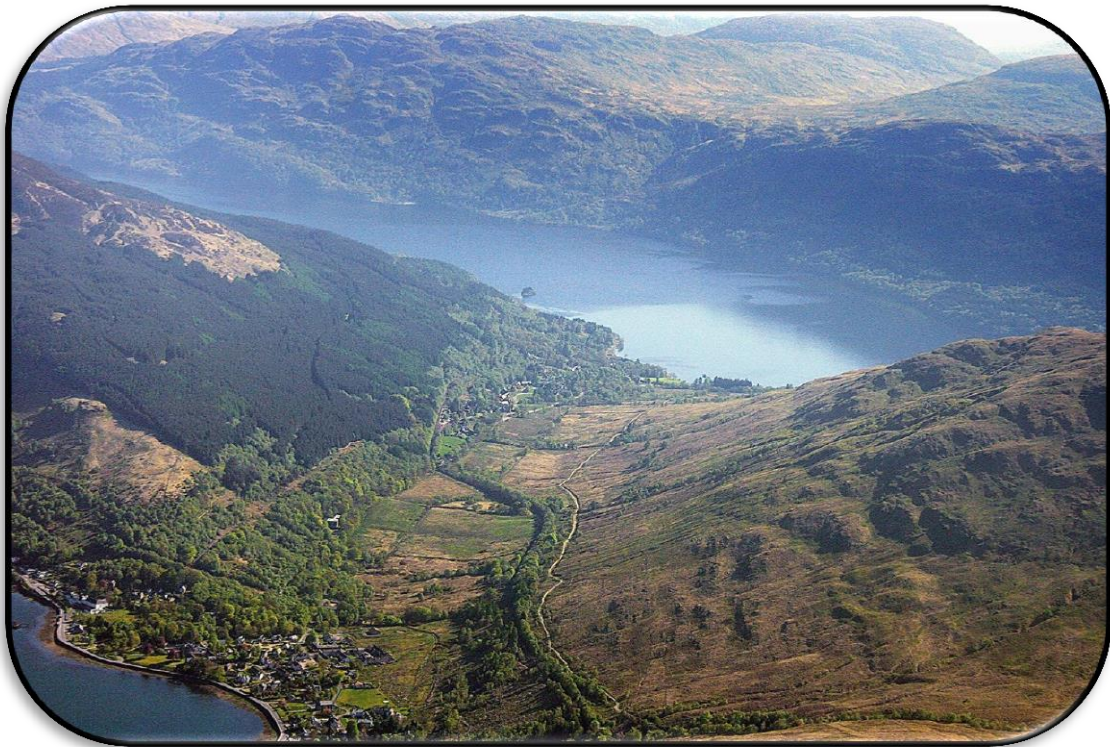


SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME NEWS

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



This aerial view taken above Loch Long ('loch of ships') looks east over the isthmus between Arrochar on Loch Long and Tarbet on the west bank of Loch Lomond. Tarbet's name (Gaelic tairbeart 'across-carrying' a compound of elements related to English through and to bear, besides Latin trans and ferre) is transparent, referring to a place where boats could be borne across a low neck of land, in this case most famously in 1263 when according to a saga account King Hácon of Norway had ships of his fleet hauled over from the 'ship-firth' to Loch Lomond. In the late 19th century it offered a useful gap for builders of the West Highland railway. An explanation for the name Arrochar lies in medieval land use, technology and administration: 'Arochor de Luss' in the 13th century, it is Gaelic arachar, 'ploughgate', some 50 hectares, or what a team of oxen could plough in a year. The term was used only in the Earldom of Lennox. (Photo: Sandra Kay)

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COMMENT

Gilbert Márkus recently photographed this unofficial spelling adjustment (from Castilian *Lagos* to Asturian *Llagos*) and accompanying injunction 'Respect the toponymy'.



Whilst not encouraging use of information signs as a medium for orthographic disputes, we can endorse the sentiment that long-established place-names should be treasured and kept in use, not capriciously replaced, mangled or 'improved'; replacement of names of great historic value is, not surprisingly, a particular concern for our sister society in Wales. A more subtle way in which the toponymy may be disrespected is the spurious use of terms which have particular historic connotations, and could thus mislead unwary students of place-names. Unfortunately elements like *grange* and *chesters* have vaguely 'high-end, country life-style' marketing appeal for developers and estate agents selling the like of stading conversions, so we may find a Chesters where there was never any 'British camp' or 'hill fort', or a Grange where no monastic body ever held property.

Of course it is easier to lament toponymic insensitivity than to prevent it, and solutions are not obvious. Maybe we should give some thought, as a Society, to preparing guidance on naming practices for local authorities and developers?

SPNS SPRING CONFERENCE AT DUNBAR – SUMMARIES OF TALKS

In from the Edge – Introduction to the History of the Burgh

Dunbar is a name of a settlement on the coast that grew to become a royal burgh. The burgh was a compact place, a single wide street with herring-bone tenements and an easterly industrial suburb to the shore. Outside the landward edge was a swath of burgh land, the Royalty. The boundary of the Royalty survived to be defined on OS maps (e.g. the 25 inch, 1893 edition) but more particularly survived as narrative directions for physical perambulation, naming sites and localities, engrossed within the council records several times between the 16th – 19th centuries. Most of this area is now under the present streetscape. The written descriptions show over time an increasing uncertainty over what is being described, and contemporary maps no longer include the boundary. The latest Dunbar Burgh Survey (Historic Dunbar, Dennison, Stronach and Coleman, 2005) was an opportunity to begin thinking about the perambulation and the landscape over which it had passed.

The southern boundary of the Royalty can be traced in some detail and followed both natural and man-made features. The westernmost point was a crossing on the *Biel Water* and separated the policies of *Bielside* (once *Williame Lauderis Maling*) to the north from the *Kingis Lands of West Barns* to the south as the boundary ran east. The boundary skirted the *Clayknowe* (and *Battleblent*, a 19th century coining), looped steeply south to the *Crumacres* and then north to the *Cruikis of Belhavin*. The area thus defined is currently arable land and a caravan site defended by a seawall but was once *the Saltirlach (salterloche)*. After skirting the tenements of Belhaven the route headed south and east on the north bank of the vanished *Belhaven Loch* to the *damheid* at the *ile-ark* and followed a (now buried) watercourse to the (now drained) *Great Loch of Dunbar* going then east *as ye deip of ye cleir water gangis* to the *Stobbern Stank*, *Lochend* and on through the *Latch Park* to the highway and the sea. Within this area the written instructions separate *the Inner Common* from heritable arable.

The arable once comprised named *crofts* and individual (run)*rigs* in named localities; the runrigs became fields at the end of the 18th

century when their owners consolidated holdings by exchange, and got new names (*Summerfield*, *Sailors Park*). Some of perambulated names must however predate the Reformation and may extend back to the heyday of the earls of Dunbar. Selecting a few examples, *Kirkhill* and *Monkscroft* (both 12th century?), *Friarscroft* (13th century and associated *Maison Dieu* (*Maidendew*)), *Abbeylands* (15th century?), *Sancte Johnnis Land*, *Templelands*, the *Preistisfauld* and *Knokers lynkis* can all be related to ecclesiastical foundations and grants. *Gibsons Lands*, *Masons Croft* and *Forrests Lands* may recall early burgess families, *Bakers Croft* (*Bacchus Croft*) is more problematic. The crag of *Knockenhair* overlooks *Rigg and Floors*, the *Over and Under Boroughdales* and the *Gallows Green*. The *Longcrofts* and *Underedge* lie near the burgh perimeter. Down in the southeast the *Punderlands* and *Punderland Butts* lie near the Kirkhill. Exiting west from the middle of the High Street, the *Sliddrine stanis* lie near part of the Common later used as a *Bleachfield*. To the north *Winterfield* (*qubiltensfelds*) reaches the coast at the *Heugh Heads* and *Bayswell* is immediately west of *Castle Park*.

Offshore, a series of rocks are hazards to navigation: among them *Oliver's Ship*, *Wallace's Head*, *Boy's Buss*, *Castlefoot Rock*, *the Steeples*, *the Yetts*, *Little and Meikle Spiker*. On the shore itself *the Pin Cod* sits on *the Delves*; *Johnstons Hole* and *the Gripes* are outliers of *Castle Rock*; and to the east is *Lam(m)er Island*. Whereas the coast and offshore names are still in use, many of the rest became disused as the town grew.

David Anderson

Dunbar - In and Around

This talk looked at some of the 20th century developments within the town, particularly in more recent years, and the themes chosen or criteria for the names of these new developments.

Beginning at the west side of the town, when you come into Dunbar you pass some of the large post Great War estates built by Dunbar Town Council. These new streets were a response to Government circulars requesting that councils began to think about the 'social housing' that would be required when the war ended. The streets which sprang up from the 1920s along the north side of the railway included names such as *Summerfield Road*, *Lammermuir Crescent*, *Doon Avenue* and *Boroughdales*. A new scheme, known locally as the

Tree Scheme (including *Ash Grove*, *Elm Street* and *Pine Street*) was also begun and was continued after WW2.

Continuing up towards the High Street you can't fail to notice the large 1960s scheme on the left. Locals called it the *Electric Scheme* on account of its being all electric, or *Cement City* as it was built to accommodate the expected influx of workers at the newly built Blue Circle cement Works, opened in 1963. As well as *Rigg Park* and *Floors Terrace* here we find *Wingate Crescent*, named after General Wingate, Sirdar of the Egyptian army and Governor of the Sudan. It was General Wingate who built *Knockenhair House* in 1907, on the hill behind the scheme, and which is discussed in an earlier paper.

The use of personal names with a historical connection can be found in another post WW2 development in one of the oldest parts of town, by Dunbar Harbour. Built by Sir Basil Spence in the late 1940s and 1950s, these include *Runciman Court*, after Sir Walter Runciman who was born in the Rock House by the harbour and who became a millionaire ship owner and later a baronet and MP, and *Buncles Court*, after William Boncle the last keeper of Dunbar Castle (dismantled 1568). Meanwhile buildings such as *The Granary* and *Custom House Square* tell us of their earlier uses.

The closes on Dunbar High Street are a subject in themselves. Names here have changed over the years, the last time being in the 1990s. Again local people who lived there or earlier uses of the buildings within are recognised. Names such as *Lawson's Court* after apothecary Peter Lawson; *Craig's Close* after the fish merchant who ran his business on the High Street for many years; and *Mason's Close*, the site of Mason's the shoe shop which closed this year after over a century of business. The *Corn Exchange Close* marks the site of the former Corn Market, where the building has been standing since 1852, while *Printer's Close* reminds us of Knox's the Newsagents who had a printing business there from the mid - 19th century.

The theme of local people, or famous sons, continued when new developments began south of the railway before the turn of the century. After consultation, the decision was to remember some of the prominent figures, not recognised in the street names of the past. So today we have for example *Middlemas Way*, after Christopher Middlemas (1761-1850), past Provost and an imposing and military man;

Wilson Place, recalling Robert Wilson the distinguished engineer who, as a Dunbar boy, first saw the potential of the screw propeller; and *John Muir Way*, after our Conservation Pioneer and Father of the National Parks. Unusually, *Fairbairn Way*, named after our current Coxswain Gary Fairbairn, descended from a long line of fishermen and lifeboat men, is one of the most recent choices.

Finally, as developments continue on the south of town, the newest phase takes us back full circle to medieval times with the name *Gospatrick* (servant of (St) Patrick). This, the name of the earliest Dunbar Earls, reminds us of the rich heritage of the town and of the historic context of many Dunbar names.

Pauline Smeed

Some Place-Names of the Original John Muir Way

John Muir was of course the renowned American environmentalist, who was born in Dunbar and left in 1849 aged 11. He was re-introduced to Scotland in the 1960s, since when his name has been widely used, including for the John Muir Way. Till Easter 2014, the John Muir Way traversed the East Lothian coast, from Musselburgh to Dunglass. Now, however, it goes from Helensburgh to Dunbar, and omits the stretch from Dunbar to Dunglass, which is now called the John Muir Link. I stayed with the old route, and adopted the name ‘The *Original* John Muir Way’, which was coined by Will Collin of the Friends of the John Muir Birthplace. I looked at some places on this route and major landmarks visible from it. Here are five examples.



A hill in the Lammermuirs

The Lammermuir Hills dominate the southern horizon of East Lothian. The 1890s *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland* described them as ‘an extensive curvature of, for the most part, wild and cheerless heights’.

The earliest known form, *Lombormore*, appears in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, put together between about 1050 and 1150. *Lombormore* reflects Anglian *lombor-mōr*, meaning ‘lamb moor’. Anglian *mōr* carries the sense of ‘waste and damp land’, or ‘high waste ground, a mountain’ (Bosworth and Toller). This aptly describes the Lammermuirs, but the first element, meaning ‘lamb’ or ‘lambs’, does not. Young lambs (as opposed to sheep – *sceþ* in Anglian) would not have been pastured on high moorland, let alone in sufficient numbers to give the area its name. Indeed English place-names with *lamb-* include valleys (*denu*), woodland clearings (*lēah*) and similar, but not *mōr* (thanks to Alan James for this).

I suggest that the first part of the name could previously have been Brittonic **lumm*, ‘bare’, or possibly **lumm-ar*, ‘a bare place’. Alan James explains that *-ar* is a name-forming suffix, earlier **-aro-*. He writes: “It’s admittedly most common in river-names, and often with nouns rather than adjectives, but in principle **lumm-ar* would be a possible formation meaning ‘a bare place’.” (pers. comm.) Simon Taylor suggests that ‘OE-speakers would have added *mōr* onto whatever the earlier name was as a form of epexegetis or way of explicitly expressing the nature of the feature.’ (pers. comm.)

From c. 1120 the name is spelt *Lambremor* and *Lambermor*, again translatable as ‘lamb moor’. The modern spelling appears by c. 1485, with *Lammermur*. Here Scots *muir* replaces Anglian *mōr*. *Muir* is derived from *mōr* but definitely implies that the land is used for grazing. By this time, shielings in the Lammermuirs had long been used by the wool-producing abbeys of Melrose and Kelso.



The mouth of the Biel Water at Belhaven

The Biel Water joins the Forth west of Dunbar, and is sprinkled with names based on itself, including Biel (the big house), Belhaven and various *Belton* names. Belhaven - then 'the port of *Bele*' - and *Belton* or *Beletun* both appear in 12th-century charters. *Belton*'s second element is Old English *tūn*, 'a farm'. The first element, *Bel-*, could be older, from Brittonic **bel-*, 'shining'. This would have been a river name similar in concept to *peſſir*, 'shining' or 'radiant'. BLITON reveals that **bel-* occurs in the names of several Celtic deities, and probably formed part of *Belisáma*, Ptolemy's name for the River Ribble.

By 1370, the 'port of *Bele*' had become '*porto de Balhaven*', taking Scots *haven*, 'a harbour', which comes from Old English *hæfn*, itself possibly a borrowing from Scandinavian *hafn*. The port at Belhaven has long since gone, swallowed up by sand.



The site of Dunbar's Iron Age fort

Dunbar is from Brittonic **dun*, 'fort', and **barr*, usually defined as 'top'. Watson translated Dunbar as 'summit fort' (CPNS 141). This is the current orthodoxy, but does not well describe the site. We know - though Watson did not - where the fort was: on the headland where the swimming pool now stands. Excavations before the pool was built revealed ditches dug in pre-Roman or Roman times. The promontory fort would have included the stack where the medieval blockhouse now sits: the intervening ditch was cut when the blockhouse was constructed. The headland is almost completely separate from the castle site, which was previously assumed to be the fort site.

So how should we translate *barr*? Judging by related words in the Celtic languages, and likely cognates in other Indo-European languages, its early meaning was simply 'something pointed', whether upwards or horizontally (BLITON). Dunbar could therefore be 'the fort on the

point'. Celtic *dun*, 'fort', developed into *din* in Old Welsh. Watson thought that Dunbar was probably originally *din-bar*, later Gaelicised to *dun-bar*, but it seems likely that Dunbar and other *dun* names in East Lothian were always *dun*. Though the form *din* had developed in Brittonic by the mid-5th century, it is now thought that this change may not have occurred in Lothian, just as it had not in Pictland further north.¹ The earliest spellings for Dunbar, *dyunbaer* and *dynbaer*, may support this. These are from manuscript copies of the *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*, who was imprisoned in Dunbar by the Northumbrian king in AD 680. The copies were made in the 11th and possibly early 12th centuries, but may reflect the spelling in the original 8th-century MS. Both spellings could imply an 8th-century pronunciation with a vowel similar to Scots *muin* ('moon'), or perhaps French *tu* (Alan James, pers. comm.). Incoming Gaelic speakers would have understood the name and pronounced it similarly.



The bay at Cockenzie - 'Kenneth's Nook'?

Watson (1926) wrote that 'Cockenzie is Gaelic, doubtless, perhaps for *Cùil C(h)oinnigh*, 'Kenneth's nook'. He had not seen early forms (CPNS 141). If the name was 'Kenneth's nook', it probably referred to the village's small shell-shaped bay, a rare natural landing-place along this rocky stretch of coastline.

Spellings on early maps are *Cokeny Haven*, recorded by Pont in about 1590, and *Cokeny* (Adair 1682). It becomes *Cockensie* on Roy's map of 1747-55. The *Cokeny* spelling reveals an earlier pronunciation - one that some local people still use. Clearly, as with Mackenzie, the 'z' has been substituted for the Middle English and Early

¹ James, Alan G., 2013, 'P-Celtic in Southern Scotland and Cumbria', *Journal of Scottish Name Studies*, no. 7, 2013, 29-78.

Scots letter yogh, *ȝ*, which sounds like a ‘y’ but resembles a ‘z’.



Bayswell Road on the clifftop in Dunbar is a fairly recent name - in 1853 it was called West Gate End. It refers to St Bay’s Well, in a cave below the swimming pool. Bay is likely to be St Begha, commemorated at St Bees in Cumbria, and said to have flourished in the seventh century. The *Aberdeen Breviary*, however, identified Bay with Beya of the Isles of Cumbrae. Her cult was probably brought to Dunbar by the Earls of Dunbar, who had close family connections with Cumbria (thanks to David Anderson for this). In 1342 the fifth Earl Patrick founded the Collegiate Church of Dunbar, dedicated to St Bae.

Liz Curtis

The Green Belt and Beyond: Metaphor in the Landscape

1. Introduction

This paper emerged from two AHRC-funded projects at the University of Glasgow: *Scottish Toponymy in Transition* (PI Clancy; 2011-2014) and *Mapping Metaphor with the Historical Thesaurus* (PI Anderson; 2012-2015). The former is producing place-name surveys for selected areas of Scotland; the latter is researching the role of metaphor in language. This paper drew on material from both in order to investigate metaphor in place-names.

2. The landscape is a body metaphor

The landscape is conceptualised as a body in many of the world’s languages. Some are more systematic than others in transferring body terms to the landscape. In the extinct Australian aboriginal language Wangkangurru, watercourses in the Simpson Desert, which are mostly dry except after rare heavy rains, are conceptualised as sinews, whereas the flat plains are conceptualised as the chest (Hercus 2009: 277–279). Morris (2012) shows how the Mongolian worldview systematically maps parts of the body onto mountains, with skeletal or bone metaphors predominating.

As well as being found all over the world, body metaphors have an ancient history. Nicolaisen’s (1995) list of cognate place-name elements deriving from a common ancestor in the North-West Germanic languages includes Old English *beafod*, Old Norse *bofuð* ‘head’, Old English *brycg*, Old Norse *rygg*, *brygg*, ‘back, ridge’, and Old English *næss*, *ness*, Old Norse *nes* ‘nose, promontory’.

3. Research questions

The pilot study presented in this paper addressed five broad questions:

- How systematic is the body metaphor in Scottish toponymy?
- What other landscape metaphors are there besides the body?
- Are there any differences between body and other metaphors?
- How are the metaphors motivated?
- How similar are metaphors in place-names and in lexis?

4. Place-names and metaphor

The starting-point was a selection of five parishes each from three Scottish counties: Fife (Taylor with Márkus 2009), Kinross-shire (Taylor with McNiven and Williamson forthcoming) and Berwickshire (utilizing material collected by the *Scottish Toponymy in Transition* project). These 15 parishes yielded a corpus of 154 metaphorical names, of which more than two-thirds (114) represent body metaphors.

The most common are terms for the head, back, side and brow. Although the same body parts are found in place-names from different languages, they do not always represent the same feature. The head in both Gaelic (*ceann*) and Scots (*heid*) can designate the top of a vertical feature or the end of a horizontal one. Neither corresponds to the meaning ‘projecting piece of land’ identified by Gelling and Cole (2000: 175) as the only use of Old English *beafod* in ancient settlement-names in England.

Some anatomical references are to animal body parts, as with Gaelic *beinn* or Scots *bin(n)* ‘horn’ in Binn (KNR) and Gaelic *gasg* ‘tail’ in Kingask (FIF). Others such as mouth and tongue could be either animal or human, but since the salient feature of the tongue in place-names such as Tongue Burn (KNR) seems to be length, an animal’s tongue may be indicated.

Also connected to the body metaphor are references to physical attributes, such as *blind* ‘hidden’ in Blind Capul (FIF) and Blind Well (KNR) and *naked* ‘bare’ in Nakedfield (FIF). References to people and animals are also strongly represented in place-names such as Carlin and Daughter (KNR) and Black Horse (BWK).

Of the non-anthropomorphic, non-zoomorphic metaphors, the most distinct group is containers, as in Cauldron Linn (KNR). A larger but more disparate group of tools relates mostly to everyday tasks such as butter-making and weaving, as in Yarn Windle Plantation (BWK). Finally, there are references to clothing, as in Cocked Hat Cover (BWK) and Long Belt (BWK), and to other articles, as in Bell Stones (BWK) and Fiddle Plantation (KNR).

It is not always clear whether names are metaphorical or not. Thimblehall (KNR) may be metonymic, referring to a seamstress, or metaphorical, referring to small size. Ship End (BWK) was included on the basis of the Ordnance Survey Name Book entry, which states: “The Name is derived from a breakwater faced with wood, and said to resemble the stern of a ship”. Ship Law (BWK) was excluded, since the Name Book claims that it refers literally to ships: “A small circular knoll in an arable field on the farm of Tweedhill from the summit of which may be seen ships sailing off Berwick hence the name”. However, as the Name Books are not always reliable, it is possible that either or both interpretations are folk-etymological.

Nyström’s (2013) study of metaphorical and metonymical place-names in Sweden includes a number of body metaphors within compounds such as Galtryggen ‘boar back’, Gethalsen ‘goat neck’ and Kattrumpan ‘cat tail’. My 15 parishes had only one uncertain example of this type: Catlug (FIF).

The third and fourth research questions turned out to be closely related. The most common motivation for metaphor in the non-body groups is shape, whereas body metaphors include shape alongside a wider range of motivations such as position, function and texture.

5. Language and metaphor

Place-name language is not always the same as ordinary language. More than 30 years ago, Nicolaisen (1982) called for a systematic comparison of lexical and onomastic fields. The tools for such a study became available with the

publication of the *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Kay et al. 2009), which organises the contents of the OED semantically instead of alphabetically. The overall classification is divided into three major categories: The External World, The Mental World and The Social World. Within these major categories are further subcategories, offering a fine-grained analysis of the 797,000 lexical items of English.

The *Mapping Metaphor with the Historical Thesaurus* project uses the electronic database underlying the *Historical Thesaurus* to identify lexical overlap between different semantic categories as a basis for the systematic investigation of metaphor in English. As with the place-name data, there is strong evidence of overlap between the semantic fields of landscape and body (human and animal). The direction of semantic change is usually from body to landscape, but there are some instances of back formation, where metaphorical transfer takes place in the opposite direction (e.g. *bottom*).

Also similarly to the place-name corpus, the *Mapping Metaphor* data show strong links between landscape and containers, landscape and clothing, and landscape and textiles. Other links were identified between landscape and existence (e.g. *proclivity*, *terrain*), and between landscape and performance arts (e.g. *circus*, *theatre*, *amphitheatre*). Most represent terms from other semantic fields being applied to landscape, and hence contributing to the domain of landscape. In some instances, however, landscape terms themselves contribute to other domains such as ill-health (e.g. *depression*, *pit*) and difficulty (e.g. *uphill*, *swamp*).

6. Cognitive Toponymy: People and Places in Synergy

The RSE-funded Research Network *Cognitive Toponymy: People and Places in Synergy* (PI Hough; 2014–2015) is investigating human conceptualisation of place, with a focus on comparative evidence from Scottish and Danish place-names. Metaphorical formations also provide important insights here. More information can be found on the project website at <http://www.cogtop.org/>.

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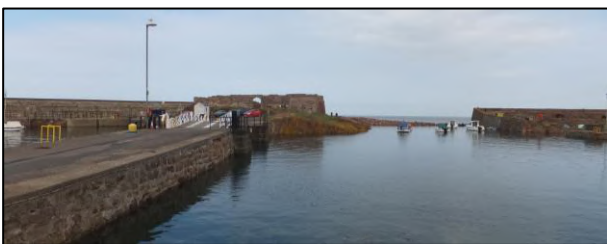
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Carole Hough

At the end of the Dunbar conference David Anderson used his fund of local knowledge to lead those who had time to stay, on a place-names walk around the historic core of Dunbar. At the harbour attention turned to the name **Lamer Island**, for a low, steep-sided rock, once just offshore, that became the nucleus of the harbour walls of recent centuries. Except that the name could only accidentally resemble that of East Lothian's hill range, it had defied rational explanation: until one of those present, Dr Arne Kruse, suggested an origin in Old Norse *hláð-hamarr*, a 'loading rock' or natural quay.



Some of the natural rock of **Lamer Island** can still be seen mid-photo, though most is covered by structures of recent centuries.

This hint of more intense Scandinavian shipping activity than is usually associated with south-east Scotland fits well with the prominence of Norse names in the Firth of Forth, discussed by Simon Taylor in issue 35; and with another name from well south of the Moray Firth, recently brought to the attention of Scottish Place-Name News by Prof. Barbara Crawford. (WP)

STROMAY



A photo taken in the summer's fine weather of the sun glinting on the tidal race which pours out of Montrose Basin under the road bridge which spans the South Esk. This happens twice daily and can reach a speed of 7 knots at spring tides. The earliest name for the harbour of Montrose is appropriately *portus de Stromay* and is mentioned in the burgh charter of David I, renewed by David II (charter of inspection of Robert III, dated 1385, is preserved among the Montrose burgh muniments). *Stromay* is usually derived from Norse *Straum-á* (tidal-race river) but perhaps more probably is *Straum-ey* (tidal-race island) as the former island of Inchbrayok lay in the mouth of the South Esk as it flowed out of the Montrose Basin, exactly as the island of Stroma lies in the tidal rips of the Pentland Firth. This well-recorded name gives indisputable evidence of some settlement of Vikings or more peaceable Norse traders, in an eastern Scottish location where few such names have survived. Sadly the harbour name went out of use in the late middle ages, but perhaps should be revived and perpetuated by a memorial plaque alongside the statue of Bamse, the St Bernard dog and mascot of the Norwegian minesweeper stationed in the same location during the Second World War.

Barbara Crawford

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ONOMASTIC SCIENCES (ICOS)

From 24th–29th August 300 name-scholars from 48 countries and every continent (except Antarctica!) converged on Glasgow for the 25th International Congress of Onomastic Sciences. Hosted by the University of Glasgow, this was the premier conference in the field of name studies (onomastics), covering all kinds of names, from place-names and personal names to company and commercial names, internet user-names and names of heavenly bodies. There were some 168 presentations in English, 25 in

German and 20 in French on subjects as diverse as number based nicknames of Kuwaiti tribes, names in Shakespeare, naming and renaming of South African naval vessels and names of stars and constellations in the Slavic and German languages.

There were two receptions for the delegates: one at the Hunterian Art Gallery, sponsored by the Scottish Place-Name Society, and one at the Glasgow City Chambers, sponsored by Glasgow City Council. The opening keynote address was by Dr Simon Taylor, lecturer in Scottish onomastics at the University of Glasgow, on the Scottish namescape and latest research in Scottish name-studies.

ARROCHAR-TARBET – 'HIDDEN HERITAGE PROJECT'

Sue Furness has provided the following note:-

Historically speaking, the Arrochar-Tarbet isthmus in Argyll and Bute is probably best known for being the route used by the Vikings to drag their boats from the sea to Loch Lomond, just before the momentous Battle of Largs in 1263. However, the same things that made this strip of land attractive to the Vikings – its closeness to the sea, its low-lying nature among the surrounding mountains, its access to the fertile areas to the south and east – have meant that it has been travelled through and lived in for centuries both before and after the Vikings. The history of the isthmus has been and continues to be inextricably linked to its geography and landscape.



Excavations near Stuckiedhu (photo: Hidden Heritage Project)

The Hidden Heritage Project was a community-led project focusing on the heritage and archaeology of this 'corridor' of land, which is central to the daily lives of local residents, as well as providing a major tourist route to and from the north and west. This 18-month project,

which has just come to an end, was initiated and managed by Arrochar and Tarbet Community Development Trust and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Argyll and the Islands LEADER.



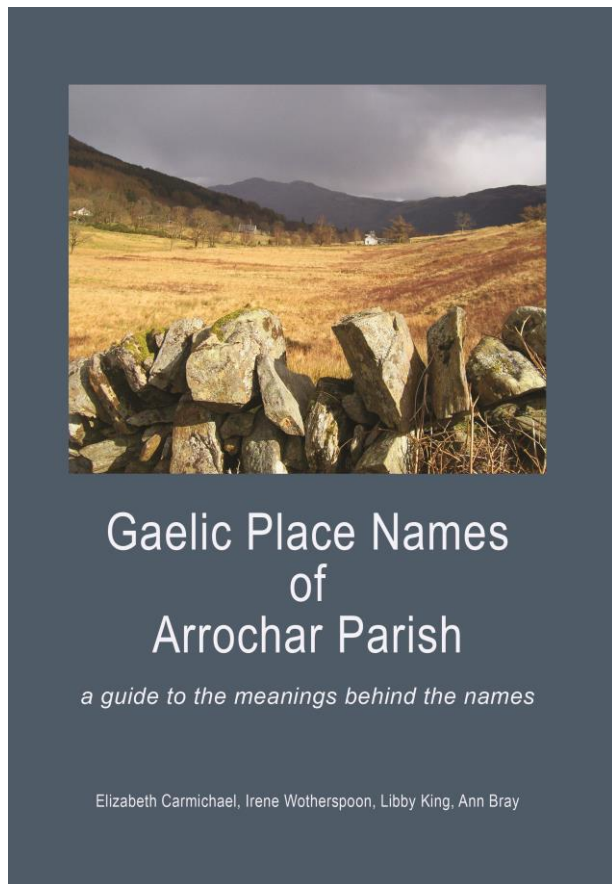
Ben Lomond from Tarbet (photo by Kate Gillon)

The project aimed to get local community members of all ages involved in researching the area's history by providing expert-led workshops, carrying out walkover surveys, and conducting excavations. There was strong emphasis on making the results widely available in a variety of formats suitable for all ages and levels of interest, and on using the new and existing heritage information to 'market' the area to visitors; the local community relies heavily on tourism, and although it experiences considerable 'through' traffic' (like the Vikings in 1263...), most people currently don't stay long.

Dr Simon Taylor (Glasgow University) provided an inspiring workshop on local place names, which not only provided insights into the area's history and geography as reflected in its place names, but also proved a perfect opportunity for older residents to pass on their knowledge of traditional pronunciations and names to newer members of the community and to archaeologists involved in the project. By the end of the day, a small group of volunteers was sufficiently enthused to have committed themselves to researching and compiling a list of the place names of Arrochar parish!

Using the information compiled by Dr Taylor for the workshop as a starting point, and his recording sheets to indicate the types of information required, the 'Hidden Heritage Place Name Group', led by Elizabeth Carmichael, boldly ventured into the realm of Gaelic place names, Ordnance Survey maps and name books, and the depths of Glasgow's Mitchell Library. To tie in with the aims of the project as a whole, it was decided that the ideal outcome would be a booklet with information on the origins, meanings and pronunciation of local Gaelic place names, accessible to non-experts, but with

enough information for those who wished to pursue the entries further to be able to do so. Although a sometimes challenging process, hopefully this balance has been achieved!



Gaelic Place Names of Arrochar Parish: a guide to the meanings behind the names, by Elizabeth Carmichael, Irene Wotherspoon, Libby King and Ann Bray, was published in April 2014. It can be downloaded from the Project's website (<http://www.hiddenheritage.org.uk/explore/place-names/>), or hard copies can be obtained through info@hiddenheritage.org.uk (book free, p&p £1.50 within the UK). Using the current Ordnance Survey Explorer map (sheet 364) as its source, the book gives the likely or possible (can we ever be sure??) meanings and origins of names such as 'Island I Vow' and 'Douglas Water', as well as the many local place names that incorporate the term *stuc*.

The Community Development Trust who led the Hidden Heritage Project were delighted at the unexpected surge of interest in local place-names, and at the way the project in general has drawn together different cross-sections of the community to research its heritage, while local hotels and B&Bs have been delighted to receive copies of the Place Name booklet, together with other material from the project, to encourage their guests to explore the local area.

Far from breathing a sigh of relief at finishing the project they started, the Place Name Group has recruited more keen members. It intends to go on to record less-well-documented local features, such as the names given to individual fields. Given that much of this information is not written down, it will involve speaking to local farmers and landowners, with the hope of recording much of this valuable information before it is lost.

Check out what else the Hidden Heritage Project has done at <http://www.hiddenheritage.org.uk/>

(Thanks also to the Project for allowing use of the aerial view of the isthmus as the cover photo.)

'BLITON' FINALISED

Anyone who ever has the need, or the curiosity, to check up on the roots of Brittonic place-names in the 'Old North' – southern Scotland and northern England – will be grateful for the work of Dr Alan James in compiling his survey of the elements used in the Brittonic place-names of this large region spanning the Scottish-English border. *The Brittonic Language In The Old North: a Guide to the Place-Name Evidence* is now in final form and is free for browsing or download. Its introductory page can be found at <http://www.spns.org.uk/bliton/blurb.html>.

Dr James explains:-

"My aim in this work has been to provide a guide for scholars undertaking study of the place-names of southern Scotland and northern England, and for historians and archaeologists using toponymic evidence to further their understanding of those regions in the early middle ages, to the evidence available for names of probable or possible Brittonic origin.

"The work brings together notes on P-Celtic place-name elements to be found in the regions between the Forth and Loch Lomond in the north and the Humber and Mersey in the south, which I assembled in the course of twelve years' research on the history of the Brittonic language in southern Scotland and northern England between the fifth and twelfth centuries.

"The main body of the work, in Volume 2, comprises a dictionary of P-Celtic elements (in their neo-Brittonic forms) that occur - or, in the opinion of scholars, may occur - in place-names in those regions. The entries include

etymological information, references to authoritative writings on philological questions, discussion of semantic issues, details of place-names found in Classical and Early Mediaeval sources and in early Welsh literature referring to the 'Old North', and lists of current and obsolete place-names in which these elements (may) occur, with references to published records of early forms and scholarly discussions of these names. It replaces the old BLITON database (formerly on the SPNS website), amending, updating and expanding what was in that.

"Volume 1 contains a substantial Introduction, Bibliography, List of Abbreviations, Guide to Pronunciation, and several lists of elements including a glossary of Modern Welsh equivalents. Volume 3 contains an index of all the place-names discussed in the work."

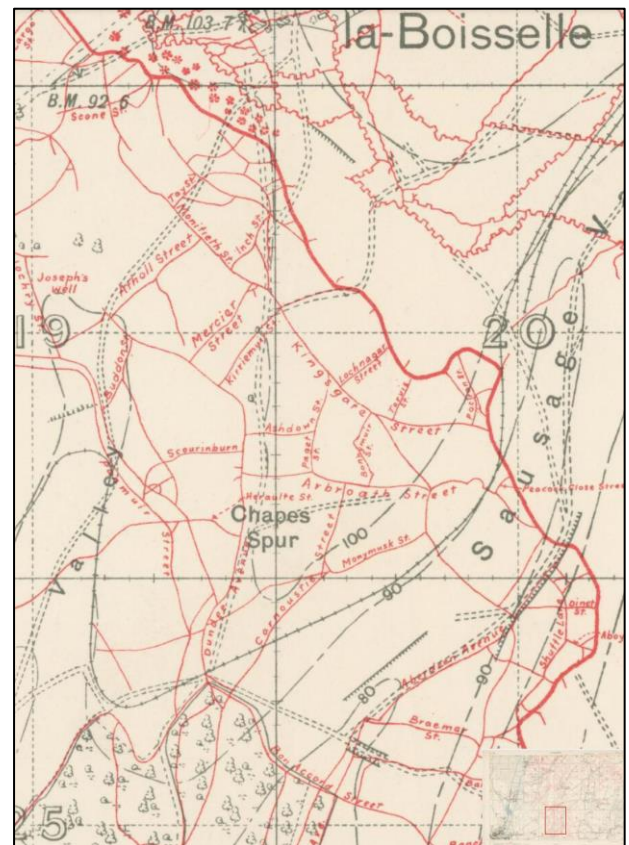
PLACE-NAMES IN THE TRENCHES OF THE GREAT WAR

David Orr of Kirriemuir, Angus, has passed on information about a display, till 11 November, of First World War trench maps at the National Library on George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, arranged by Chris Fleet, Map Curator at the Library. "Trench maps are a primary source for studying the major battlefields of the Great War. They show in detail the changing Front Line and its associated communication trenches, as well as the location of enemy positions and defences including artillery gun emplacements, machine guns, mines, wire entanglements, and observation posts. They record the names that soldiers gave the trenches, as well as the names of nearby farms, villages, woods, and other landmarks. These are often referred to in the written histories of the War, including personal war diaries and official regimental accounts. Accurate locations and the distances and bearings between them were essential for the artillery, and all the maps show the British Trench Map Grid System as a prominent overlay, a unique referencing system often used in associated written records. Trench maps illustrate the innovative survey, compilation, and printing technologies that advanced rapidly during the conflict. Comparing trench maps to each other over time, and to the present day, allows a detailed and fascinating graphic insight into the changing topography of the Western Front."

The trench maps can be searched at <http://maps.nls.uk/ww1/trenches/index.html>.

David writes that he was amazed by sheet 57D.SE.4 (Ovillers), <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101464807:->

"... the names of the trenches in the area occupied by the 51st Highland Division at la-Boisselle in 1915 are all familiar to readers today as our local Scottish names such as Kirriemuir Street, Arbroath Street, Atholl Street, Dalhousie Street, Carnoustie Street, Dundee Avenue and Scouringburn, and many more with a Scottish connection."



Extract from trench map 57D.SE.4 (Ovillers), dated March 1917. (Thanks to NLS maps)

For further reading on this topic Chris Fleet suggests Peter Chasseaud's book *Rats Alley: trench names of the Western Front, 1914-1918*. (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 2006).

NOTES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS

McWhannell, D. C., 2013, 'Gaill, Gall-Ghàidheil and the Cenèla of Greater Galloway', *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society* 87, 81-115.

Dr McWhannell reviews current scholarly opinion on the drastic changes to the ethno-linguistic landscape of south-west Scotland

during and arising from the period of Scandinavian incursions, and in particular on the origins of the *Gall-Ghàidheil* and the different referents of that term from the 9th to 13th centuries.

He goes on to consider the problematic origins of Fergus of Galloway, concluding that his father may have been the leader of a *Gall-Ghàidheil* band, and also raising the possibility that Fergus's male ancestors may have been of Hiberno-Scandinavian *Lagmann*/ 'Lawman' status in the context of a 'farmers' republic'.

He then considers in detail the names of the 'captains' of *cenéla*/ 'kindred groups' recorded in 14th century charters, and presents a careful analysis of the (probable or possible) Gaelic origins of these and other early-recorded personal and kindred names in the region, concluding with a discussion of the evidence these may provide for the 'Gaelicisation' of mediaeval Greater Galloway (including much of Kyle and Carrick).

A short appended glossary of terms used in technical senses in early Gaelic and other relevant languages in the fields of kinship, inheritance and social status will itself be a helpful aid to researchers.

Alan James

Murray, John, 2014, *Reading the Gaelic Landscape: Lenghadh Aghaidh na Tìre* (Dunbeath).

This is an unusual book, and its character is largely explained by a biographical note on the last page. The author is not a native Gaelic speaker, nor an academic in linguistic matters, but is Director of Landscape Architecture at the University of Edinburgh, first captivated by Gaelic as heard on Barra in 1971. Hence, no doubt, comes the occasionally unsteady engagement with matters linguistic, at the same time as remarkable insight into the topographic, climatic and vegetational nuances of Gaelic naming practices, to a large extent as imperfectly fossilised by Ordnance Surveyors in the 19th century, when ways of life in the Gaidhealtachd had already undergone huge changes. As he observes, some of these were so drastic that the paucity of names recorded by the surveyors in some areas, along the south side of Loch Tay or in nearby Glen Quaich for instance, reflects the recent clearance of native Gaelic speakers in whose absence a rich legacy of small-scale local names would promptly have died out.

Few other backgrounds would have led readily

to the observation that Gaelic terminology would fit more readily than modern English into the classification of characteristics promoted for Landscape Character Assessment by Scottish Natural Heritage. From the preface we gather that the author enjoys fishing at remote Highland lochs and lochans. Even without that declaration it would have been an easy guess, for a section on the analysis of freshwater names for clues to the potential of waters for fishing, and in what conditions, is a most impressive tour de force. As the Introduction states, the book is aimed at a wider readership than the climbers and hillwalkers mainly served by previous publications, and at the names of other places as well as hills and mountains.

The next two chapters summarise the history of Gaelic in Scotland and of mapping the Highlands. The latter has some interesting anecdotes, notably of how the outstanding Victorian scholar Alexander Carmichael railed at the manner in which his painstaking records of genuine Gaelic place-names were set aside by the chiefs at the Ordnance Survey in favour of inaccurate and inadequate earlier versions – because the corrections and additions would incur expense. Chapter 4 provides a brief guide to Gaelic grammar and punctuation. This attempts the difficult task of explaining features like lenition and case inflections in a non-technical way, and for pronunciation uses a similar format to that used in Peter Drummond's 'Scottish Hill and Mountain Names'. Its phonetic transcriptions are implicitly based on a rhotic 'Scottish Standard English' pronunciation, rather than a variety of English in which 'barter' would correspond to Gaelic *bàta*.

The main meat of the book is in pages 37 to 214, with chapters on: place-name classifications – revealing layers in the landscape; landform and hydrology; landcover and ecology; land use; climate, season, sound and time; the cultural landscape; adjectives; and reading the landscape through place-names. There are many illustrations, among which the colour versions are generally more helpful than the black-and-white reproductions, which are somewhat lacking in sharpness and contrast. There are useful lists of terms in the many categories of place-name elements, besides maps of notional landscapes to illustrate the hierarchy and nuances in the generics of watercourses, coastal features and high places, and some sketch maps of actual landscapes to elucidate the text. One of these picks out the sequence of Raasay place-

names in Sorley Maclean's famous poetic vision 'Hallaig', following a substantial extract from the poem itself. Indeed, a distinctive feature of the book is the number of quotations, some extensive and all very pertinent, from poetry, song, sayings and recorded conversation. In the same chapter a cogent case is made, from place-name references to vegetation and management of the land and from professional knowledge of ecology, to debunk the still common notion that until recent centuries much of the Highlands was under untamed natural forest. For many readers explorations of the 'cultural landscape', citing notably a poem listing the names of twelve *ùruisgean* (kelpies) in Breadalbane, will be a revelation. The discussion of the Gaelic colour system, very different from that of English and more subtle, is helpfully complemented by a 'Gaelic colour chart'. As perhaps befits the author's profession, the last of those chapters contains some theoretical discussion and some statistical analysis of the frequency of name elements and categories. It is followed by a bibliography and indexes of generics and adjectives, though not a general index which would have been useful.

It is a pity that the publication is marred by imperfect proof-reading, which has left more than a few textual errors and stray particles of punctuation. As becomes clear during reading, rather than being explained at an early stage, its geographic scope stays mostly west of the A9, and none of the illustrated examples comes from the *Monadh Ruadh* (Cairngorms). It is not at all concerned with Gaelic landscape names south and east of the Highlands. The chapter on cultural names does not address the significant category of names relating to political or administrative boundaries, and there is only peripheral mention of what place-names may suggest about Norse settlement or control. The table of name elements concerned with legend and the supernatural may have missed a trick in describing the element in *Na Fambairean* of Trotternish, Skye, as merely 'giant, mole-catcher', not noting the possibility that for the original name-givers if not later users of the name the allusion was specifically to the supernatural *Fomoir* of Irish mythical pseudo-history.

Perhaps inevitably with such a substantial and ambitious book there are instances where issue can be taken with content, particularly on matters of etymology. It is rather unexpected to see *cù* 'dog', genitive singular *coin*, genitive plural

con, described as "new" in comparison with *madadh*, when *cù* has cognates in 11 of 12 Indo-European branches, including Dutch *bond*, Latin *canis* and Greek *kuōn*, and its direct ancestor was one of the commonest elements in early Celtic personal names of the British Isles. The Scots word *brae* is generally considered (e.g. the entry in online DSL) to have its descent from Old Norse *brá*, closely related to Old English *bréaw* 'eyelid' and modern English *brow*, rather than from Gaelic *bràigh* 'upper part' as stated in the book, although this and Gaelic *bruach* 'bank, brim' are more distant kin. The command of Gaelic grammar does not always seem secure: notably, *Loch an Losgainn Mòr*, as printed in table 15, means 'big loch of the frog' rather than 'loch of the big frog' as stated, which would require the genitive *mhòir* to agree with *losgainn*.

Despite the limitations and a necessary health warning about the flaws in matters of detail, for those who enjoy the Highland and Hebridean landscape and wish to deepen and broaden their understanding of how its human occupants reacted to it and supported themselves on its resources, this book will be a useful asset, repaying its cover price of £16.99. Enjoyment will be enhanced by gems such as the explanation, from an early 20th century note of local usage in now extinct Perthshire Gaelic, that OS Explorer sheet 378's puzzling *Ciste Buide* [sic] *a' Chlaidheimh* is garbled for *Ciste Buille a' Chlaidheimh* ('Chest of the Sword Blow'). Its correct name is perfectly explained topographically by the photo of part of a barrel-vaulted top (like a cartoon pirate's chest) riven by a deep slash; and it fits splendidly into a series of place-names around Loch Tay, recalling exploits of the gigantic culture-hero *Fionn mac Cumhail*, or Fingal.

Bill Patterson

The Place-Names of Fife,
by Simon Taylor with Gilbert Márkus

In five volumes; normally £24 each incl. UK p&p, but £22 to SPNS members. Contact Shaun Tyas at 01775 821542, by e-mail to pwatkins@pwatkinspublishing.fsnet.co.uk, or by writing (with cheque to 'Shaun Tyas') to 1 High Street, Donington, Lincolnshire PE11 4TA.

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Kruse, Alan Macniven and Bill Patterson, this is the first bibliography of recent Scottish place-name related publications to appear in *SPNNNews* since issue 34 (Spring 2013). For more extensive bibliographies of name-studies in Britain and Ireland, and, less comprehensively, other parts of northern Europe, see the bibliographic sections in the relevant issues of *Nomina*, the journal of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland: most recently 'Bibliography for 2011', compiled by Carole Hough, (*Nomina* 35 (2012), 161–72). The material in the *Nomina* Bibliographies is set out thematically, and includes reviews which have appeared in the given year. There is also now an onomastic bibliography for Scotland 2006–2009 in *Journal of Scottish Name Studies (JSNS)* 4, 173–86; for 2010 in *JSNS* 5, 183–8; for 2011 in *JSNS* 6, 97–9; and for 2012 in *JSNS* 7 (compiled by Simon Taylor). The following bibliography also includes all the articles in the latest *JSNS* 7 (2013).² An extensive, though by no means exhaustive, bibliography of Scottish toponymics, set out thematically and regionally, can be found on-line at

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The **SPNS Autumn 2014 conference** will take place at the Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life, Coatbridge, on Saturday 1st November. *Details on flier with this Newsletter*. The Spring 2015 conference and AGM will be in or near Inverness (date in May to be confirmed).

The **SNSBI** (Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland) holds its 2015 spring conference at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, from 27-29 April; bookings need to be made by the end of October. Further information through <http://www.snsbi.org.uk/>. Tickets may also still be available – contact treasurer@snsbi.org.uk –

for a day conference, A Tribute to Margaret Gelling, at Shrewsbury on Saturday 25 October.

The **Scottish Society for Northern Studies** has its yearly day conference with AGM on Saturday 22 November in Edinburgh. The programme includes Dr Maggie Scott on 'Scots in the linguistic landscape'. <http://www.ssns.org.uk/>.

BOOKS FROM SPNS

In the Beginning was the Name
Selected Essays by Professor W.F.H.
Nicolaisen

393 pages; price £12.00 plus P&P.
For further information on this wide-ranging selection of essays by a pre-eminent scholar, and how to order it, please see the Scottish Place-Name Society website:

<http://www.spns.org.uk/IBWNorderform.html>

Cultural Contacts in the North Atlantic Region: The Evidence of Names

edited by Peder Gammeltoft, Carole Hough and Doreen Waugh

To clear remaining stocks, the price of this volume is now £5.00, plus £2.50 postage and packing (UK only). Please send a cheque payable to SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY to: Professor Carole Hough, English Language, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ

The Place-Names of Midlothian

Dr Norman Dixon's previously inaccessible and still important PhD study of 1947, with Introduction by Simon Taylor outlining more recent approaches to some of the names. (Midlothian here is the pre-1975 geographical county including Edinburgh and Musselburgh.)

515 pages. £10, plus £2.50 postage and packing (UK only). Please send a cheque payable to SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY to: Professor Carole Hough, English Language, University of Glasgow, Glasgow G12 8QQ
Available by post from 3rd November.

ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS!

Grants of up to £125 for students of onomastics to attend conferences are still available from the

CULTURAL CONTACTS FUND –

information from

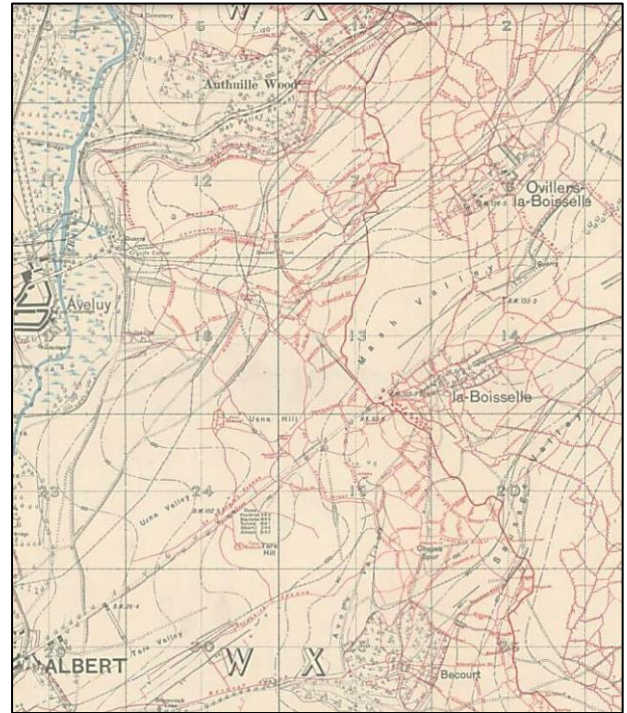
<http://www.spns.org.uk/News09.html#CulturalContactsFund> or the current coordinator of the steering committee, Professor Carole Hough: carole.hough@glasgow.ac.uk.

Some of the proceeds from sales of 'In the Beginning was the Name' are being used to fund an annual

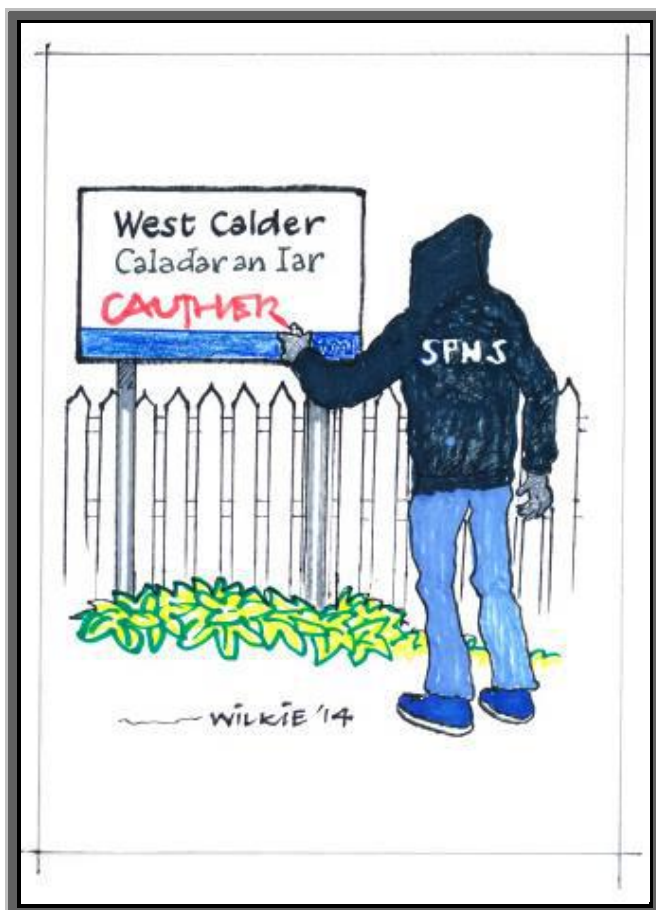
NICOLAISEN ESSAY PRIZE

of £75 in honour of our Honorary Praeses, 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, Alison Grant, at alison@barnhillweb.co.uk.

The winner will also be invited to give a paper at an SPNS conference.



A zoomed-out view of the trench map shown on page 11. The ironic 'Sausage Valley' and 'Mash Valley' evoke frontline existence. Tara and Usna Hills and Valleys and Avoca Valley suggest the presence of soldiers from what soon after the war became the Republic of Ireland. That the thick red line of the front was permanent enough to be mapped, in intricate detail, tells its own story. (Thanks again to NLS Maps)



During the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow this summer, Scotrail stations joined in the fun with platform name-signs such as Falkirk Higher, Cambuslangjump, Polevault for Polmont, Sprintburn for Springburn, and Muscleburgh for Musselburgh. The volume of groans at this humour may have been greatest for Ding-Ding! wall (Dingwall). However, these ephemeral additions were doubtless less controversial than the Gaelic names that have appeared on bilingual station signs where Gaelic has not been generally spoken for a long time and many citizens hold to the misconception that Gaelic was never spoken.

John Wilkinson's cartoon is not meant to incite spray-painting of railway property by left-handed, hoody-wearing SPNS members, but does remind that there are also distinctive local versions of many place-names, in Scots. John's original *West Lothian Place-Names* (1992) is now available free online, with other writings, at <http://johnngarthwilkinson.com/2013/west-lothian-place-names-1992/>.

It is currently being revised and extended – completion imminent.