SCOTTISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Hillwalkers head southward to Ben Loyal ~ Beinn Laoghal in north Sutherland. Laoghal is generally explained as from Norse laga fjall 'mountain of laws', one of the high places sometimes used by early Norse communities for solemn religious and legal meetings. Given the location within the region long controlled by Norse Earls of Orkney and more loosely by Norwegian kings, that is scarcely surprising. Less expected is that the massif also became a location for a version of a favourite Gaelic tale, better known for an Argyll setting. Zigzagging down the northern slopes is a narrow gash called Sgrìob an Tuirc 'The Boar's Furrow'. At the left edge of the photo is a mound called Uaigh Dhiarmaid, Diarmid's Grave. The late 19th century Ordnance Survey Name Book explains them as where Fionn mac Cumhaill's band of hunters and warriors (Fian) set the fatal boar to chase Diarmaid to his death as punishment for running off with Fionn's intended bride Grainne. The southmost top of Ben Loyal is Càrn an Tionail 'rocky hill of the gathering', intriguingly ambiguous in being equally apt for the laga fjall and as a trysting place for hunts which took place here into modern times.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In **Newsletter 54**, there was a snippet (p. 15) on the unmarked name, Cnoc nam Bramannan 'hillock of the farts', in Tarskavaig in Sleat in Skye. It was said that "[t]he precise reason behind the name has been lost, but it is thought to be connected to horses in some way." Well, that's not how I know it! When I lived in Tarskavaig for a number of years in the late 1980s, I took many notes after my conversations with local folk of their Gaelic vocabulary, dialect, anecdotes and - of course - place-names. This is how I noted the explanation given for this fine name, behind what he called Cnoc Fionn [sic], from probably my most copious native informant, Gilleasbaig / Archie MacDonald:

Bhiodh fir a' bhaile a' coinneachadh air a' chnoc airson gnothaichean a' bhaile a shuidheachadh. Bhiodh iad a' bramadaich am fasgadh a' chnuic.

The men of the township would meet on the hill(ock) to settle the affairs of the community. They would let off farts in the shelter of the hill.

Peadar Morgan

Some Thoughts on Place-name Training

The SPNS website has an article by Iain MacIlleChiar about the potential for training to support and enhance place-name interests and researches, in particular for members outwith an academic background.

There is an associated online questionnaire here. Members are encouraged to visit the site and let the committee know how training needs might best be served.

SPNS Spring Conference 2023

An Overview

For the first time in SPNS history the **SPNS conference** on the 6th of May took place over the Border, in **Berwick-upon-Tweed**, a town which famously alternated between Scottish and English allegiance in troubled medieval centuries.

If any excuses are needed for straying beyond our usual geographical limits, there are at least two good ones. Firstly there is much continuity between the naming patterns either side of the Border, reflecting the history of the broader region, particularly before the national boundaries solidified; and secondly, despite the town's having been under English control since 1482, the first highly detailed Ordnance Survey mapping of Berwick was administered as part of the survey of Scotland.

Enthusiasts of winter team sports may feel it equally important that Berwick Rangers FC and Berwick Rugby Club play in Scottish Leagues. The immediately following articles summarise talks given at the conference.

THE LANGUAGES OF BERWICKSHIRE PLACE-NAMES

The first major output of the Leverhulme-funded project *Recovering the Earliest English Language in Scotland: evidence from place-names* was the Berwickshire Place-Name Resource (BPNR), launched at the Society's autumn conference in 2018. The second major output, *The Place-Names of Berwickshire* Vol. 1: *The Border Parishes (PNBWK1)*, is nearing completion, and will be published as a volume of the ongoing Survey of Scottish Place-Names (SSPN).

The volume covers the six parishes of Coldstream, Eccles, Foulden, Hutton, Ladykirk and Mordington. As with other Survey volumes, there is a section for shared features that cross parish boundaries, and introductory chapters setting out the geographical, historical and linguistic background. The chapter on languages has just four sections: Northern Brittonic, Old English, Scots and Scottish Standard English. This is the first Survey volume with no section on Gaelic. Only two potentially Gaelic place-names are in the catchment area: Ross and Drummaw, both in the medieval parish of Lamberton. Neither is certain. Ross MRD may derive from Gaelic *ros* 'headland, promontory', but stronger contenders are a Northern Brittonic cognate or a borrowing into Scots. Drummaw MRD is likely to derive from Gaelic *druim + magh*, giving a topographically-appropriate interpretation 'ridge by a plain' with the characteristically Gaelic element order of generic followed by specific. On the other hand, *drum* is a Gaelic loan-word into Scots, Scots *maw* 'gull' is also consistent with the historical spellings, and some Scots place-names follow the same element order. The main argument against a Gaelic etymology is the sparsity of Gaelic in the area, and clearly this argument could easily become circular.

Other place-names too are ambiguous between languages of origin, or in some cases between categories of element. It is sometimes unclear whether a specific is an appellative or a name, and if the latter, what type of name. St Mary's Well LKK is straightforwardly 'a well dedicated to St Mary', the patron saint of Ladykirk itself. However, according to the Ordnance Survey Name Book, St Mary's Well CSM was named by a former proprietor after one of his saintly relatives. A wider range of possibilities is available for St Johns FOU, an 18th-century renaming of a place previously called *Newhouses*. The Database of Scottish Hagiotoponyms (DOSH) treats this as a dedication to either John the Apostle or Evangelist or John the Baptist. On the other hand, comparison with St Mary's Well CSM raises the possibility of a commemoration of a pious individual, while comparison with St Michaels in Leuchars FIF suggests the possibility of an ironic reference to someone non-saintly – in that instance, the local publican Michael Irvine (*PNF2*, 540–41). A further possibility is a transferred name from another place called St John's, such as the capital of Newfoundland in Canada.

Further instances of ambiguity between transferred names and *ad hoc* formations include Bannock Burn, a shared feature between the parishes of Coldstream and Ladykirk. If this were an original coinage – a doublet of the famous Bannockburn in Stirling – then it might undermine Watson's (1926, 195–196) derivation of the Stirling name from the name of the nearby hill range. However, no alternative derivation is available for the Berwickshire name, so it may be a transferred name created to commemorate the battle of 1314.

Transferred names elsewhere in the volume tend to be late, sometimes replacing an earlier toponym. Ruthven CSM first appears in 1900, replacing *Dovecot Mains*. It presumably derives from Ruthven Castle in Angus, or from one of the other Ruthvens in Aberdeenshire, Badenoch, or other parts of Scotland. Rycroft HUT would be analysed confidently as 'a croft where rye is grown', but for the fact that it first appears in 1975 and refers to a 20th-century house that used to be a police station. Presumably it is either a transferred or an aesthetic name rather than a descriptive one. Grunewald FOU, first recorded on the OS map of 1977, was previously named *Hagg* or *Foulden Hag*, referring to ground used for cutting peat. A derivation from German Grünewald 'green wood' would be explicable as a transferred name, possibly from the Grunewald forest near Berlin. Also first recorded on the OS map of 1977 is Hilltops MRD. This may be a local coinage of a common farm name, but alternatively, like others, it may have been inspired by Hill Top House, the home of Beatrix Potter in the English Lake District.

Particularly problematic is the parish name Mordington ((*mansio of*) *Morthyngton* 1095), an Old English formation from the generic *tūn* 'farm, settlement' and medial -ing- 'associated with'. The specific is ambiguous between a noun and a name, each of which presents difficulties. OE *morþ* 'death, murder' appears in three English toponyms – Morpeth in Northumberland, Mortgrove in Hertfordshire and a lost charter bound *morþhlau* in Warwickshire – but none is a convincing parallel to Mordington. All have topographical generics, referring respectively to a path, a grove, and a tumulus, and may commemorate the site of a local fatality. Such an interpretation is difficult to apply to a settlement.

Even less plausible is Williamson's (1942, 30–31) suggestion of an unattested OE *morð-hring 'murder ring', 'perhaps an allusion to some stone circle or circular camp not now visible'. This is based on a single spelling in a charter now known to be a forgery. Moreover, neither 'stone circle' nor 'circular camp' is among the attested meanings of OE hring (DOE A–I). Smith (1956) has an entry for an unattested OE *hring-stān '"a circular stone", possibly "a stone circle"' in Ringstonehalgh in Lancashire, Ringstone Hurst in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and Ruston in Devon, but in all three, hring is the first element of the compound, and the topographical feature meaning is carried by OE stān.

The remaining possibility is that the specific may be a name. Personal names are common in Old English -ington formations, represented elsewhere in Berwickshire by Edington in Chirnside, and in England by around 40 examples listed by Cameron (1996, 153–154). The problem has been that no such personal name is on record, and an etymon meaning 'death' seems implausible. However, publication of the Durham Liber Vitae has brought to light the name Morthgeorn, recorded twice from the early 12th and mid 12th century (Rollason and Rollason 2007, ii, 245). This is grouped under 'Unassigned Names', rather than in the section on English names, but with the suggestion: 'Obscure but the second element could be Old English georn'. In fact there seems little doubt that it is OE georn 'eager'. That too is not attested as a name element outside the Durham Liber Vitae, but it appears in two other names recorded there from the early 9th century. Friðugeorn and Heregeorn are both analysed as English dithematic names (ibid., ii, 119, 127). The respective meanings 'eager for peace' and 'eager for battle' are straightforward. By analogy, Morthgeorn could be interpreted as 'eager for death', presumably in the sense found in Philippians 1: 21–24: 'For to me life is Christ and death is gain. ... my own desire is to depart and be with Christ – that is better by far' (REB). OE morþ as a name element makes excellent sense in this context. However, this still falls short of evidence that it was available for use as the specific of Mordington. The very fact that Morthgeorn fits the religious context so well raises the possibility that it could have been created deliberately, perhaps by analogy with the earlier names Friðugeorn and Heregeorn.

Although not previously suggested, a different type of name may be worth considering. Three other -ington names in PNBWK1 have a topographical feature as the specific. Edrington MRD refers to the River Adder, Hassington ECC refers to a neck-shaped valley (OE hals), and Mersington ECC refers to a marsh (OE mersc). It may be relevant that the group of cognates to which OE morþ 'death' belongs has a wider range of extended meanings, potentially extending to a river-name (BLITON, s.v. *morß). Breeze (2001) gives examples from Wales of cognates terms applied to water in a toponymic context. A Brittonic river-name, perhaps applied to a stretch of the Whiteadder Water, would be formally possible as the specific of Mordington. It is a long shot, but so are the alternatives.

Turning to the name of the River Adder itself, three potential etymologies have been put forward. Watson (1926, 467) considered the possibility of a prehistoric river-name cognate with others in continental Europe, but then rejected it in favour of OE ǣdre 'watercourse', a derivation supported by the earliest historical spellings (e.g. fluuius Edre c.950 x 1050). However, Ekwall (1928, 156) dismissed Watson's suggestion, apparently believing that the term only applied to small streams, and proposed instead an unattested adjective from the homonymous adverb ǣdre 'quickly'. Nicolaisen (2001, 238) followed Ekwall in assuming that OE ǣdre was unsuitable for a major river, but his main objection was that both noun and adverb have a long vowel, which he believed to be incompatible with the double -dd- spellings in some early forms. He therefore supported a pre-Celtic origin based on parallels with continental river-names. Most recently, BLITON (s.v. *ador or *edir) follows Nicolaisen in assuming that the etymon must have had a short vowel, but recognises that the Adder and other river-names discussed by Ekwall point to an Old English origin. BLITON therefore suggests an unattested synonym of OE ǣdre 'watercourse', otherwise identical but with a short vowel, to resolve the phonological difficulty.

There is much confusion here. The least convincing proposal is the unattested adjective, since OE ǣdre 'quickly' is known to be one of a small group of adverbs with no corresponding adjectives in West Germanic (Campbell 1959, §662). The semantic objection to OE ǣdre 'watercourse' is unfounded, since recorded meanings of the noun include major watercourses, even extending to Noah's flood (DOE A–I, s.v. ǣder, ǣdre, sense 5). Equally unfounded is the phonological objection. Although a double consonant usually indicates a preceding short vowel in Old English, there are exceptions, and ǣdre is known to be one of them. Attested spellings of the noun include many with double -dd- (ibid.). This is due to a regular sound change within the phonological environment. Campbell (1959, §453) describes 'frequent instances of consonant doubling before r after a long vowel, which was probably shortened'. Both here and in the later discussion by Hogg (1992, §7.79), ǣddre is used as an example. This means that a derivation of the name of the River Adder from

OE ǣdre 'watercourse' is fully consistent with the recorded spellings and with standard patterns of phonological development. It remains possible that it may have been preceded by an earlier river-name belonging to the continental pre-Celtic group, which the Northumbrians associated with their own word. The long-running discussion illustrates some of the complexities represented by the place-names in PNBWK1.

Prof. Carole Hough (Spring 2023 conference)
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EAST LOTHIAN'S PLACE-NAMES: A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

The productive farmland of East Lothian has drawn waves of settlers over millennia, who left place-names in their various languages. The talk traced this story and also touched on the county's store of folk etymologies. Here are some examples from each period.

Fig. 1 The River Tyne near Preston Mill. Photo: Liz Curtis

The Rivers Tyne and Whiteadder may have the oldest names in East Lothian. The Tyne shares its name with other rivers in Britain. Alan James writes in BLITON that it probably comes from **ti*, which is likely to be 'an ancient river-naming term... of obscure meaning.' The Whiteadder and the Blackadder, which joins it, were both originally just called Adder. This may be an ancient name meaning 'watercourse', but it could be Old English.

The people we call Britons populated the whole of Britain during the first millennium BC. They spoke a P-Celtic language, Brittonic, which is the forerunner of modern Welsh. Some 30 Brittonic names are still used in East Lothian. Six of these relate to forts: Cairndinnis, Carfrae, Dunbar, Dunglass, Dunpender (the medieval *Dumpelder*) and Tantallon.

Carfrae is a farm southwest of Garvald. The name is made up of the Brittonic words *caer* and *bre*, meaning 'fort' and 'hill'. The start of *bre* is softened to *vre*. At Carfrae today, there is no sign of a fort, but it is there in both the historical and archaeological record. The Old Statistical Account for 1792 (1975 edn., vol. ii, 487-88) tells us that until recently there had been 'an encampment' here nearly the same size as the one at Garvald, which was circular and about 1,500 feet in circumference. The OSA says that, 'A few years ago the stones of the encampment were dug up to enclose the farm'. Aerial photography has revealed an impressive series of ramparts.

Fig. 2 Carfrae farm sign. Photo: Liz Curtis

Four of East Lothian's Brittonic names include the element *tref*, meaning 'a substantial farm'. One of these is Tranent, whose earliest forms include *Treuernent* and *Trauernant*. These give us Brittonic *tref* 'substantial farm', *yr* 'of the' and *nant* 'ravine' or 'stream in a ravine'. The old part of Tranent sits along a deep cleft named the Heugh, which is the Scots term for a steep-sided glen or ravine. We could summarise the name as 'farm of the heugh' or 'farm of the burn in a heugh'.

In the first centuries AD, Roman armies moved through Britain. They built a fort at Inveresk, but did not have any impact on place-names in East Lothian.

Next came Anglians from Northumbria, who expanded their kingdom up to the Forth. They spoke a northern dialect of Old English: this became the dominant language in East Lothian, forming the basis of Scots. As the place-names reveal, the Northumbrians established large farms or estates. These farm names often ended in *hām, wīc* or *tūn*. A *hām* is a 'house and landholding, or a settlement', a *wīc* is a farm, and a *tūn* is a 'substantial farm'. East Lothian *hām* names include Auldhame - meaning 'old settlement' (*Aldeham* 1094) and Oldhamstocks (stressed on the second syllable), which was recorded as *Aldehamstoc* in 1127. This means 'place of the old settlement'.

Two *wīc* names in East Lothian are North Berwick, from Old English *berewīc*, meaning 'barley farm', and Hedderwick 'heather farm'.

Fig. 3 Oldhamstocks Church. Photo: Liz Curtis

East Lothian has many *tūn* names. *Tūn* has become -ton, and it is not always easy to tell whether these are Old English or later coinages. Some *tūn* names refer to features in the landscape, such as East Linton, which is 'farm by the waterfall'. Others refer to the owner's occupation. These include Smeaton, 'farm of the smithy', Preston, 'farm of the priest or priests', and Clerkington, 'farm of the clerics'.

Some *tūn* names refer to an individual associated with a farm. One such is Haddington, which means 'farm named after Hada'. In local lore, however, Haddington means 'hidden toun', because 'you don't see it until you arrive'.

Scandinavian place-names around the entrance to the Firth of Forth suggest there was considerable Viking activity here. Islands with probable or certain Norse names are the Bass Rock 'cowshed island', the Isle of May 'gull island', Fidra (which needs an article to itself) and the Lamb. The name Lamer at Dunbar Harbour could be Old Norse *hlaðhamarr* meaning 'loading rock' - thanks to Arne Kruse for this suggestion.

Another group of Scandinavian names is found inland around Humbie, where several place-names end in 'b-i-e', from Norse *bý* meaning 'farm'. Humbie was recorded as hundeby circa 1250, and means either 'Hundi's farm' or 'dog farm' or 'kennels'.

Fig. 4 The Bass Rock. Photo: Liz Curtis

From the 9th century on, Gaelic-speaking Scots came down from Fife, eventually taking control of East Lothian from the Northumbrians. The 12th-century Earl of Fife held land in East Lothian, and also the 'Earl's Ferry' between Elie and North Berwick. The Scots left a scattering of Gaelic place-names. These include Balgone, which is probably 'farm of the smith or smiths', and Ballencrieff, which is from *baile na craoibhe*, meaning 'farm of the tree'.

In the 12th century, many Norman barons were given land in Scotland by Scottish kings. They left their mark on place-names through the many religious institutions which they sponsored. Nungate Bridge, for example, was en route to the Cistercian nunnery in Haddington, while Jerusalem Farm once belonged to the Knights Templar, whose headquarters was at Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Fig. 5 Jerusalem Farm Sign. Photo: Liz Curtis

Old English developed into Scots, which became the dominant language in East Lothian. From the Middle Ages on, thousands of Scots place-names have been coined. East Lothian's grandest folk etymology concerns the village of Athelstaneford, known as the birthplace of the Scottish flag. The name is Scots, from Elstanesford (1153 x 1178). This comes from Scots ford and the personal name Alstan or Elstan, a development of Old English *Æðelstān*. It is called Elshanford by locals, while others say Athelstan-ford, with the stress on 'ford'. The ford in question is said to have been named after a

Saxon King named Athelstan, who was killed in battle there. The victor was the Pictish king Oengus: he was supported by St Andrew, whose X-shaped cross appeared in the sky when the battle began. This legend was told by medieval historians and has no basis in fact, but the story lives on, and today the village boasts a Flag Heritage Centre in a doocot behind the parish church.

Liz Curtis (Spring 2023 conference)

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EARLY NORTHUMBRIAN MONASTERIES AND LANDHOLDINGS: THE CASE OF LINDISFARNE

When Bishop Aidan came from Iona to Northumbria at King Oswald's behest in 635 to set up a monastery on the isle of Lindisfarne, he set in motion a development that transformed the kingdom during the next two centuries. The Northumbrian monasteries have been intensively studied for their religious practice and affiliations, their stimulus to learning, their artistic and cultural achievements, their participation in the governance of the kingdom. Less developed is a strand of study investigating them as landholding bodies. For under royal patronage, the largest became large landholders: Bede's monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow had by 716 built up an estate of 150 farms. In this respect, they became key players in developing the physical infrastructure of the kingdom. The historical geographer Brian Roberts showed that many of the monastic centres were sited around the edges of the lands he called 'cultural cores', lands long-time cleared, settled and cultivated, where the cores gave way to wilder lands. This leads to two insights: that the kings were not giving away core territories; and that they were using the religious communities as agents for development.
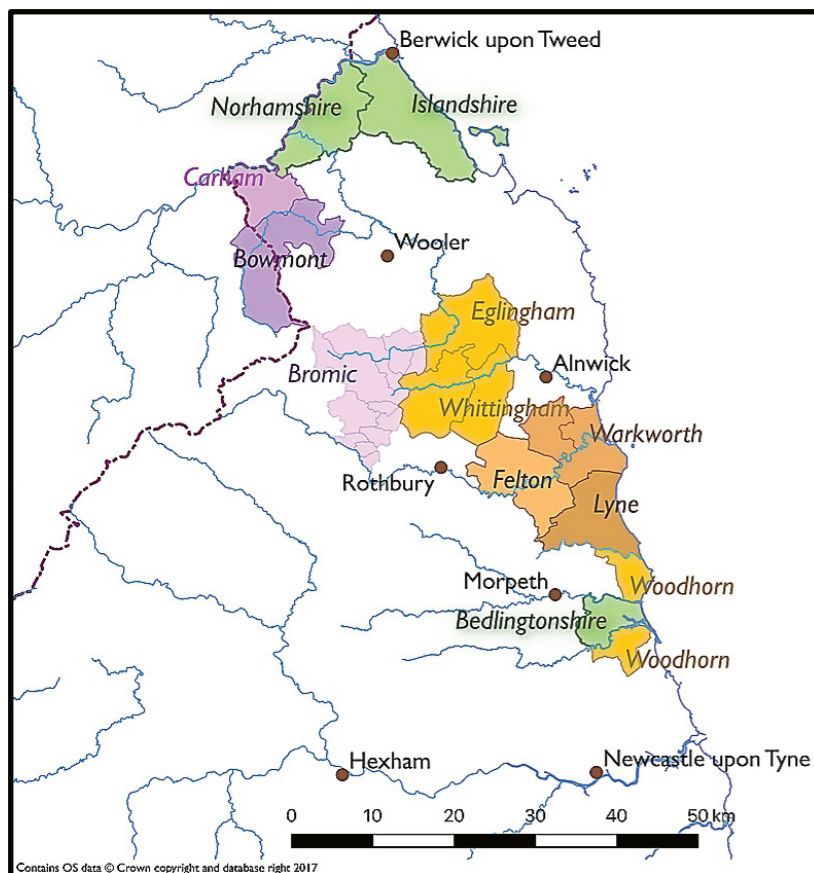

Fig. 1 Lindisfarne landholdings between Tweed and Tyne

This is the starting point for studies that I and colleagues have been doing into the geographies of monastic landholdings. Beyond the centres lay the wider estates, and the challenge is to map these, as Roberts has done for the Wearmouth-Jarrow lands. Our case study is Lindisfarne, the largest of all the Northumbrian landholding monasteries, concentrating here on the lands between Tweed and Tyne.

We have two key sources of information. First is the remarkable survival until 1844 of three areas, geographically within Northumberland but administratively part of County Durham: North Durham. These are Bedlingtonshire, Islandshire and Norhamshire. They belonged to County Durham because they had been Durham church lands, They are well studied, first by James Raine in 1857.

Second is the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, a document compiled in the 11th century within the Community of St Cuthbert, by then settled in Durham. Despite its title, it is not a history of the saint; in the main, it is a set of claims as to landholdings: lands given to the saint (that is to his church). Many of the claims are retrospective, reaching back as far as the 7th century. Some are problematic, perhaps inviting scepticism. But Geoffrey Barrow unpicked the names and the geography of a historically implausible claim of a grant by King Oswine of twelve vills around the River Bowmont to reveal a perfectly credible land unit around that river pertaining to a shire centre at Yetholm. The Anglo-Scottish border later split this land in two with the result that its integrity was broken and its identity lost to memory. When King Ecgfrith granted Carham, on the south bank of Tweed, it came along with *quicquid ad eam pertinet* 'whatever pertains to it', an expression indicating a wider estate of vills dependent on the centre; sometimes the *Historia* calls these the *appendicia*. This terminology allows us to understand these landholdings within the model of the small shire of the pre-Conquest period and its relationships of dependency between shire centre and outlying vills within a social economy of lordship, render and service which Professor Barrow did so much to illuminate.

The shire is the key structural unit. Methods for identifying it have a long scholarly pedigree reaching back to Frederick Maitland at the end of the 19th century, when he coined the term 'retrogressive method', proceeding, as he explained 'from the known to the unknown'. Following Maitland, JEA Jolliffe showed that the Norman imprint on northern England was incomplete and that fragments of pre-Conquest structures survived and found their way into feudal records. Working back, then, from such records, has enabled me to reconcile a faulty boundary description of an estate centred at Warkworth to a real geography. This was a grant by King Ceolwulf (729–737), who resigned his office and entered Lindisfarne as a monk. His donations made up a large swathe of land across mid Northumberland from the coast to link with an upland estate of *Bromic* on the east side of the Cheviot hills.

For place-names, the *Historia* is of some interest as an isolated text standing in between Bede and other writers in the early 8th century and the feudal records that begin to emerge in the 12th (there being no Domesday for Northumberland). Some examples, which Diana Whaley has discussed in a jointly written paper of 2018: *Cocwuda* is the form for the river now called Coquet; in the Ravenna Cosmography it is **Cocuneda* or **Cocuueda*. In the cases of *Brincewele* and *Wudacestre*, it seems that the first elements of the names have remained stable, and the seconds not so, if Brinkburn and Woodhorn are correctly identified. More problematic is *Hafodscelf* which does not easily reconcile on linguistic grounds to any surviving Northumbrian place-names; Hauxley, the usual identification, depends on interpreting the geography of the boundary description.

In the middle reaches of the valley of the River Aln, soils are poor and the few areas of better land correlate with the *ing(a)hām* names such as *Hwitingham*, *Eadwulfincham* and *Ecgwulfincham*, all named in the *Historia* as grants from King Ceolwulf. *-leah* names here indicate woodland, which was still a feature of the landscape in the 13th century when coastal townships near Bamburgh exercised rights of pannage in the woods of Whittingham, at a distance of 25km. The Whittingham woods suggest that Lindisfarne specialised to some extent in the exploitation of its many estates: here exploitation of woodland resources; from King Ceolwulf they gained the resources of four river estuaries; and for the Cheviot estate of *Bromic*, Max Adams and I have argued that Lindisfarne introduced a radical change in land use from intensive cultivation for subsistence farming in small-scale units to extensive land use practice for cattle raising.

Colm O'Brien FSA (Spring 2023 conference)

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NAMING THE BORDER UPLANDS

Straddling the Scotland-England Border, the Cheviot Hills present a distinctive landscape of rolling hills, grass-covered or heather-clad, and a no less distinctive namescape of laws, knowes, cleughs, hopes, burns, sikes and strothers. This brief paper can do no more than visit a small area south-east of the Border to explore patterns of naming, considering how place-names reflect the character of the uplands, their history and their management. The focus is chiefly on Upper Coquetdale in Northumberland, and specifically the extra-parochial Kidland and the large parish of Alwinton, though of course the naming does not observe boundaries and much of what we find is mirrored north-west across the Border.

Fig. 1 Looking north-east to Kidland from below Shillhope Law. Photo: D. Whaley

The massive whaleback of The Cheviot itself (NT9020), rising to 815m., dominates the Border area and lies north-east of the part of it featured here. An extinct volcano 400 million years old, it consists of a granite core and is surrounded by a large aureole of younger andesite – lava turned into metamorphic rock that outcrops in *crag*s and *tor*s but is mostly eroded to form numerous lower, rounded hills with deeply incised valleys carrying small streams. The toponymy matches the geology, albeit within a much shorter time-scale. The name Cheviot (*Chiuiet* 1181/2) stands out as venerable and Brittonic, probably the cognate of Welsh *cefn* 'ridge' plus a suffix. This patriarch gives its name to the surrounding range of younger Cheviot Hills, most of which bear English-based names such as Hedgehope Hill (NT9419), Bloodybush Edge (NT9014) or Barrow Law (NT8611).

Typically, the hill-slopes are windswept and treeless, either 'whitelands', clad with rough grass that bleaches over winter, or peaty 'blacklands' covered with heather and blaeberries (cf. Black Braes, NT8314). The prevailing land use is stock-rearing (and recently grouse-shooting). Terms for sheep and cows of various ages and genders appear in hill-names such as Lamb Hill (NT8113), Wether Cairn (NT9411), Hog Lairs (NT9113) and Beef Stand (NT8213). Bought Law (NT8412) evidently refers to a pen for milking ewes, and Swineside Law (NT8313) suggests pig grazing on lower slopes, presumably once wooded. Shieling sites by burns and solitary farmsteads slightly up-slope punctuate the lonely valleys (and we return to those below).

Fig. 2 The Cheviot and Hedgehope Hill. Photo: D. Whaley

The river-name Coquet also has a long history, already recorded as *Cocuneda/ Cocuueda* and variants in the Ravenna Cosmography (C7th, in C13th copy) and apparently containing Brittonic *cocc* 'red' plus *wedd* 'appearance', or a similar suffix. Upper Coquetdale boasts Bronze Age and Iron Age sites and is bounded to the west by the Roman Dere Street and Chew Green camps. Its documentary history, however, begins after the Norman Conquest when much of the area was held by the Umfravilles, Lords of Redesdale. The name Umfraville is not directly reflected in the place-names, but

two other Norman surnames are: *Bataill* in Batailshiel Haugh (NT8810, *logiam quondam Willelmi Bataille* 1226x44 (C14th)) and *Punchardon* in the farm-name Puncherton (NT9309, *(Ricardus de) Punchardon* c. 1190, *Ponchardon* (a parcel of land) 1495). This is a rarity, as a place-name consisting of nothing but a post-Conquest surname. though Guyzance (NU2104, *Gynes* 1242), much lower down the Coquet, is another example, from the family name *Guines*.

Fig. 3 Rowhope Burn. Photo: D. Whaley

Beginning in 1181, portions of Kidland were leased and then granted by the Umfravilles to the Cistercian monks of Newminster Abbey, near Morpeth. Hence a vital source for the medieval place-names of the area is the Newminster Chartulary, which supplies the earliest evidence, albeit in fourteenth-century copies, for the names of several of the chief landmarks in or near Kidland: the River Alwin (*Alwent* 1181, possibly pre-Celtic, with the sense 'flowing') and major tributaries such as Usway Burn (NT8710, *Osweiburne* pre-1195, 'stream at Usway, ?Ōsa's path'); Alwinton (NT9206, *Alwenton* 1233, 'settlement on the Alwin'); Kidland (*Kidland* 1181, 'Cydda's land'); farmsteads such as Trows (NT8512, *Witetowes* pre-1195, '(white) hollows') and Rowhope (NT8512, *Rohope* pre-1195, 'rough enclosed valley'); and landmark hills such as Cushat Law (NT9213, *Cousthotelau* 1195x1216, 'pigeon hill').

Taken as a whole, the names in the Newminster charters enable us to see what the local toponymicon looked like by c. 1200 – and presumably much earlier, though the age of the names can only be guessed at. Items with at least two occurrences include terms for high ground such as (in their Old English form) *hēafod* 'head', *hlāw* 'hill' (later *law*) and *hyll* 'hill'; terms for lower ground such as *hop* 'hope, enclosed valley', *denu* 'dene, (main) valley', *clōh* 'clough, narrow side-valley' and *halh* 'haugh, alluvial land in a river-bend'; and the ubiquitous stream-term *burna*. *Hop(e)* is especially prolific in upland Northumberland and in the Scottish Borders (Williamson 1942, 88-92), and the fact that each small, enclosed valley tends to contain a single shieling or farm seems to have encouraged the use of the word to designate those and not merely the natural features. An inquisition *post mortem* of 1326[1], for example, lists numerous 'hopes' in North Tynedale, some with *-hope* names but others not, that are clearly more than valleys

Fig. 4 Rowhope from the north. Photo: E. Andersen

for instance *le Caryte* (now High and Low Carriteth NY7983), and a distinction is made between 'hopes' and 'shielings' (*schalinge*). Roberts, Carlton and Rushworth (2010, 32) cite further evidence that at least some of these 'hopes' may have been permanent farms by the thirteenth century. Meanwhile some evidence from nearby Upper Redesdale suggests that some 'hopes' began as shielings and still had that function in the seventeenth century, while permanent 'wintersteeds' occupied the lower ground (Winchester 2000, 85-6).

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[1] https://archive.org/details/cu31924099427845/page/426/mode/2up

Fig. 5 Looking east to Windy Gyle. Photo: D. Whaley

Each year in the heyday of Newminster Abbey, its stock were driven the thirty miles or so to the Cheviot foothills for summer grazing (see Gubbins 2014, chs 5 and 6), and wool production was evidently managed through a grange at Rowhope and a fulling mill near Windyhaugh, recently excavated (NT8610; Jones 2018, 122-7). This system of 'summering' or transhumance using shiels or shieling huts is commemorated in the name Batailshiel Haugh, which has already been mentioned, and the building of temporary 'lodges and sheales' by folk from the local valleys is reported as still current when

Henry VIII's officials Bowes and Elleker took stock of the lands taken over from the abbey in the 1541/2 *Border Survey*.[1] This too is an invaluable source of names. As well as further examples of generics such as *burn* and *cleugh*, we find items such as *banke, brey (brae), gare (gair, a grassy patch amidst peat and heather), meadoe* and *shanke* (a spur of land). *Gole (gowl//gyle* 'a narrow pass' appears in Windy Gyle (NT8515, formerly *Wyndihege* pre-1195 (C14th)), the name of the commanding hill that bestrides the Border flanked by drove routes; the name has many parallels in Scotland.[2]

Further name elements that appear in a Rental of 1663[3] (though are evidenced much earlier elsewhere) include *croft* and *know(e)*, and the eighteenth-century cartographers Roy (*Military Survey of Scotland* 1747-55)[4] and Armstrong (*Map of Northumberland* 1769)[5] record names in *bush, cairn, cross* and *step*.

The modern name-stock as seen on the First Edition Six Inch Ordnance Survey maps,[6] in the Ordnance Survey Name Books that lie behind them,[7] and still largely on modern Explorer maps, evokes a wonderfully clear picture of this upland landscape. There is a rich diversity of terms for hill features: *hill, law, knowe, shank, side, rig(g)* and others, which sometimes show characteristic, recurrent nuances of meaning, and sometimes not (see Nurminen 2012), but the naming of streams and their valleys tends to have a repeating hierarchical pattern. The chief river has its own name – Coquet; its main

Fig. 6 Upper Coquetdale above Windyhaugh.
Photo: D. Whaley

[1] https://archive.org/details/historyofnortpt302hodguoft/page/170/mode/2up; see p. 221.
[2] https://scotlandsplaces.gov.uk/search/results?st=windy%20gowl
[3] https://archive.org/details/historyofnortpt301hodguoft/page/243/mode/1up?view=theater
[4] https://maps.nls.uk/roy/index.html
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[6] Northumberland Sheets XXIV, XXV, XXVIII, XIX, XXXV, XXXVI (1866), at https://maps.nls.uk/geo/find/#zoom=6.0&lat=53.39954&lon=-3.03050&layers=102&b=1&z=0&point=0,0
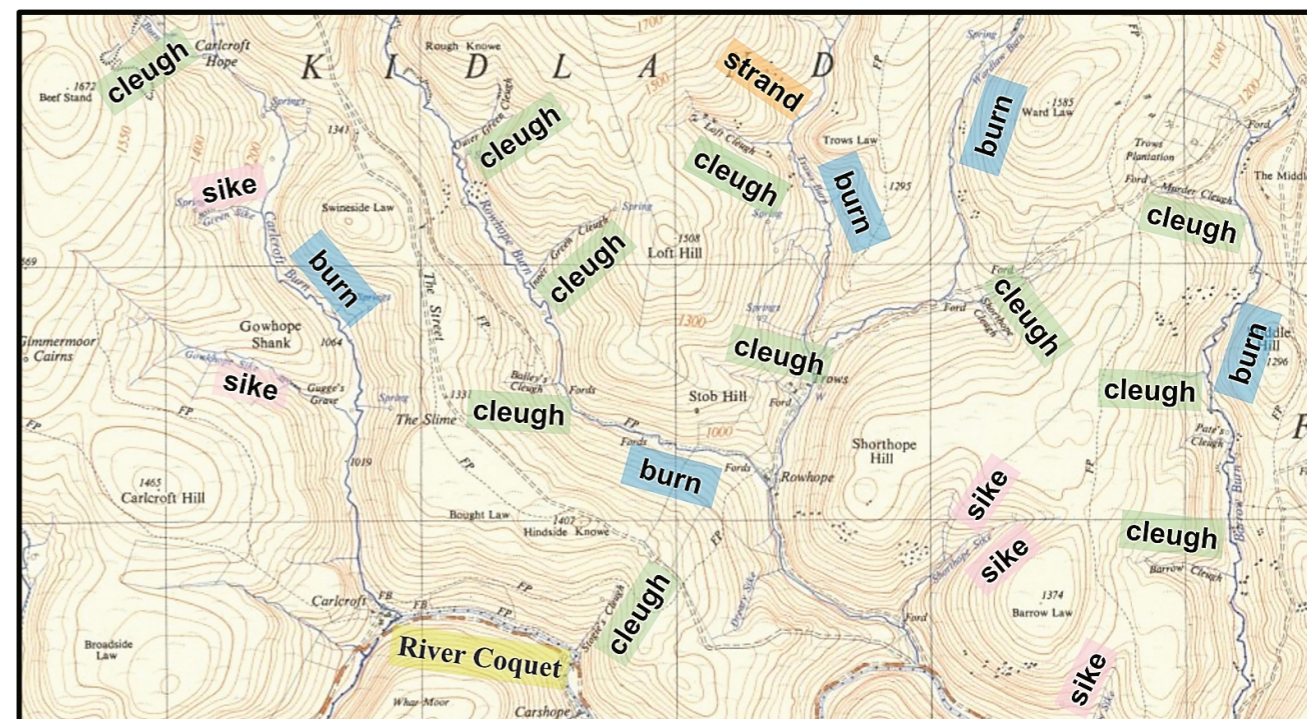[7] Northumberland Name Books available at https://namebooks.org.uk

Fig. 7 A hierarchy of terms for watercourses around Rowhope in the Cheviot Hills. Based on Ordnance Survey 1:25,000, 1937-61; thanks to NLS for use of its online collection of historic OS maps.

tributaries have names in *burn*, often qualified by a place-name; and the burns are fed by smaller streams called *sike* or *strand* or else the small, narrow tributary valleys are labelled *clough* or occasionally *slack* (ultimately of Scandinavian origin) and the streams that flow through them are unnamed on the map. The example of the valley of the Rowhope Burn is given here, but the headwaters of the River Breamish to the east or of the Bowmont Water north-west across the Border show a very similar patterning.

This is a selection of material presented to SPNS in May 2023. The talk went on to consider some tantalising individual names such as The Slime (not particularly slimy) and Murder Cleugh (where the wrong murder is commemorated), but unfortunately space does not permit coverage of those here.

Diana Whaley (Spring 2023 conference)
Prof. Emerita, Newcastle University

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SPNS & SNSBI joint Autumn Conference 2024
The **SPNS** will be hold a joint conference with the **SNSBI** online on Saturday 4th November. Details of this live event on separate flier.

THE STREET NAMES OF BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

The Naming of Streets is a difficult matter,
It isn't just one of your holiday games;
You may think at first I'm as mad as a hatter
When I tell you, a street can have two different names.
(with apologies to T. S. Eliot)

As a non-specialist I was both honoured and panicked when asked to talk on the street-names of Berwick-upon-Tweed at the 2023 conference.[1] There I looked at individual names as evidence for the town's history, using a detailed town plan[2] based on information provided then and anyone needing more detail is welcome to contact the author. This short contribution goes further by examining the names as a group, an approach which may have wider relevance to the understanding of street-names in general. Rather than drawing conclusions based on my limited understanding of the subject I have presented some questions suggested by this exercise.

Before looking at the street-names it is worth noting the terms 'Tweedmouth' and 'Berwick'. For centuries they have been used respectively for the settlements on the south and north banks of the Tweed but they seem to have originated as names for the estuary as a whole. This is obvious for 'Tweedmouth' but can also be argued to apply to 'Berwick'. In conjunction with nearby 'Sunwick', 'Fishwick', 'Goswick', 'Cheswick' and 'Elwick', Berwick appears to have gained its name as part of the network of food supply for a large estate, presumably the monastery at Lindisfarne founded in 635 AD. The role of *ber-wic* or distribution centre for grain from the surrounding area would inevitably have included both sides of the river: a proportion of the grain would have come from the Merse to the north and be ferried across the river before its onward journey south, requiring granaries on both banks of the estuary. In effect, 'Tweedmouth' is a topographic and 'Berwick' a functional name for the same place. This duality is discussed later on in the context of Berwick's street-names.

But first, two unrelated observations. The first is that a group of early names seem to have originated as place-names areas. 'The Ness' is, as its name implies, a flat headland reaching into the sea which, in spite of being built on, had no formal street-names until the 17th c.; in 1577 a frustrated surveyor had to define its lanes as 'The Ness every way'. 'Ravensdown' is still a steep bank above the sea coast, the ideal habitat for a bird which enjoys rocky coastlines. '*Waldefgate*' (modern West Street) marked the boundary of 'the land of Waltheof son of Arnabol', a wealthy Northumbrian whose trading estate in Berwick was acquired by David I and donated to Melrose Abbey. Waltheof's land was on the side of 'Hide Hill'**;** rather than referring to animal hides or land measurement I suggest that this term probably originated as 'hithe hill', the hill above the 'hithes' or beach landing places used by Waltheof and other merchants. Although a term now associated with the south of England its use here can be explained by Berwick's early importance in North Sea trade. It also explains the medieval name *Hidegate* (modern Silver Street) as 'the way to/ from the hithes'. The various 'Greens' names refer to an important area of land within the burgh, set aside when it was founded for the burgesses to build on or use for agriculture. The change of name from area to street is obviously related to the process of urbanisation, but is it possible to pinpoint exactly when an area becomes a street?

The second is that several of Berwick's street-names are shared with settlements to the south. Alnwick has 'The Avenue', 'Ratten Row' and 'Walkergate': Holy Island has 'Crossgate' and 'Marygate': both Alnwick and Holy Island have a 'Fenkle Street'. However none of these names appear to the north in Eyemouth, Dunbar, North Berwick or Haddington. Does this result from the fact that the Lammermuirs formed an early cultural boundary or from the fact that the names were recorded after Berwick had begun the (ongoing) process of becoming English?

The most surprising (to me) observation relates to names undergoing fundamental changes over time. Most of Berwick's medieval streets are recorded as having had at least one such change of name. During this process the 'gait/gate' suffix was always lost and even in the few names fundamentally unchanged it often disappeared. Bridge Street, for example, went from '*Briggate*' (1153-65) to '*Briggestrete*' (1303), '*Briggate*' (1562) and 'Bridge Street' (1696). Is it relevant that the only streets to preserve '-gate' (Castlegate, Marygate, Sandgate) are all on the ancient long-distance route through the town to the ford?

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[1] After this point the town is referred to for convenience as 'Berwick'.
[2] This was not practicable for inclusion in the Newsletter but is intended to be included for on-screen use in the website version of the article; the author is happy to provide further detail.

TOPOGRAPHIC NAMES	DIRECTION OF CHANGE	FUNTIONAL/PERSONAL NAMES
The way to the rampier	→	Cookson's/Coxons Lane
Crossgate	→	Woolmarket
Hidegate	→	Silver Street
Chapel Street	←	Walkergate, Shaws Lane
West Street	←	Waldefgate
Church Street	←	Soutergate
Hide Hill	←	Uddingate
Segate → Ness Street		
Narrugate → Eastern Lane		
Windmill Hole / Windmill Hole, Tweed Street	→ / ←	Guisnes Row
Ravensden, Ratten Row? Fenkle Street, Backway / Ravensdown	→ / ←	Ratten Row? Union Street

The table shows streets with a recorded fundamental change of name. Nearly every recorded street-name in the town can be classified as either topographical or functional/personal and the table shows that the new name generally involved a change in classification, although there is no obvious bias as to whether names changed from topography to function or vice-versa.

The last two entries include names which are apparently superseded but re-appear at a later date. In the case of Tweed Street the name change was short-lived. In 1558 the English garrison in France was defeated at Guisnes and the gunners redeployed to Berwick where they were allowed to build on Windmill Hole, the back lane leading to the castle's windmill. Soon afterwards the lane was recorded as '*Guisnes Row*'. But within 15 years the gunners were fully integrated into the Berwick garrison, the street name was lost and Windmill Hole returned in records. ('*Guisnes Law*', the land provided for the gunners' horses, survives as the place-name Gainslaw just outside the town). Even after the rather bland 'Tweed Street' was adopted the earlier name survived as 'Windmill Hole Banks', the slope down to the river.

Ravensdown has a more complex history. The name was in use by 1300 but officially superseded in the 16th c. by '*Ratten Raw*' and the 17th c. by 'Fenkle Street'. 'Rotten Row' and 'Ravensdown' appear again in the 18th century, followed soon afterwards by the short-lived names 'Backway' and 'Union Street'. 'Ravensdown' had returned as the official name in the by the mid-19th c.. This may have been merely an antiquary's whim but since the name is also recorded in the intervening period, while the alternatives occur only rarely, it is equally possible that 'Ravensdown' had survived in informal use and became officially acceptable again with the dawn of Victorian medievalism.

These examples suggest that a case can be made for other streets having had both formal and informal names. 'Woolmarket' (medieval '*Crossgate*') is one example. The name is not recorded until 1797, by which date Berwick had little or no connection with the wool trade. However it makes sense as the recognition of an earlier, informal and functional term for the topographic name of the street at the market cross where the wool traders had been situated. Similarly, modern 'Silver Street' (medieval *Hide/Hythegate*) could memorialise a (functional) name for the street which had almost certainly housed the medieval mint. A contemporary example of this duality in practice is the (topographical) name Marygate which is often referred to informally as 'High Street' (functional in the context of 'main shopping street').

In conclusion, having made the suggestion that streets might at times have 'two different names', one originating in topography and the other in function, I leave it to the experts in the SPNS to judge its likelihood or relevance!

Dr Catherine Kent (Spring 2023 conference)

Recently seen: This information sign at Newhaven in Edinburgh, for passengers from the Italian cruise ship *Costa Favolosa,* anchored off Leith, who were using a shuttle tender and buses for visits to the city centre. The innovative spelling 'Edinmburgh' may reflect the awkwardness of the cluster -nb- to Italian mouths and ears; the usual Italian exonym being *Edimburgo,* with an assimilation to -mb- far from unknown to natives of *Embra* and elsewhere in central Scotland.

The conjunction of a Union Jack to signify the English langage with the words 'center' and 'downtown' also tells a story.

Thanks to Guy Puzey for the photo and comments.

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Professor Richard A.V. Cox has passed on the information that a bibliography of Clann Tuirc publications, as well as his own publications, is available online at:

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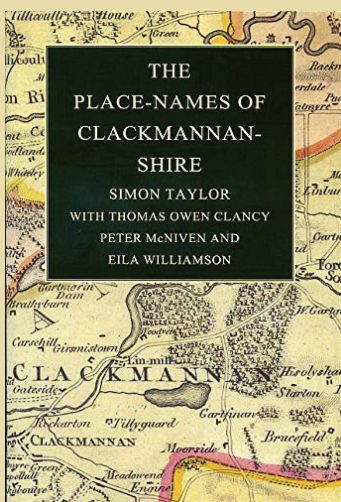
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The next volume in this series, *The Place-Names of Berwickshire* vol. I, covering the six parishes along the Tweed from Eccles to Mordington, will be out shortly, also published by Shaun Tyas.