

# SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME NEWS

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The Newsletter of the  
**SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY**  
**COMANN AINMEAN-ÀITE NA H-ALBA**



*Defying with a coat of warm pink its sometimes chilly setting nearly 300 metres up on a hillside to the west of upper Lauderdale, is Channelkirk, the parish church for the village of Oxton in north-west Berwickshire. This 'hidden gem' of 1817, designed by James Gillespie Graham to replace a much older structure, is not signposted from the main A68 road through Lauderdale. The location was not always so far from the beaten track: it was beside a spring on or very close to Dere Street, the main north-south road built by the Romans and still used long after they had gone. The medieval church was dedicated to St Cuthbert. In a brilliant piece of scholarship in his parish history of 1900, the Rev Archibald Allan disproved notions that the name referred to 'shingle' or to 'children' (specifically the Holy Innocents). Using a range of sources he showed that of all the wildly variable medieval and later forms Childeschirche was closest to the original sense of 'church of the cild' (youth of high status) Cuðberht; and the motive for the siting was the belief that this was where the noble-born shepherd lad and future saint had a vision of St Aidan being borne up to heaven by angels after his death on 31 August 651. Oxton is one of those place-names with a treacherously 'obvious' explanation. The series Ullfkeliston 1206, Ulkilstoun c1220, Ulkes- 1273, Ugis- 1463-4, Uxtoun mid 17<sup>th</sup> century (Blaeu map) shows that it is based on Ulfkell, a personal name of Scandinavian origin.*





the hilltop,<sup>1</sup> which also boasts a *Wallace's Bed* and *Fairy Leap*, where tales now lost would have been attached. [NS989744]

Its neighbour **Bowden Hill** 749ft/229m (*Boudoun H.* 1745, locally /'budn/) is likely named with reference to its bou-backit shape and its hillfort rather than the 'cow pasture' suggested by Macdonald.<sup>2</sup> Arthur's last battle was once claimed to have been fought here. [NS975743]

**Cairnpapple** 1016ft/310m (*Kernepopple* 1619), formerly the lowest highest point of any Scottish shire, might have been the *Medionemeton* 'Middle Sanctuary' of the Ravenna Cosmography. Its henge and barrow evidence usage from the Neolithic through to the Christian period with an embarrassing lack in the Iron Age. Locally it's **Cairniepapple**, which a Cumbrophile could make OW *carn e papil*, W *carn* + *pabell* 'tent, shieling', but cf *Foulpapple* AYR, *Papple* ELO, *The Papples* Swanston MLO: the name could be entirely Scots. Its views are immense, east-west from the Isle of May (40 miles) to Arran (65+), and from Breadalbane to the Lowther Hills. [NS988718]



*The Knock (on right) and Cauldstane Slap (Pentlands), from Cairnpapple*

Nearby is **The Knock** c1010ft/309m (*Knokhill* 1541) Sc *knock* 'hillock', cf W *cnwc*, ScG *cnoc*, glossed by Macdonald as 'hill' but more 'knucklish'. [NS991712]

**Binny Craig** (*Bynning Crag* 1523) is both a ScG *binnean* 'little peak' and a *crag*, Sc *craig* 'crag, rock': it's reckoned to be the haunt of fairies, a hillock of it known as *Witch Craig*. Geologists say it's a crag and tail shaped by glacial flow, but West Lothian folk know better: it was the Deil who howked out the Cauldstane Slap in the south of the county to bigg it. **The Cauldstane Slap** c1425ft/435m (*Colstounslope* 1666) carries the *Thieves' Road*, a drove road used by reivers

<sup>1</sup> John S. Stuart Glennie, 1869, *Arthurian Localities: Their Historical Origin, Chief Country, and Fingalian Relations; with a map of Arthurian Scotland* (Edinburgh), 46-7.

<sup>2</sup> Angus Macdonald, 1941, *The Place-Names of West Lothian*, 90.

and covenanters alike, leading out of the county between the twin Bronze Age cairns of **East and West Cairns**, our highest hills.



*The distinctive outline of Binny Craig*

*Law* is found eg in **Dechmont Law** (a name more at home in Pictland), probably named for the fair, extensive view. In November 1979 a world-famous and inexplicable Close Encounter took place here. **Seafield Law**, a good example of lawmaking, is Scotland's newest, an upwardly mobile eminence, until this millennium *Seafield Bing*.

We also have *kips*, but at **Kip Rig** (*sic* 1696) there's no sign of one. Nearby **Kip Syke** (*sic* 1753) has a ploughed out Bronze Age mound: could this have been the kip? The *Schedule of Ancient Monuments* calls it **West Harwood mound**: Historic Scotland promises to change this erratic legal form.



*Kipsyke Farm: ruin and syke, but no kip*

And so to *tor*, often thought a rocky outcrop: '*tor* high rock, pile of rocks (esp. in local names). OE. *torr*, of British origin (cf. OW. *twrr* bulge, belly, Gael. *tòrr* bulging hill)' (*ODEE*<sup>3</sup>) Toponymists have tended to extend this, with 'knoll', 'mound', 'eminence' and 'conical hill' predominating. But what are West Lothian's? Our potential *tor*-names, usually 'Scotsed'<sup>4</sup>, show their Gaelic ancestry, one or two their older Welsh.

**\*Turniehill** Boness & Carriden (*Tornihill* 1685, *sic* 1696)? [lost]

**\*Turndreich** Dalmeny (*sic* c1800) ScG *dreach W*

<sup>3</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, ed. C. T. Onions (Oxford 1966). I also cited the definitions offered by Ekwall, Watson, Macdonald, Dixon, Nicolaisen, Fraser and Taylor. Thanks to Dr Simon Taylor, who inspired this line of research by asking me if the West Lothian tors were all conical.

<sup>4</sup> That is, turned into more sensible-looking recognisably Scots 'words'. \*Asterisks denote such an assimilation.

*drych* ‘aspect, sight’, cf *Pittendreich* MLO. [cNT179772]

**\*Tar Hill** Ecclesmachan c450ft/137m (*sic* 1753). [NT060740]

**Torphichen** (*Thorfechin*, *Torphechin* 1165-78, *Torfechin* 1199) W *tref-fechan* ‘small homestead’?; more likely ScG *tòrr* + *fitheachean* ‘ravens’ or (*St*) *Feichin* ‘little raven’ who founded sanctuaries (eg Lesmahagow’s).

**\*Tartraven** Linlithgow (*Retrevyn* 1264, *Tortrevane* 1490): ?B *\*ro-* > W *rhy* ‘great’, later *tor* + *trefyn* ‘homestead’: ‘grand steading’ > ‘tor of the large steading’. [NT005725]

**\*Tawnycraw Hill** Torphichen c725ft/221m (*sic* OS1) ScG *craobh* ‘tree’? More likely *tamhnach* ‘green place, clearing’ + *crò* ‘enclosure’. [NS904693]

**Tarrareoch** Bathgate (*Torreoch* 1500) ‘brindled hill’, cf *Torran Riabbach*, Arran. [NS942674]

**\*Torbane** Bathgate (*sic* 1335-6) ScG *bàn* ‘white, fair’: also *Torbanetrees*, *Torbanehill* and *Hall Torbane*. [NS944672]

**\*Turnhigh** Whitburn (*Turnbeigh* 1818) cf Arran’s *Creag an Eich* ‘horse’s crag’, *Cragean Fhithich* ‘raven’s crag’. [NS935635]

West Calder parish’s cluster:

**\*Turniemoon** (*Turn himin* 1753, *Tamethemoon* 1763, *Turnamoon* 1773, locally *TurnaMUNN*) ScG *tòrr* ‘rounded hill’ + (*na*) *mòine* ‘(of the) moss, peat’: ‘hillock of the peat(-bog)’, with its lunatic legend of dancing witches. [NT035623]

**Torphin** (*Torfyn* 1450, *sic* 1692) ScG *tòrr* ‘rounded hill’ + *fionn* ‘white hill’ (PNML<sup>5</sup>, 307), a grassy hill amongst peaty ones. [NT035610]



*Golf course at Torphin*

**\*Torwhitie** c725ft/221m (*Terwhyte* 1654) ScG *tòrr* ‘rounded hill’ + an ‘obscure’ element

(PNML, 308); cf W *tor* + *coediog* ‘wooded’: ‘wooded knowe?’ [NT043618]

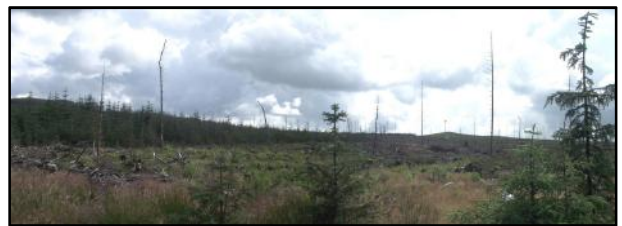
**\*Torheaving** c825ft/252m (*sic* 20th c) ScG *tòrr* ‘hillock’ + *aimhean* ‘pleasant, smooth’ or *aoibhinn* ‘comely’: ‘pleasant hillock’, or a golfer’s joke? [NT035602]

**\*Torweaving Hill** c1320ft/403m (*Torweaving* 1773) W *tor gwefin* ‘hill of moths or insects’ (Johnston PNS, 313), ?ScG *tòrr uaimhinn* ‘hill of horror or detestation’ (PNML, 307-8), ?W *tor \*gwefrin* ‘little amber-coloured hill’ (WLPN, 19). [NT072570]



*Torweaving Hill from the Lang Whang (A70 road)*

**\*Tormywheel (Hill)** c1121ft/342m (*Tormy Wheel* 1816, *sic* 1832, OS1) ScG *tòrr mi-bhail/mi-bhuil* ‘hill of profusion’ (PNML, 107, 307). But cf *mi-/mion-/meanbh-chuileag* ‘midge, gnat’: ‘hill of midges?’<sup>6</sup> [NT072570]



*Tormywheel: the nearest we get to conical*

Each **tor** was discovered to be a ‘hillock’ or ‘rounded knoll’.

Also: **\*Tarryjews** Whitburn (*sic* 1818, *Turrviews* 1820, *Turmedues* 1832, *Tarrydews* OS1) ?ScG *tòrr* or *tàrr* ‘lower part of the belly; breast’ + *damb* ‘ox; stag’: ‘stag’s knoll’ (see PNWL, 112). But the palatalisation suggests ScG *deas*, *deise* ‘right, south’. [NS931598]

**\*Tarrymuck** Whitburn (*sic* 1816) G *tòrr* + G *muc* ‘Pigs’ hill’ (ibid.). [cNS915607]

Does the talk’s title make more sense now? It might give us pause to think what exactly we are doing, according to our own lights, much like

<sup>5</sup> Norman Dixon, *The Place-Names of Midlothian*, unpublished typescript PhD (University of Edinburgh, 1947), online at <http://www.spns.org.uk>, published illocally by the Scottish Place-Name Society, 2011!

<sup>6</sup> I neglected mentioning saintly possibilities here, which had also struck me re *\*Carkurrin Hills* (*Kincurrin* 1773) and even *Leven’s Seat* (for which there is no room here). Feedback welcome in every case.

<sup>7</sup> Both well worth the googling!



our mapmakers and folk-etymologists. *Caveat lector!*

**John G Wilkinson** (text and photos; from his conference talk)

## PLACE-NAMES IN THE PENTLAND HILLS



Blaeu 1654, *Lothians*. Showing Pentland farm (Pentland), Pentland hill, and the gap in the hills traversed by Glencroce (Glencorse)



Armstrong 1773 *Map of Three Lothians*. Showing the Cauldstane Slap, the lost name Cairn Edge, and Harper Hill, the former name for East Cairn Hill.

The Pentlands are the hills which dominate the southern skyline of Edinburgh, stretching south-westwards for 25km. The name of the charitable group, the Friends of the Pentlands, epitomises the feelings of many in this part of Scotland, and there is a small library of books covering them, with resonant titles like *The Breezy Pentlands* (G Reith, 1910) and *The Call of the Pentlands* (W Grant 1927), and today's bookshops hold three or four recently-written guides to the range. But they are not just a fine walking area, they are a showcase of the four main languages laid down in place-names in this part of Scotland, Brittonic (aka Cumbric), Anglian (aka Old English), Gaelic and Scots [henceforth respectively Brit, OE, G and Sc]. The very names of the dozen parishes whose boundaries meet in the hills testify to this: thus Brit (e.g. Penicuik, Carnwath), OE (Lasswade), G (e.g. Currie, Dunsyre) and Sc (e.g. Walston, Colinton).

The very name of the range might appear to offer an instance of Brit *pen*, 'head', and indeed David Buchanan in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century (writing for Blaeu's *Atlas* 1654) thought so: ". . . *Pen* or *Pin* or *Bin* is high . . . and *Lana* is land or dwelling from Hebrew *Lun* to inhabit. This whole Penlan is elevated here and there into mountains, which are called the Penlan mountains . . .". In fact the name originated in the lands called Pentland, near Penicuik, in Midlothian, first recorded c.1150 as *Pentlant*, and probably from Brit *pen llan*, 'head, or end, of the church, or enclosure'. The barony of Pentland was extensive, as medieval deeds show (e.g. 1476, RMS ii no. 1271, which includes *Loganbous* and *Mortonhak*; and 1542, RMS iii no. 2769, which includes *Hilend* and *Bogball*, all names still recognisable). There is also, in the first of these deeds, a reference to *Pentlandmure*, confirming that the hills would have been used for summer pasturing for beasts, leaving the low ground free for arable farming. In time, this traditional summer grazing land would become known as The Pentland Hill, a toponym that then spread gradually to apply to much of the range. In 1642, in RMS ix, one Alexander Foullis in Colinton (on the other side of the hills) was accorded the right to graze his beasts "super Pentlandhilles". Shortly after, Blaeu's *Atlas* (published 1654, but for Scotland largely based on Pont's mapwork of the 1590s), mapped a *Pentland Hill* near Glencorse, and *Pentlandt Hill* for the whole range south of this, on his Lothian sheet; and on his Tweeddale sheet, near Carlops, *Pent-land Hills* [i.e. plural]. This name for the range has persisted ever since.



Looking south-west from the profusely-cairned summit of Carnethy Hill to the patchy slopes of Scald Law, and beyond it West Kip

The oldest place-names will be Brit, or in the case of river-names perhaps pre-Celtic, e.g. Water of Leith, the Esk, and Medwin. In hill-

names, an important Brit element is *monið* or *minið*, (cf Welsh *mynydd*), the root of G *monadh*<sup>8</sup>, and Sc *mount*.<sup>9</sup> From this root, directly, we have Mendick, the distinctive ‘stepped’ hill near West Linton, and indirectly a proliferation of *mount* hill-names – Black Mount (*Black Munth* 1590s Pont), Byrehope Mount, Faw Mount, The Mount, and Mount Maw (which looks a bit like Welsh *mynydd mawr*, ‘big hill’). Carnethy Hill, the second highest Pentland peak, echoes the Carneddau hills near Snowdon, and is almost certainly Brit *carneddau*, ‘stony heaps’ [*dd* pronounced approximately *th*]: indeed, if you climb to its summit, you will an enormous, sprawling pile of stones, the remains of a prehistoric burial cairn. Further north, looking down on Edinburgh city, is the hill Caerketton, whose first element is probably Brit *caer*, ‘fort’, for there is indeed a prehistoric fort on its eastern outlier.



*West Kip*



*Mendick Hill*

G place-names are scarce east of the Pentlands, and it is noteworthy that most of the Gaelic hill-names here are on the western fringes of the hills, apart from Dunsyre (*dùn siar*, ‘western hill-fort’) in the far south. Thus for instance

Mealowther (*meall odhar*, ‘dun-coloured hill’), Craigentarry (*creag an tarbh*, ‘bull craig’) and Torphin (*tòrr fionn*, ‘white hillock’) all lie in the west. Two areas of low ground also have G birth certificates: the extensive Kitchen Moss is from G *coitcheann*, ‘common grazing land’ (cf Cathkin, Glasgow, etc); and the main east-west pass or gap athwart the northern part of the range is Glencorse (*Glenkrosh* 1317), from *gleann croisg*, ‘glen of the crossing place’.



*Kitchen Moss, from Gaelic coitcheann, ‘common grazing land’, looking south-west towards East Cairn Hill*

Scots of course has had a major impact on the hills’ toponymy. The highest hill is Scald Law, *law* being the archetypal Sc generic for a hill, although it is mainly found in south-east Scotland and the eastern lowlands. It is of course of OE origin in *blaw*, originally meaning a burial mound, but coming to mean a low hill in northern England, and applied to higher hills on crossing the border. Sc *scawd* means ‘scabby, blemished’, or similar, and there are another dozen hills in southern Scotland with this name in various spellings; it surely refers to the patchy or scabby appearance made by variegated vegetation on its slopes, as nearby Black Hill advertises to the colour of its blanket of heather – Reith (1910) described its appearance as like a “dirty patched gypsy tent”. One of the shapeliest hills in the range is West Kip, from Sc *kip*, ‘pointed, projecting, jutting’; the element may be related to G *ceap*, ‘summit, head’ or OE *copp* of similar import. The same element is found in an adjectival form in Keppat Hill near Dolphinton, a pointed hillock of sand and gravel, locally known as The De’il’s Riddlins, from the legend that the devil, sieving out rocks and stones from Biggar Moss, dumped them here. Other Sc generics found in the hills include *muir*, ‘moor’ (as in Allermuir, ‘alder muir’), *rìg* (as in Monks Rig, associated with the medieval hospice at Spittal), and *knowe* (as in Bawdy Knowes, from

<sup>8</sup> Watson, p 391 *Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (1926)

<sup>9</sup> See G W S Barrow, pp 62-67, in Taylor *The Uses of Place-Names* (1998)



Sc *bawd*, ‘hare’). There are two elements which relate to the pile of stones that marks the summits of most hills: *cairn*, as in East and West Cairn Hill, where the summit has prehistoric mounds of stone on top, and *pike*, as in The Pike (two instances), which means the same. The lower ground also has Sc names, as in the old drove road across the southern part named the Cauldstane Slap (from Sc *slap*, ‘pass, gap’) – cresting at 440m, it was probably the ‘cauldest’ spot the drovers encountered in the area! Much of the north-west face of the hills is in the form of a scarp slope, and there are two names on old maps, now lost, which were felicitous in their description, but are sadly no more: *Cairn Edge* ran south-west from West Cairn Hill, and *Bavelaw Edge* above the farm of that name near Threipmuir: the Lammermuirs, to the east, were also known as *The Edge Hills* in the past, for the same topographic reason. There was also, near Threipmuir, a lost G name, *Torbrack* mapped in 1773 (*tòrr breac*, ‘speckled hillock’) is the hill probably now called Harbour Hill.

**Pete Drummond** (from his talk at the November 2012 conference)

[The environmental charity Friends of the Pentlands have published *Pentland Place-Names: an Introductory Guide*, by John Baldwin and Peter Drummond (2011). It sells at £3, for the charity’s funds; obtainable at the SPNS bookstall at conference, or contact [peter.drummond@btinternet.com](mailto:peter.drummond@btinternet.com)]

## ‘NOUGHT BUT BARE WHOP-SHAFTS?’<sup>10</sup>: SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN 18TH CENTURY WEST LoTHIAN

Everyone who studies place-names has to be aware of the vein of dourly realistic farm- and field-names across Lowland Scotland around the 17th–19th centuries, though the type, which on occasion attains the pawkily humorous, is not confined by chronology or location: *Rotten Raw* (*Ratoun Raw* 1453), *Randy Raws* and *Giro Street* (both 20th c) witness its appearance in towns and villages.<sup>11</sup> No modern estate agent would countenance its further spread, nor would any

<sup>10</sup> ‘Expecting some, wha a’ the leave will nick/ And gie them nought but bare Whop-shafts to lick’: Allan Ramsay, *Poems* I, 162 (1720).

<sup>11</sup> For a study of this type of ‘early modern’ (usually farm-)name, see Simon Taylor in Padel & Parsons 2008, *A Commodity of Good Names: Essays in Honour of Margaret Gelling*, 274–85: ‘Pilkembare and Pluck the Craw: verbal place-names in Scotland’.

insurance company risk low-lying *Swineabbey* and *Swindinem*, their first element watery \**swyn*(d), the local form of Sc *synd* ‘swill, wash out’.

*Cauldhame* and *Clatchiehome* (‘cold’ and ‘clarty’ respectively) are as graphic in their own way as *Blawloan*, *Gutterslap*, and *Bare Bank*. This last field-name is literal, whereas *Bare Brecks* edges towards the metaphorical, like *Hungry Hill* (potentially a horrific children’s tale), while *Coothrapple* (?= *Gowkthrapple* LAN) may take the metaphor further. *Blinkbonny*, *Lookaboutye* and *Glownerwerem* boast fine views, *Blawweary* and *Blathewas* more wind, *Clash-me-doon* an encroaching bing, while *Cockmylane* is cheekily independent, and *Brag Forment It* toponymic bling: a farmer whose eggs were all double-yolkers? Is there irony here? And is *Mak It Better* a plea or a statement of intent? There are yet others evoking a crossword devised by someone whose mindset and tone we lack the key to: we have answers but no clue.

One such is an odd inscription on Roy’s 1750s map, ignored by Angus Macdonald.<sup>12</sup> At first glance incomprehensible, it resolves itself into *Dear Whup Shafts*. [cNT105737<sup>13</sup>] The initial impulse is to make it another 18th c garbling, perhaps of \**Deep Whaup Shafts*, named for Sc *whaup* ‘curlew’ a bird of the muir? A century too early for shale, it could still be another witness of the exploitation of this mineral-rich area.



If we take it at face value, though, the middle word is Sc *whup* ‘whip’ (an emigré to Hollywood, featuring in movies along with *gonna* and *yo ass*) and here we have a clue. *CSD*<sup>14</sup> offers *lick the whipsaft* ‘kiss the rod, suffer humiliation or defeat’, making *Dear Whup Shafts* a heavily ironic self-deprecatory name for an unproductive farmstead: ‘a (series of) humiliation(s) that has cost (me) dear’, *dear* being a deeply rueful pun, a masochism echoed in the grim humour of

<sup>12</sup> Angus Macdonald, *The Place-Names of West Lothian* (Edinburgh and London 1941).

<sup>13</sup> It lay just outwith the mapped policies of Newliston, towards Niddry, between Winchburgh and Broxburn.

<sup>14</sup> *Concise Scots Dictionary*, ed. Mairi Robinson (Edinburgh 1999): *whip*, sv.

nearby *Fitimbame* ‘kick them home’, perhaps the epithet of a sadistic herd.

Our cruciverbalist’s clue would then be something like ‘costly Scots rod causes deep humiliation (4, 4, 6)’ (with *shafts* a modern verb); but how do we decrypt *Blawshinny*, *Cockups*, *Cuffabouts*, *Daintydods*, *Dounstan*, *Liltiecockie*, *Mountpuff*, *Sowen Mugs* and *the Scud Hintie*?

John G Wilkinson

## JOURNAL OF SCOTTISH NAME STUDIES 6

### Articles

Alice Crook *Personal Names in 18th-Century Scotland: a case study of the parish of Beith (North Ayrshire)*

Matthew H. Hammond *The Use of the Name Scot in the Central Middle Ages. Part 2: Scot as a surname, north of the Firth of Forth*

Michael Parker *An Eighth-century Reference to the Monastery at Hoddum*

### Reviews

Gilbert Márkus on: Stephen T. Driscoll, Jane Geddes and Mark A. Hall, *Pictish Progress: New Studies on Northern Britain in the Early Middle Ages*

Thomas Owen Clancy on: John MacQueen, *Place-Names in the Rhinns of Galloway and Luce Valley and Place-Names of the Wigtownshire Moors and Machars*

*Bibliography of Scottish Name Studies for 2011*, compiled by Simon Taylor

<http://www.clanntuirc.co.uk/JSNS/JSNS6.html>

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The **SPNS Spring 2013 conference** will take place at Aberdeen University on Saturday 4 May. *Details on flier with this Newsletter.*

The **Scottish Society for Northern Studies** has arranged a day conference at Meigle, Perthshire on Saturday 13 April 2013. Topics include local place-names: details at <http://www.northernstudies.org.uk/>.

The **SNSBI** (Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland) holds its 2013 spring conference at the Pond Hotel, Great Western Road, Glasgow, from Friday 5 April to Monday 8 April. Further information through <http://www.snsbi.org.uk/>.

The triennial **World Congress of Onomastic Sciences** will be held at the University of Glasgow from Monday 25 August to Friday 29 August 2014. More information is available from Carole Hough: [Carole.Hough@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Carole.Hough@glasgow.ac.uk)

Robin A Hooker has let us know that remaining stock of the **PATHFINDER GAZETTEER** is available for sale from the National Library of Scotland: “There are Scottish and Northumbrian gazetteers available in both hard-copy and digital form (digitally subject to OS copyright agreements).” Further information is available from Robin at [rahdelp@yahoo.com](mailto:rahdelp@yahoo.com).

## TIREE PLACE-NAMES WEBSITE

We have learned from Aonghas MacCoinnich of a valuable new resource for those seeking information on place-names in Tiree. There is also an opportunity for feedback.

<http://www.tireeplacenames.org>

## NORTHERN IRELAND PLACE- NAMES PROJECT

In the recent past there has been no shortage of dismal tidings about the problems facing place-names research in Northern Ireland. It is therefore some relief to have had this news from the Project’s Director, Dr Mícheál Ó Mainnín:

“We had been proceeding with work on enhancing the Northern Ireland Place-Names Project database over the past two years in collaboration with colleagues in Land & Property Services (LPS; formerly the Ordnance Survey), both in technical terms and in terms of corrections and amendments to the research data. The University had been able to provide a little financial support for this purpose and we were grateful for this.

“Now, however, with the support of a grant from Foras na Gaeilge (the all-Ireland Irish-language body), we have been able to employ a research assistant (Dr Paul Tempan) for two and a half days per week for the next six months to assist in seeing Phase I (Co. Down) of the terminal stage of the project through to completion and in initiating work on Phase 2 (Co. Armagh). We are very grateful to Foras na Gaeilge for this.

“The newly-enhanced database, which will be complete for the administrative names and urban settlements of Co. Down, will be launched on 21 January 2013 ... The new version of the database will be available at the same address ([www.placenamesni.org](http://www.placenamesni.org)) but will differ from that currently online in that access will now be available to information on all of the place-names contained in the database (and not just administrative names). Also, the historical



sources for these names will be fully referenced (at present, all that is available online is an abbreviated reference for each source).”

## DANISH DIGITAL PLACE-NAME RESOURCES – DIGDAG AND DANMARKS STEDNAVNE

*This article is an updated version of my talk ‘Place-names in a digital landscape: a presentation of the results of the Danish project DigDag’ at the SPNS Day Conference in Edinburgh, 3rd November 2012.*

On 1st June 2009, the Danish Research Infrastructure project *DigDag* (Digital Atlas of Denmark’s Historical-Administrative Geography) was launched – and I was part of it. My role in the project was to oversee the digitisation of the majority of the administrative units and divisions as well as the digitisation and geocoding of the place-name series *Danmarks Stednavne* (Place-Names of Denmark). With a budget of GBP 2.4 million, mainly funded by the Danish Agency for Technology and Innovation, we had a very good outset. This was enough to fund equipment, 9 permanent staff and over 20 students over three years.

The purpose of *DigDag* was to digitise and map all possible Danish administrative units from 1660 until today temporally and spatially, i.e. how long an administrative unit existed and its size(s) during this period. In order to ease the search for administrative, place-names were chosen as a means of singling out the relevant unit from the notion that a known locality is a better means of identifying a unit which we probably do not know the name of. Over the three years we collected data for some 80 administrative unit types (in the region of 15,000 individual units in total and geocoded their geographical extent and established more than 300,000 relationships between the various units), as well as digitising and geocoding more than 9,000 pages of place-name volumes (more than 148,000 individual place-names). The result of this work can be seen on the dedicated portal [www.digdag.dk](http://www.digdag.dk). Additionally, place-names may also be searched Name Research Section’s own homepage [www.danmarksstednavne.navneforskning.ku.dk](http://www.danmarksstednavne.navneforskning.ku.dk).

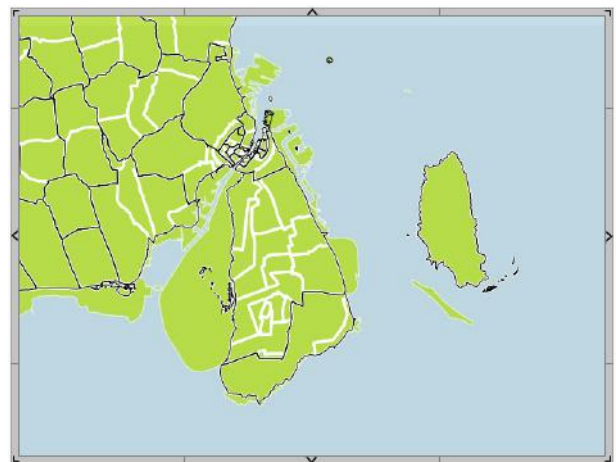
The *DigDag*-portal shows the total digital outcome – the borders for all generated units and the place-names digitised in connection with the project. It is possible to perform a purely map based search for the individual units (*Søg på kort*), where the various administrative units are

grouped according to seven main themes: municipal, regional, ecclesiastical, judicial, geographical, police and other. Currently, it is necessary to zoom in a few times to get the units to show, as the precision of the units is so high that the computation processes are too big to bring country-wide views for anything but the regional theme. It is also necessary to state a date when the wanted administrative unit was in existence – it is possible to perform a day-to-day search. If a double view or comparison of two administrative units is needed, then the facility *Søg på dobbeltkort* allows you to see two types of administrative units overlaying each other, as seen in Figure 1.

Place-names may be searched through the *Søg på stednavne* feature. Here it is possible to search modern and historical forms. If a more detailed search is needed, I can instead recommend [www.danmarksstednavne.navneforskning.ku.dk](http://www.danmarksstednavne.navneforskning.ku.dk). This site is being refined right now but should be available shortly. Then it will feature an advanced search engine, with results being shown in text and on a map (more about this in the next issue).

For anyone who would like to use *DigDag* data in his or her own research, for use locally, web service and download facilities are being developed at the time of writing in cooperation with the Danish Geo Data Agency. This data will be made available in conjunction with the rest of the newly freed data from the agency on their webpage. There will be links to the data on [www.digdag.dk](http://www.digdag.dk), though.

### Peder Gammeltoft



**Figure** The Copenhagen area 1867 showing parishes (black lines) and townland divisions (white lines). The underlying map is a modern map of the area. Notice how several townlands may be within the same parish, at the same time as one townland may contain two or more parishes – the latter is a typical feature of urban areas.

### Nicolaisen Essay Prize

Some of the profits from sales of 'In the Beginning was the Name' will be used to fund an annual Student Essay Prize of £75 in honour of our Honorary President, Professor Bill Nicolaisen. Students are invited to submit original work of around 5,000 words on any onomastic topic by the deadline of 31 December. Submissions should be sent electronically to the Society's Convener, Carole Hough, at [carole.hough@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:carole.hough@glasgow.ac.uk). The winner will also be invited to give a paper at an SPNS conference.

### A NEW ONLINE RESOURCE



In October 2012, a new online resource, [onomastics.co.uk](http://onomastics.co.uk), was launched by Glasgow postgraduates Alice Crook and Leonie Dunlop, with technical assistance from IT consultant Scott McGready. The website was intended to fulfill a need for accessible and efficient onomastic discussion and for engaging the general public with this exciting research field.



Inspiration for the website came from the Onomastics Reading Group at Glasgow University, which began in January 2012. With an enthusiastic group of academics, postgraduates, and undergraduates, we have discussed a huge range of onomastic research, including general onomastic theory, the naming of dogs in an African tribe, the Saints in Scottish Place-names project, and the names given to omelettes in recipe books. After the founding of this group, it soon became apparent that a new outlet for onomastic debate was needed, where methodological issues, new considerations of

existing theories, and interesting discoveries could be discussed at leisure and outside of the conference season. This idea, coupled with a well-timed presentation by Peder Gammeltoft (University of Copenhagen) on digital onomastics, led to the founding and launching of [onomastics.co.uk](http://onomastics.co.uk).

The need for an outlet for onomastic discussion was fulfilled by the creation of the website's forum. To contribute to a discussion here, the user is required to create an account (membership is free); to date, we have 77 members, not including the three founders and administrators. Once a user has logged in, they are free to add your own thoughts to an ongoing discussion or begin their own. Even if there are no pressing questions they would like to ask or any discussions they would like to contribute to, there is also a topic for introductions, where researchers have been simply introducing themselves and outlining their research interests. We hope that this website will help onomasticians become more aware of the research interests of others, and hopefully also inspire some joint research projects which otherwise would have never been envisaged. Overall, we hope that usage of this website will help develop and strengthen new and existing onomastic networks, and aid the creation of exciting new research projects.

The site has been primarily designed for the purpose of keeping track of what's going on in the onomastic world. Consequently, we have a monthly blog post, which is intended to allow contributors to alert other researchers to ongoing projects, interesting discoveries, and to spark general discussions into the development of the onomastic field. The content is contributed by researchers from around the world, and, so far, we've had submissions from researchers in countries including the UK, France, Denmark, and Australia. In the first five months since the website launch, we've seen posts regarding a huge range of interests, including a project on hagiotoponyms in Scotland, urban names in Copenhagen, and the career development of a consultant toponymist. Future posts include an overview of the Ghana Place-Names Project and a 'how-to' guide on easy and efficient geo-coding.

The website also contains an events calendar, which is regularly updated with details of conferences, workshops and meetings which may be of interest to researchers. This will hopefully also increase the memberships of



various onomastic societies and, to further improve the chances of this, the website also contains a page full of links to useful websites, including the sites of various onomastic groups and societies, as well as interesting resources.

The website has now been live for five months, and we've already had over 2,000 visits from visitors in 66 countries. These countries represent every continent except Antarctica, and include the USA, Brazil, Russia, Germany, Kenya, New Zealand, India, Iran, Spain, Vietnam, and Hungary. Of the visits to the website, 56% are from returning visitors and 44% are new visitors. This shows that new visitors are frequently finding links to our website on other sites and on Google, and are interested enough to follow the link and visit the site. Crucially, it also shows that many visitors found the site to be engaging and worth more than one visit.

We plan to continue developing this website and promoting it at various events; once a stable and enthusiastic membership has been established, [onomastics.co.uk](http://onomastics.co.uk) promises to become an invaluable resource and outlet for onomastic discussion.

**Alice Crook, Leonie Dunlop, and Scott McGready** (updating the presentation to the conference in November 2012)

The fifth and final volume of '**The Place-Names of Fife**', by Simon Taylor with Gilbert Márkus, is now out. It includes discussion, an elements glossary, bibliography and appendices, and complements the four previous volumes on West Fife, Central Fife, St Andrews and the East Neuk, and North Fife. Orders for previous volumes as well as for Vol 5 can be made by telephone to the publisher Shaun Tyas at 01775 821542, by e-mail to [pwatkins@pwatkinspublishing.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:pwatkins@pwatkinspublishing.fsnet.co.uk), or by writing (with cheque to 'Shaun Tyas') to 1 High Street, Donington, Lincolnshire PE11 4TA.

Normally £24 per volume, inc. UK p&p, but £22 to SPNS members.

Grants of up to £125 for students of onomastics to attend conferences are still available from the Cultural Contacts Fund – information from [http://www.spns.org.uk/News09.html#Cultural\\_Contacts\\_Fund](http://www.spns.org.uk/News09.html#Cultural_Contacts_Fund) or the current coordinator of the steering committee, Professor Carole Hough: [carole.hough@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:carole.hough@glasgow.ac.uk)

## PERSONAL NAMES IN SCOTTISH COMMUNITIES: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH

At the November 2012 SPNS conference, **Ellen Bramwell** reported on her recently-completed PhD on personal names entitled *Naming in Society: A cross-cultural study of five communities in Scotland*, which was carried out at the University of Glasgow. The project used approaches from the social sciences, and specifically sociolinguistics, to investigate the systems of names that people use within different types of community. Sociolinguistic approaches look at language in the context of society, using social factors (such as gender, age, social class or place of residence) to explain variation in language and employing research methods such as interviews and participant-observation. This research applied similar techniques to the study of naming.

The aim was to investigate personal names in a diverse range of communities in Scotland. To this end the research looked at communities in the Western Isles and Buckie, as well as three different communities in Glasgow: an indigenous community in the West of Glasgow, the Pakistani-Muslim community and a multicultural community of Asylum Seekers and Refugees who had been housed together by government bodies.

Despite existing within a small nation, there were differences between the indigenous communities in the Western Isles, Buckie and Glasgow, alongside many similarities. Three generations of people were interviewed in each community to get a sense of changing practices. The proliferation of different forenames during the latter half of the twentieth century seemed to have happened earliest in Glasgow, then Buckie and, later, the Western Isles. The practice of bestowing a relative's name on a child had been particularly important in the Western Isles and the name was still seen as a link to the relative for whom the person had been named. This relational link seemed the most significant aspect of the name in older generations – more so than form, sound or meaning – to the point that two siblings could be given the same name. In these cases the siblings would have been named after different relatives, often from different sides of the family. Naming after relatives had also been important in Buckie and Glasgow, but these practices had begun to change earlier, with members of the elderly generation there

discussing the social difficulties they had faced in breaking away from tradition and giving names from outside the family. Changing social practices had also begun to affect family surnames (though only to a fairly small degree), with teenage interviewees reporting more instances than previous generations of siblings with different surnames.

In the Western Isles, names were routinely 'translated', particularly amongst the older generations. Gaelic and English names co-exist, with the name sometimes varying depending on the language being spoken at the time, but often due to the formality or otherwise of the situation. For example, *John* might be known by that name only on official documents, whilst being known as *Seonaidh*, which is seen as a Gaelic equivalent, at all other times. In the Pakistani-Muslim community in Glasgow, which is settled and close-knit, the names given remained recognisably Pakistani (although the names themselves often had Arabic roots) in contrast to the practices around them. In this regard there seemed continuity with the maintenance of religion and other practices traditional to this community.

However, in contexts outside the community, the form and pronunciation of people's names were often altered to make them more 'Scottish-like'. This commonly happened at school and in the workplace, and was often imposed by teachers and workmates, though it could also be a decision on the part of the community-member themselves. So *Malik* could become known as *Malkey* to make it 'easier'. In addition, though the names given to children at birth were Pakistani, hereditary surnames were becoming the norm, which seemed a move towards British and Scottish tradition at a structural level. Some of the first Pakistani migrants to Scotland had not had surnames at all and found that they had to adopt them for official purposes. As the community developed, patronymics (where the father's forename is given as the child's last name) had been extremely common. Now many, if not most, children are given the same *last* name as their father (and mother, if she has changed her name on marriage). Due to their more recent arrival and lack of stability, the asylum seekers and refugees in the study had had little time to establish practices different from their home country. However, for some interviewees worries about the potential for racism had caused them to give names to newborns which might work in either culture. In

addition, many of the teenage asylum seekers and refugees, who had partly grown up in Scotland, reported differences in their parents' expectations and their own as to how they might name a child in the future.

The study also looked at unofficial names – the types of names not given to a child at birth or recorded on official documentation. These were widely used in the Western Isles, where the surname-stock was small and very concentrated leading to many people sharing the same official name. Bynames and nicknames were used here to differentiate people and were also very much a continuation of Gaelic culture. In Buckie, unofficial names known as tee-names had been historically important but had all but disappeared between the oldest and youngest generations in the study. Tee-names were like clan names, but were used alongside surnames to differentiate family lineage; for example, *Smith Frasier* and *Smith Miss* denoted two different families with *Smith* as their official surname. However, the use of nicknames was still relatively strong in this close-knit town. The indigenous community in Glasgow did not have as much nickname-use as expected, which may relate to its looser social ties. In contrast, young males in the Pakistani-Muslim community in Glasgow used nicknames extensively, seemingly as a function of group solidarity and close social bonds.

To sum up, this talk provided a short summary of some of the results of a recent research project on personal names in Scotland. The wider study showed diversity in naming practices within Scotland, where localised cultures played a part in the naming system alongside national and global influences. Various factors, such as cultural contact and social structure, appeared to influence how the naming systems had developed and are still developing over time.

### **SOME CHARTER NAMES OF EAST LoTHIAN**

The talk at the Edinburgh conference was largely though not only based on the Yester Writs, a wonderful resource, spanning centuries, of charters and records of legal disputes involving the Lords of Yester; and on the strip of land on the northern fringes of the Lammermuir Hills known as the Hillfoots, at the heart of which is the parish of Yester. This was formed not much over 300 years ago but named for the centuries old lordly estate of Yester, rather than the emerging new village of Gifford. The new



parish was based on that of Bothans, whose late medieval collegiate church survives, still roofed, near the 18<sup>th</sup> century Yester House; with the addition of a western part of Baro, most of which was added to Garvald parish. Already in this paragraph there are some interesting place-names.

Early forms for **Yester**, such as *Gbiestrith* and *Jbestrith* in variants of the same charter of 1166x82 (Yester Writs 2 and 3) by King William the Lion, are consistent in having a final /d/ or /th/. The building of Yester Castle on a bluff by what is now called the Gifford Water is likely to have been a little before Writ 16 (1250x67) mentions “*vado rivuli qui vocatur Jestrith*” (“ford of the stream that is called Jestrith”). So it looks rather likely that ‘Yestrith/Yestrith’ is originally, or contains, a river-name. Given the recurrent references to fords in connection with the stream, there must be a suspicion that *-rid/-rith* represents the same Brittonic element, cognate with and meaning ‘ford’, as in the Welsh common noun *rhyd* (from early Celtic *ritu*) and the Cumbrian place-name Penrith.

There is a difficulty in that, in Wales, *rhyd* as generic is nearly always followed by the specific (e.g. *Rhyd-y-Meirch* ‘ford of the horses’), with exceptions after *ben* ‘old’, as is usual, and in the noun compound *Llechryd* ‘stone ford’.<sup>15</sup> If an exception here can be justified on grounds such as early adoption into Northumbrian Old English of a Brittonic ford name retaining the old order of elements as in *Tadoritum* and *Maporitum* of the late Roman Ravenna Cosmography, or dialectal conservatism in the Old North, a suspect for the original hydronym could lie within the Brittonic sub-section of a large family of words based on Proto-Indo-European *\*ies-*. This has senses in the field of ‘boil, seethe, foam’ and is found in Sanskrit, Tokharian and Greek as well as abundantly in Germanic, where one of its members is English *yeast*. Welsh *ias* ‘boiling’ but now metaphorically used for ‘thrill, shudder’ has a Celtic cognate in Gaelic *eas* ‘waterfall’ (Old Irish *ess*, from hypothetical *\*iestu*). Another derivative with a suitable sense for a clear stream is Welsh *iesin* (from *\*ies-t-in-o-* ‘bright’). Whilst a convincing detailed scenario within this broad outline is at present elusive, the ‘traditional’ explanation of the name as Welsh *ystrad* ‘vale’ is less consistent with the vowel quality in the stressed first

syllable of Yester, and with the /i/ of the second syllable in the oldest forms.

**Gifford**, pronounced with hard /g/, developed as a local economic hub at a meeting of roads north of the parkland of Yester Castle, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The name appears to combine a folk memory of the Giffard dynasty who were lords of Yester, for nearly 200 years till 1357, with an allusion to a crossing of the river. Possibly the personal name had already given rise to a folk etymological explanation referring to a local ford. Prof Geoffrey Barrow located the Norman origins of the family name (pronounced with French soft /g/) at Longueville-la-Gifart in Seine Maritime.

**Baro**’s now disappeared church stood on a bluff with a broad view encompassing Traprain Law; the Writs give compelling evidence for the church’s dedication to St Kentigern whose legendary origins were on the law. The early forms such as *Barow/Barw* (Writ 24, c1340) suggest that it is a northerly instance of Old English *bearn*, dative *bearwe*, ‘grove’, which provides some of the places in England called Barrow.

**Bothans**, as the name of the former parish and collegiate church, unsurprisingly has many mentions in the Yester Writs. The name has been associated with St Bathán (Báithéne), cousin and successor of Columba as abbot of Iona: e.g. ‘St Bathán’s Collegiate Church’ on the 1890s 25 inches to 1 mile OS map. Bishop Bernham in the 13<sup>th</sup> century consecrated the kirk to St Cuthbert, possibly obliterating an earlier dedication. However, Gaelic *bothan*, ‘hut’, with English/Scots plural, is also in the frame. Writ 86 (1447) records a grant to the church and the chaplain of St Mary’s altar a piece of ground at ‘le Bothanis’, between the church and the water to the east; not named here, but elsewhere in the Writs the ‘Burn of Bothanis’, now the Gifford Water. Roy’s military survey seems still to show a hamlet here in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. The 1447 reference and the lack of documentary evidence for a cult of Báithéne here suggest fairly strongly that the name was simply a straightforward description of a meagre settlement, and coined in Gaelic, just to add to the linguistic mix in this area. Many spurious saints’ dedications were invented by Victorian antiquarians, on flimsy evidence.

**Garvald** is obviously Celtic and is a name not unique to East Lothian, but could be Brittonic ‘rough bank’ or Gaelic ‘rough stream’. The latter, *garbh allt*, may fit better most instances of

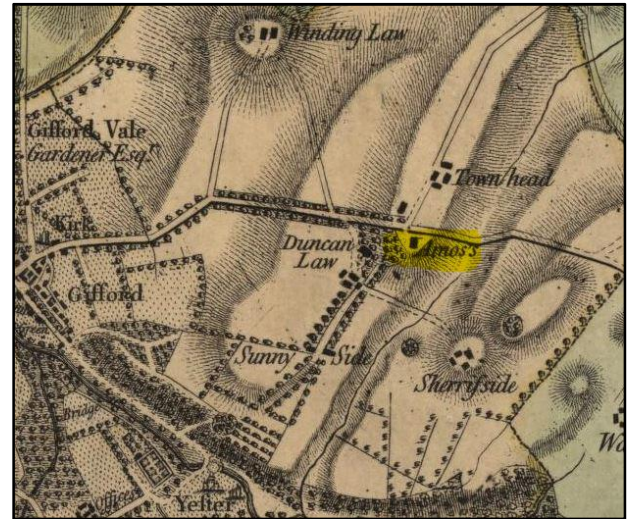
<sup>15</sup> *Dictionary of the Place-Names of Wales*, Hywel Wyn Owen and Richard Morgan (Llandysul 2007)

the name; but at Garvald Mains farm, where the main village stood till the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the presence of an ancient ‘hill fort’ or defensive farmstead above a steep and roughish bank may point rather to the equivalent of Welsh *garw allt*. There is a temptation to guess that the name could even have been coined for the settlement at the ‘rough bank’.



The modern spelling of **Gamuelston**, a farm just south-west of the Yester House policies, doubtless emulates Samuelston west of Haddington. In Blaeu’s map it was Gamston and in Roy’s Gamelston. This very probably refers to the person with a Scandinavian name who is mentioned in Yester Writs 2 and 3 when William the Lion granted to Hugo Giffard the Yester lands “*per easdem diuisas per quas Gamel illam terram tenuerat*”: by the same bounds by which Gamel had held that land.

We have no such candidate individual for the naming of the barony of **Duncanlaw**, to the east of the Gifford Water, or **Duncanbog**, a small area near the east bank. If these refer to the same man, his period may have been even earlier. We know from the Writs, including no. 24 of c1340, that within the barony of Duncanlaw and parish of Baro there was a *domus hospitalis*, a ‘house of the hospitaller’, a ‘spittal’ which would have offered food and shelter to needy locals and to travellers. With the knowledge that in Scots an alms-house was an *aumus house* we can locate this house and chapel with some confidence, thanks to the excellent work of map-makers over 200 years ago. The combination of the name **Cross Hill** on modern OS maps, a circular enclosure, an ancient monuments record of a cross base, mention of the ‘cross of Duncanlaw’ in the Writs, and a location at a likely former crossing of major routes would have made the spot a prime suspect anyway. The name **Amos’s** on Forrest’s finely drawn map of 1799 corresponds too well to the Scots vernacular *aumus house* not to contain a memory of the site’s old function.



**Winding Law** is puzzling. In variable spellings including the **vyndenmyr** of Writ 24 (commemorated in Myreside Farm by the road from Haddington) and later Wynden, Windene and Windane it is persistent in the Writs. It seems to be matched in the name Winding Cairn for a prehistoric mound nearly 200m up on Penmanshiel (Brittonic *penn* + *maen*?) Moor in Berwickshire. In days before modern machinery the Wynden/Winding grounds were infamously unsuitable for anything but permanent pasture and ploughmen ordered to tackle it likened its clay to cast iron. Since it resists explanation in English or Scots and gives no hint of a Gaelic origin it may be noted that in Welsh *gwyndwn* (12<sup>th</sup> century *guendun*; *gwyn* ‘white’ + *twyn/ton* ‘ley, turf, sod, lawn etc’) refers to ‘unploughed land, ley’; but there is no sign of the expected initial /G/ or /Q/ and it would be astonishing if such a local and minor name could have survived since Brittonic speech was last used in East Lothian.

A decret arbitral of about 1600 rationalised the boundaries of Duncanlaw and ‘Barra’ with **Linplum** which lay between them. This is another very enigmatic name, but evidently older, maybe much older, than the first mention in the Writs, in 1439. Till the rationalisation of holdings Linplum had four quarters, named after their early occupants. Such quartering was also characteristic of **Blance** (Blawnce 1445/6, also Blans in the Writs) north-west of Gifford. It is just possible that Blance is a rare example of a Scottish place-name formed from a French word, as the lands were held in *blanche ferme* tenure. Otherwise we have to consider a Brittonic term (as in Welsh *blaen* ‘point, end, limits, confines’) which W J Watson identified as occurring in *Plenploth*, Stow parish, Midlothian: ‘far end of parish’, cf. Blaenplwyf in mid-Wales, although this name may date only from the 19<sup>th</sup>



century. As it happens West and East Blance farms, which face each other across a country lane, are at a parish boundary. An outside possibility for Linplum, given its resistance to any sensible explanation in other languages and the location of the former main house on high ground very close to Baro kirk, but requiring unusual sound changes in both the first vowel and the final consonant, would involve Brittonic \**lann* ‘ecclesiastical enclosure, church’ and the same derivative of Latin *pleb-* ‘common people’ as at Plenploth (*Plenploif* 1593).<sup>16</sup>

A name significantly absent from the Writs, which end in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, is **Danskine** (*Danskin* on Roy’s map), at the foot of the higher hills south-east of Gifford, beside the road to Duns and thence to England. This is now a farm but in the 18<sup>th</sup> century was an inn notorious as a haunt of smugglers using the hill tracks to avoid the attention of excise men. At the conference the idea that the name referred to Danes (Dansker) was mooted. That this is no new idea was confirmed by subsequent information from a historically well informed local resident that two fields on the farm were called North and South Elsinor on an early 19<sup>th</sup> century estate map. However, this was trumped by information, in conversation with Prof Steve Murdoch who specialises in the history of Scotland in the early modern period, that Danskin(e) was the standard form by which Danzig (Gdańsk in Polish) was named in Scottish shipping records. Since the former Hanseatic city of Danzig was still a major *entrepôt* with important trading privileges it now seems very likely that Danskine, as a place of unofficially duty-free business, was a particularly fine example of a facetious place-name coining of the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century. We can certainly lay to rest W J Watson’s unusually ill researched suggestion that ‘Dunschine’ was “probably” a Gaelic *dun sgine*, ‘knife-fort’.

**Bill Patterson** (updating some of the material from the November conference, with thanks for suggestions in discussion on the day and since)

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(From a BBC report)

More than 50 streets in the Moray town of Keith are finally being given names. The lanes - which make up part of the town's grid formation - have been unidentified for more than a century. Land Street, Mid Street and Moss Street run north to south through the centre of the town and are intersected by 22 lanes, only a handful of which had names. The names were prompted by the emergency services who had concerns about areas not being identified.

Local historians have played a part in choosing the names, so there are farming references in the local Doric dialect, with Ploo Lane and Fairmers Lane among the new titles. Others reflect historic industries, such as Weavers Lane and Coopers Lane.

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