Namenforschung NF2, pp 325-96.
[29] *Nicolaisen (2001) p93.*
[30] *Nicolaisen (1976) Scottish Place-Names: their study and significance 1ˢᵗ edn, pp72 and 76.*
[31] *Nicolaisen (2001) p xx.*
[32] *D Hall (2006) Scottish Monastic Landscapes (Stroud), pp175-7.*
[33] *C Hough (2001) 'The Place-Name Penninghame (Wigtownshire)', Notes and Queries June 2001, pp99-102.*

Whithorn.[34] However, the fact that North-umbrian *peningas* went out of production by 790, along with the point that *hām* was obsolete as a habitative term by that date implies a limited window of opportunity for such a formation, in the early to mid 8th century. Monetary valuation of land entails more than the presence of coins, it implies a fully-functioning monetary economy: how likely was that in 8th century north-west Northumbria? The coins found at Whithorn (as at other 'high status' sites) could well have been used only in transactions with visiting merchants. There is really no evidence for the <u>circulation</u> of coins away from such sites in northern Northumbria/ Cumbria/ 'Scotland' before 1100. There might just possibly have been a local monetary economy in the *regio* of Whithorn, and perhaps an early Northumbrian bishop might have introduced the radical new idea of monetary valuation of land-yield, but if Penninghame was *Pening-hām* it must have been revolutionary at the time, and it would have remained wholly exceptional in north-west Northumbria for more than three centuries.

An alternative, perhaps more likely interpretation, is to see Penninghame as *Pen-ing⁴-hām*, with *-ing⁴-*, a connective particle not subject to inflection: 'landholding associated with *Pen*'.[35] Brittonic *pen[n]* refers in inland place-names to the 'head' or 'end' of a ridge or hill-spur. Penninghame church stands at the southern end of Barr Hill, a ridge ending in a sharp point that might well have been named, or at least referred to, by Brittonic speakers as *Pen[n]*; either way, English speakers would have taken that for its name, and formed *Pen-ing⁴-hām*, 'landholding associated with [the headland called] *Pen[n]*'. Such a name could have been formed at any time during the currency of *hām*, i.e. mid-6th to mid-8th centuries, but there is no reason here to think it any earlier than the later 7th or early 8th century.

All the *–hām* names in southern Scotland are certainly important, but Nicolaisen's attempt to associate the *–ingham* names among them with the pre-Christian *-ing³a-hām* names in southern and eastern England was perhaps an unfortunate distraction. I suggest that the *–ham* and *–ingham* names of southern Scotland/ northern Northumbria are best understood in context of Northumbrian state-formation and the closely-related development of the Northumbrian church, especially during the mid 7th to mid 8th centuries.

Alan James (summarising his talk at New Galloway)

NEWS FROM WALES

Dr Rhian Parry has let us know of the project Adnabod Ardudwy (Knowing Ardudwy) which is well under way in the Ardudwy area (a medieval 'commote') south of Snowdonia. The wide scope of the project, as described in an article Dr Parry forwarded, will be of interest outside Wales: "Ardudwy has an archaeological landscape which is of European importance. The PhD research undertaken was based on the study of farm and field names. The aim was not to study the linguistic origin or meaning of names but their use in the landscape and their historical significance. A methodology was developed to reconstruct ancient landscapes, one which is transferable to other locations. … It takes effort today to visualise the older communication patterns and the vitality of small upland communities, now isolated and forgotten. We need to look with different eyes at the present landscape if we wish to see older settlements and recognise the significance of our farm and field names."

Bronze Age trackway

The aerial photo (from RCAHMW) of Muriau Gwyddelod (= Irishmen's Walls), Llandanwg, shows the remarkable richness of the resource of

[34] E J E Pirie (1997) 'The Early Medieval Coins' in P Hill Whithorn and St Ninian: excavation of a monastic town 1984-91 (Stroud), pp 332-45; idem (1986) 'Finds of sceattas and stycas of Northumbria' in M A S Blackburn (ed) Anglo-Saxon Monetary History: essays in memory of Michael Dolley (Leicester) pp 67-90; D M Metcalfe, ed., (1987) Coinage in Ninth Century Northumbria BAR Br. Ser. 180 (Oxford).
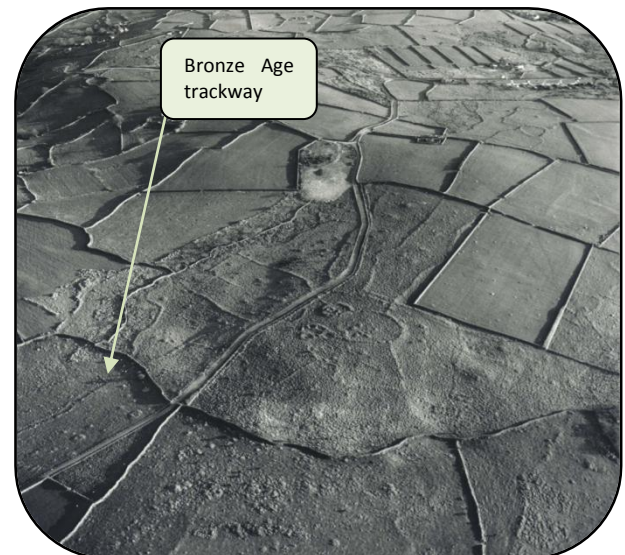[35] Smith (1956), pp291-8.

archaeological landscape in Ardudwy. It is hoped that local interest and initiative will keep Adnabod Ardudwy active after initial Lottery funding ends.

More can be learned of the project online at http://www.adnabodardudwy.org.uk/, in Welsh or English. Dr Parry can be contacted at barryg.allcott@btinternet.com or Tytandderwen, Pencefn, Dolgellau, Gwynedd LL40 2 ER.

AINMEAN-ÀITE NA H-ALBA

Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba is a national advisory partnership of public and voluntary bodies whose purpose is to research Gaelic place-names to establish correct and consistent forms for maps, signage and general use. AÀA uses local knowledge, historical sources and established principles to agree orthographically and historically accurate forms of place-names. The partnership has produced guidance on the use and spelling of Gaelic place-names and on common elements in street names. These are available on the AÀA website www.ainmean-aite.org.

Since 2000 AÀA has seen a growing demand for reliable information on Gaelic place-names, both from the general public and from public bodies. To meet this demand, with funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, we are setting up the national Gaelic place-name gazetteer referred to in the *National Plan for Gaelic*. This will provide a single source of authoritative information on Gaelic place-names, including the research on which names have been determined and sound files to assist with pronunciation. The gazetteer will be freely available on our website.

The project is always interested to hear from any native Gaelic speakers with a *bona fide* knowledge of Gaelic forms of place-names in any area of Scotland. If you would be willing to spare some time to talk to us, please contact jking@ainmean-aite.org or call 01471 888 120 during office hours.

Dr Jake King

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The **SPNS Autumn conference** takes place at a highly accessible venue in Glasgow on Saturday 7 November: please see accompanying flier for details and booking arrangements.

A date for diaries: the **SPNS Spring 2010** conference will take place on Saturday 8 May

2010 at the Birnam Arts and Conference Centre (http://www.birnaminstitute.com/), close to the A9 and Birnam & Dunkeld station. The SPNS Committee is issuing a **call for papers** (25 or 40 minutes), with emphasis on topics related to the region of the Tay, to which responses in the form of abstracts are invited by 2nd December.

The **Second International Conference On The Early Medieval Toponymy Of Ireland And Scotland** is to be held at Queen's University, Belfast, on 12-14 November 2009. Dr. Nollaig Ó Muraíle of NUI Galway and Prof. Thomas Owen Clancy of the University of Glasgow are to give keynote papers on early place-names and the linguistic situation at the dawn of history in Ireland and Scotland respectively. Eight papers will be delivered each day on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th, and on Saturday 14th there will be an excursion to Emain Macha and the city of Armagh, including a guided tour of Emain Macha and environs led by a toponymist and an archaeologist. Details at http://www.spns.org.uk/EarliestStrata.html. Enquiries to Paul Tempan, Irish and Celtic Studies, Queen's University Belfast. ☎ 028 90973890; e-mail p.tempan@qub.ac.uk.

Unfortunately that event clashes with the **Autumn Day Conference of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland** (**SNSBI**) on Saturday 14th November 2009 at The Old Fire Station, The Crescent, University of Salford, in Greater Manchester. The conference will have an emphasis on place-names in the North West of England and is being organised by Dr Maggie Scott, Lecturer in English Language, School of English, Sociology, Politics and Contemporary History, University of Salford, Salford M5 4WT. E-mail: m.r.scott@salford.ac.uk; ☎ (0161) 295 5552

We have advance notice of the international **Trends in Toponymy Conference** at The University of Edinburgh on 28th June to 1st July 2010. This is the fourth in a series, the previous events having been at Kárášjohka-Karasjok (in the far north of Norway), Ballarat (Australia) and Durban (South Africa). Keynote presentations include Dr Simon Taylor on 'Scottish Place-Names: The Cultural and Linguistic Challenge'. There is a call for papers on the conference theme of 'attitudes to names and naming', with abstracts to be provided to Guy Puzey by 30 November. Contact details and website: E-mail: g.puzey@ed.ac.uk; http://www.delc.ed.ac.uk/conferences/

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Caldwell, David, 2008, *Islay: The Land of the Lordship* (Edinburgh) [with much toponymic input from Alan **Macniven**; Macniven contributed Chapter 2 'Prehistory and Early History'; while Chapter 8, 'Continuity and Change – Place-Names and Extents' draws heavily on Macniven 2006 ('The Norse in Islay: A Settlement Historical Case-Study for Medieval Scandinavian Activity in Western Maritime Scotland', unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh); Appendix 1 is a useful compilation and examination of Islay surnames; while Appendix 2, entitled 'Islay Lands, Recorded Prior to 1722' is also drawn from Macniven 2006, giving suggested etymologies, as well as sources, but sadly no early forms]

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CULTURAL CONTACTS FUND

All applications welcome!

We wish to remind you that following successful fundraising for the Shetland conference volume *Cultural Contacts in the North Atlantic Region: The Evidence of Names* (P. Gammeltoft, C. Hough and D. Waugh eds.) we have surplus funds which we are using for the benefit of name research in the following ways:

► Grants to enable students of onomastics to attend conferences
► Travel grants to enable students of onomastics to pursue their research in the field
► Grants towards publication of onomastic material relating to the North Atlantic region, defined broadly as in the publication

A small steering committee, representing the three societies, has been appointed to make decisions on the fair allocation of funds.

Further information is available from the current coordinator of the steering committee, Professor Carole Hough: c.hough@englang.arts.gla.ac.uk
Application forms can be downloaded from the Scottish Place-Name Society website:
http://www.spns.org.uk

Maybe the sign-maker has been impressed by road signs in Wales or France and thought a couple of circumflexes would add that je ne sais quoi to plain old Geàrr Lòchaidh. We have also heard of Maliag for Mallaig and An Gearsadan for the name which is actually correct in the photo. Thanks to Grant Cornwallis for the photo.

It might be a reasonable guess that Calanais / Callanish in Lewis had been named for the famous stones, but not so. It is from Old Norse *Kalla(ða)rnes, which in the shorter form is found in at least five places in modern Norway, with instances elsewhere of Kallar- with other topographical terms. Kallarnes is a 'ness of calling', (kall (noun), 'call') a headland within hailing distance of an opposite shore, typically so that a boat could be summoned. At Calanais the narrows (photo below) have been exploited as a route for overhead cables. In Shetland Kalliness occurs at Hellister on Weisdale Voe; and on the small island of Trondra. A Gaelic equivalent of Kallarnes is Rubha na h-Eighich (grid ref. NF 795 278) on Loch Eynort in South Uist.

Examples from Hamnøya in western Norway of Kallarnes and Roparnes with the same reference to a hailing place on a narrow sound: ON hrópa, 'to shout' - anyone remember the Scots word roup? The same idea lies behind Ropsten ('hailing stone') in suburban Stockholm.

Thanks to Arne Kruse and Ian Fraser for Norwegian and Gaelic material.

*A contention arose in **Nairn** earlier this year about the name for a street in a low-lying area: The Maggot. Perhaps predictably not everyone favoured keeping the traditional street name in a new housing development; the community council wanted 'Bailey Drive'. Others were more inclined to keep alive a little piece of the town's history. Some even felt strongly enough to have Maggot T-shirts printed. Provost Liz MacDonald said: "I feel it is part of our heritage. That was what the locals knew it as. Why change the name of an established road that has been known as that for a couple of hundred years?" She explained that the name had nothing to do with creepy-crawlies and there were two theories about its origin. The first was a reference to St Margaret, the saint of areas of land between the river and the seas, while the other connected it with a Gaelic word, magh, meaning a piece of flat ground.*

There is also a Maggot in Inverness and the name is reminiscent of others such as the Megget Water in the Borders.