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Simon Taylor

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The Journal of Scottish Name Studies
JSNS is a peer-reviewed journal that exists to publish articles and reviews on place- and personal names relating to Scotland, her history and languages.

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The Future of the Journal

Publisher
From its inception in 2007, The Journal of Scottish Name Studies has been published by Clann Tuirc. From next year (2020), it will be published by Celtic and Gaelic at the University of Glasgow.

Editor(s)
To date, the journal has been edited by Simon Taylor (Vols 1–3) and jointly by Simon Taylor and Richard A.V. Cox (Vols 4–13).

Vol. 14 is to be edited by guest editor Sarah Künzler, with Simon Taylor as consultant editor (Richard Cox has retired). It will contain articles resulting from a series of seminars led by Dr Künzler at the University of Glasgow on the overall theme of ‘Challenging perspectives: new approaches to the Scottish landscape through the study of place-names’.

Submissions
Submissions are welcome as usual. However, while shorter varia will be considered for inclusion in Vol. 14, main articles will be held back and considered for inclusion in Vol. 15.
Pictish *pont* ‘bridge’ as a place-name element: Pitpointie in its wider contexts

Nick Aitchison

Introduction

The number of identified place-name elements in or derived from the Pictish language is still small but has increased exponentially, rising from only six in 1955 to fourteen by 1996, 32 by 2011 and 40 by 2012 (Jackson 1955, 146–49; Nicolaisen 1996; Taylor 2011, 83–108; PNF 5, 149–57, infra; see also Nicolaisen 2007; James 2009, 150–54). That so few Pictish place-name elements are known is hardly surprising given our very limited knowledge of the Pictish language and the small number and largely unintelligible character of surviving Pictish textual sources. As a result, place-names themselves provide the principal source of Pictish topographic terms. This is particularly apparent in the case of place-names incorporating the most commonly attested toponymic element of Pictish origin, pett (below).

Less frequently attested place-name elements derived from Pictish pose considerable challenges of identification and interpretation because of the paucity of evidence and difficulties in identifying meaningful comparisons or convincing cognate forms. Nevertheless, this may still be a rewarding endeavour because of their potential contribution to our knowledge of not only Pictish toponymy but also the Pictish language itself. Pictish toponymic elements and those of Pictish origin may potentially provide the largest single resource and best opportunity for adding to our knowledge of the Pictish lexicon.

Against this background, one Pictish place-name element deserves more detailed analysis than it has received previously. William J. Watson in his pioneering *The Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (1926, 348) was the first to note that ‘Welsh [sic, i.e. Brittonic] pont, “bridge”, from Latin pons, pontis, seems to appear in ... Pitpointie’ (ANG). Despite this, both Pitpointie and the (possibly) Pictish place-name element *pont* have attracted surprisingly little attention, featuring only occasionally and peripherally in publications. More fundamentally, the interpretation of the toponymic term *pont* in Pitpointie has been challenged recently. As a result, the significance of Pitpointie and its wider implications, if any, remain unclear. This paper assesses the currency of *pont* ‘bridge’ as a place-name element in the area of historical Pictland during the early medieval period, analysing Pitpointie within its wider linguistic, toponymic and topographical contexts.
Pitpointie: Sources and Recorded Forms

The four earliest forms of this place-name are recorded in three charters recording grants of land or pensions, preserved in the *St Andrews Liber*. A variety of later sources, textual and cartographic, also record variant forms of the same place-name:

*Petpuntin* 1 September 1196 × the early thirteenth-century *St Andrews Liber*, 325; Ash et al. 1999, no. 332

*Pethpo[n]tin* 1240 × 1250 *St Andrews Liber*, 284; Ash et al. 1999, no. 276

*Petpontin* 1240 × 1250 *St Andrews Liber*, 284; Ash et al. 1999, no. 276

*Petponti* after 1333 [from a reference to the Battle of Halidon Hill] *St Andrews Liber*, 399; Ash et al. 1999, no. 424

*Pratpouty* 1471 RMS ii no. 1039

*Petpoyn* 1493 RMS ii no. 2158

*Petpuinty* c.1583 × 1596 Pont 26

*Petpuntie* 1593 RMS v no. 2273

*Pitpoyntie* 1606 RMS vi no. 1768

*Pitpointie* 1678 Edward 1678

*Pitpointie* pre-1732 Moll 1745

The place-name survives as Pitpointie (NGR NO356374), Auchterhouse, 9 km north-east of Dundee city centre.

Toponymists have referred to this place-name as *Petponti* (Watson 1926, 348), *Petponti(n)* (Nicolaisen 1968, 147; 1995, 139; 1996, 7; 2001, 197; Rhys 2015, 339) and also by its modern form, Pitpointie (Nicolaisen 1996, 12; Cox 1997, 52; Rhys 2015, 240, n. 497). Confusion about the correct form and/or interpretation of this place-name is indicated by the rendering of *Petpuntin* as Penpunt (Ash et al. 1999, no. 332). However, there is no evidence to support this emendation. As no explanation is given, *Penpunt* appears to represent a typographical error for *Petpunt*, presumably influenced by Penpont (DMF) (below), rather than a deliberate emendation of *pet* for Pictish *pen* ‘head, end, promontory’ (on which see Taylor 2011, 93).

The following observations may be made on the variant forms recorded in the *St Andrews Liber*:

- The earliest attested form is *Petpuntin*, despite the wide possible date range of the charter in which it is recorded
- *Pethpo[n]tin* preserves *peth*, an orthographic variant of *pett* which is commonly attested in thirteenth-century records of other *pett* place-names, for example *Pethcorthin* 1266, Pitcorthie (FIF) (*PNF* 3, 173)
- The three earliest recorded forms – *Petpuntin*, *Pethpo[n]tin* and *Petpontin* –
Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ as a place-name element: Pitpointie in its wider contexts

The development Petpuntin, Pethpo[n]tin, Petpontin > Petponti, Pitpontie, Pitpointie attests the loss of the terminal -in and its replacement by -ie, which is widespread in (particularly) north-east Scotland and also occurs in, for example, *login > logie (Clancy 2016, 27–28, 52–71)

The first element of Pitpointie is unambiguously pett, the most commonly-attested place-name element of Pictish origin. This survives in Pit-place-names, over 300 of which are recorded in eastern Scotland (Jackson 1955, 146–48; Nicolaisen 1996, 6; 2001, 195, 198, Fig. 17), although it is claimed that ‘There may be up to 1000 place-names in Scotland with pett as their generic’ (Rhys 2015, 338–39, citing Simon Taylor pers. comm.; see also Taylor 2011, 105). The meaning of pett is widely thought to originate in a ‘piece’, ‘portion’ or ‘share’ of land (Watson 1926, 407–14; Jackson 1955, 146–48; Nicolaisen 1996, 6–17; 2001, 195–98, 200–04). By around the ninth century, pett had become a generic word for an estate dependent on a shire or thanage centre (Barrow 1973 [2003, 49–50]; Taylor 1997, 10). Although ‘dependent estate’, referring to ‘a piece of land within a larger administrative unit’, helpfully conveys the meaning of pett (Taylor 1997, 10), it is now interpreted as referring to a ‘land-holding, unit of land’ (Taylor 2011, 103) or ‘land-holding, farm’ (PNF 5, 468). There is no absolute chronology for pett place-names and their dating is difficult. Nevertheless, pett place-names are thought to have been in use by the ninth century (Taylor 1997, 10), although most were probably coined during the eleventh and twelfth centuries (PNF 5, 222).

Place-names in pett are almost always compounded with Gaelic place-name elements rather than ones of Pictish origin (Cox 1997, 47–53; Nicolaisen 2001, 197, 200–01; Taylor 2011, 77–79; PNF 5, 217–25; Rhys 2015, 338–43). This reveals that pett place-names do not provide direct evidence of Pictish settlement because the pett element was borrowed into Gaelic. Simon Taylor (2011, 103) places pett in Category 3, the third highest, of his four ‘degrees of Pictishness’, consisting of ‘P-Celtic loan words attested as common nouns in Scottish Gaelic’. By contrast, W. F. H. Nicolaisen ruled out a Gaelic coining for Pitpointie. According to Nicolaisen (2001, 197, 200), Pitpointie ‘is the only [pett place-]name in which the second element can definitely be said to be of non-Gaelic Celtic origin, as it

1. Thomas Owen Clancy (2016, 28) expresses ‘some doubt that this is quite the correct interpretation’ but concedes that he ‘lack[s] a convincing alternative’.
has obviously to be compared with Welsh *pont “bridge”.* Although Nicolaisen does not state so explicitly, he clearly implies that *pont* is a place-name element of Pictish origin. If so, this makes Pitpointie very unusual and deserving more detailed analysis.

However, Nicolaisen's confidence appears to have been misplaced. Nicolaisen may have based his identification of Pitpointie as a wholly Pictish place-name on the absence of evidence that *pont* was loaned into Gaelic and, therefore, that the specific was not a Gaelic word. Alternatively, his belief that Pitpointie comprises two diagnostically Brittonic elements may reflect the traditional belief that the phoneme /p/ is not native to the Goidelic languages (e.g. Mackinnon 1887, 98; Macbain 1922, 137), thereby implying that the *pont* place-name element is, or at least originates in, Pictish. Although Latin /p/ appears as Irish /c/ in the earliest stratum of Latin loanwords in Irish (e.g. Latin *Patricius* > Primitive Irish *Q*ʰ*atrício* > *Q*ʰ*otriciós* > Old Irish *Cothriche*), words containing /p/ were being adopted into Old Irish by as early as the sixth century (e.g. Latin *Patricius* > British Latin *Padrigius* > Old Irish *Pádraig*) (Jackson 1953, 126–28, 610). In addition, the presence of words with /p/ in early Scottish Gaelic may be inferred from their currency in Middle Irish (below). As a result, claims that Pitpointie is not a Gaelic place-name have no sustainable linguistic basis. Even if both its elements originated in Pictish, Pitpointie, like other *pett*–place-names, nevertheless represents a Gaelic coining.

Despite the fact that Pictish *pont* ‘bridge’ must have been loaned into early Gaelic to form the place-name Pitpointie, there appears to be no evidence for *pont* ‘bridge’ in Gaelic, either as a lexical item or in a place-name, other than the two or possibly three place-names discussed in this paper. Although this might appear problematic, it may be relevant that there is very limited evidence for the adoption of *pett* into Gaelic. Despite *pett* being such a common place-name element in the area of historical Pictland, *peit* is only attested twice in Gaelic literature, both in the sense ‘croft’ (Watson 1926, 408), while *peite* ‘patch of land’ is attested only in Lewis Gaelic (Cox 1997, 50). (Early) Gaelic *pont* 1 ‘fierce, vehement’ 2 ‘cruel’ (Dwelly 2001, 732) carries an entirely unrelated meaning, which is unattested in place-names. If anything, the absence of Gaelic *pont* as a lexical item may support its Pictish origin, perhaps suggesting a specialised meaning confined to a very limited number of surviving place-names.

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2. Although it has been suggested that two other *pett* place-names, *Pitbladdo* (FIF) and *Pitfour* (PER), may also contain two non-Gaelic elements (Cox 1997, 52; Nicolaisen 2001, 197, 200), these can be interpreted as Gaelic place-names (Watson 1926, 377, 407, 411; PNF 4, 304–05; 5, 299).

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Previous Interpretations and their Assessment

Following Watson’s lead (above), Nicolaisen (1968, 147; 1995, 139; 2001, 197) – the other leading toponymist of Scotland during the twentieth century – repeatedly noted the non-Gaelic character of Pitpointie and continued to compare it with Welsh pont. Welsh pont ‘bridge’ is a common toponymic element, often applied to a town or village that has developed at one end of a bridge (Owen and Morgan 2007, lxiii, 89, 99, 318, 362, 371, 381, 386–95, 454–55). As a result of this close similarity in form, Nicolaisen (1996, 12) interpreted Pitpointie as meaning ‘bridge portion’. More specifically, the presence of the locative suffix -in ‘at’ in its earliest recorded forms and current interpretations of pett (above) suggest that Pitpointie may be translated as ‘place of/at bridge landholding or farm’. This indicates that the farm or landholding concerned was situated at a bridge, from which it derived its name.

The endorsement by both Watson and Nicolaisen of Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ in Pitpointie might have ensured that the issue remained closed. But does the comparison of the element *pont in Pitpointie with Welsh pont ‘bridge’ stand up to critical analysis? Simon Taylor (2011, 83–108) does not include *pont in his glossary of Pictish place-name elements, although it does appear in his The Place-Names of Fife (PNF 4, 185–86; 5, 472). More recently, the interpretation of Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ has been challenged by Guto Rhys (2015, 240, n. 497) on the grounds that Pitpointie ‘is not situated near any waterway that would require a bridge’. Rhys (2015, 340, n. 698; my emphasis) later appears to relax his position slightly, stating that ‘the location offers no watercourses which would require a bridge of any significant size’, but his point is clear. Does this apparent discrepancy between toponymy and topography expose *pont as either a corruption or a false friend? In the apparent absence of a requirement for a bridge, Rhys advances an alternative interpretation. Claiming that Pitpointie is located ‘in the bottom of a depression’ and comparing *pont with Welsh pant ‘hollow, depression, valley’ (GPC, s.v. pant), Rhys (2015, 240, n. 497; see also 340, n. 698) finds the derivation of *pont from Pictish *pant, a cognate of Welsh pant, ‘very appealing’. As a result, the former consensus in favour of *pont ‘bridge’ as a place-name element of Pictish origin appears to have evaporated, leaving its currency as controversial at best.

Although Rhys’s argument is initially persuasive, there are three possible objections to it. Firstly and most fundamentally, all the recorded forms of this place-name consistently give the element concerned as -pont, or its variant forms -point or -punt, from its earliest attestation (above). This is still preserved in its current form, Pitpointie. There is simply no evidence that Pitpointie was ever a place-name in *pant.
Secondly, Rhys is mistaken about the topographical context of this place-name. Pitpointie does not sit in a ‘depression’ but occupies a gently sloping and sheltered location on good-quality and well-drained agricultural land with a southward-facing aspect. These are all common characteristics of the location of *pett* place-names (Whittington and Soulsby 1968; Whittington 1974, 100–04; Nicolaisen 2001, 203–04). Indeed, these qualities are expressed in the most commonly surviving *pett* place-name, Pittendreich (and variant forms), ‘land-holding or farm of the (good) aspect’ (Watson 1926, 413–14; Nicolaisen 1996, 10; *PNF* 2, 99–100; 3, 252). At least thirteen examples of this place-name are recorded in eastern Scotland, all of which are located on gentle, east- or south-facing slopes. Pitpointie is not marginal land. The farm of Pitpointie was valued at £133 6s 8d in 1802, out of a total valuation for the parish of Tealing of £1886 3s 4d (Land tax rolls, Angus, Vol. 6, 53; E106/16/6/53), and is recorded as ‘A two storey house with good steading & offices and arable farm’ in 1860 (OSNB, Forfarshire, OSI/14/84/3). One would not normally expect to find an apparently thriving arable farm located in a ‘depression’, which implies poorer-quality and damp or even waterlogged soil, making it both more difficult to work and less productive in its yields. Instead, Rhys appears to be referring to the hollow through which the western arm of the Fallaws Burn flows, located immediately to the southeast of Pitpointie, although this is (now) a minor feature.

Thirdly, although it appears to undermine fatally the (possible) identification of *pont* ‘bridge’ in Pitpointie, the absence of a watercourse requiring a bridge at Pitpointie may be explained in one of two ways. The first concerns possible changes in the landscape of Pitpointie since the early medieval period. The hollow through which the upper reaches of the Fallaws Burn flows is boggy, with a couple of pools of standing water. This watercourse was probably more prominent and its environs were probably even boggier in earlier periods. This may be supported by early maps (Pont 26; Edward 1678; Moll 1745), which depict Pitpointie as being located on or near a watercourse. The place-name either straddles or is beside the (unnamed) Fallaws Burn on all three maps, although both Moll and Edward mistakenly place the symbol denoting the location of the settlement closer to the upper reaches of the Fithie Burn. The impact of agricultural improvement, particularly field drainage schemes and the canalisation of watercourses, on the modern landscape and its hydrography, including at Pitpointie, should not be underestimated. A common theme in historical sources is that even what would now be considered as minor streams could formerly pose formidable barriers, prompting Geoffrey Barrow’s (1984 [1992, 213]) observation of ‘the wellnigh obsessive interest which our ancestors took in fords, many of them marking... what seem to us to be quite inconsiderable watercourses’. This ‘obsessive interest’ may also have been manifested in the
construction of bridges, particularly on watercourses where there were no convenient fords.

The second possible explanation for the apparent absence of a watercourse requiring a bridge at Pitpointie rests on the interpretation of the *pett- place-name element and may now be considered.

**Pett and *Pont: Pitpointie as a Pett Place-name**

Pitpointie’s status as a *pett- place-name is also of potential relevance to the possible location of a bridge there. Rhys assumes that a place-name in *pont acquired its toponym because it was the location of a bridge. Similarly, Nicolaisen (1996, 12) categorises the place-name Pitpointie ‘bridge portion’ as referring to its ‘surroundings’. This is understandable, particularly given the close relationship between bridges and settlements attested in Welsh place-names in pont (above). However, a different relationship between Pitpointie and the bridge this toponym possibly refers to may be suggested by its status as a *pett-place-name. Pett refers to an independent, directly-taxable landholding unit within a larger lordship, at least when the place-name Pitpointie was coined in Gaelic. As a result, it is possible that the place-name Pitpointie ‘place of/at bridge land-holding or farm’ may have referred not to a location at a bridge but to a landholding whose profits were reserved to fund the construction, repair and/or maintenance of a bridge or bridges, reflecting its status as productive agricultural land. As a result, the relationship between the bridge (*pont) and land-holding or farm (pett) apparently attested in Pitpointie may have been fiscal rather than physical. If so, *pont may still refer to a bridge without having to propose that there was formerly a watercourse at or near Pitpointie which required bridging. This possibility deserves more detailed consideration.

A pett was part of a larger administrative unit, an estate dependent on a shire or thanage centre (above). As a result, the bridge or bridges possibly referred to in the place-name Pitpointie may have been located elsewhere within the territory administered from that centre (below). Pitpointie, therefore, may denote a dependent landholding or farm whose revenues, presumably in the form of dues paid in agricultural produce, were dedicated to bridgework, reflecting the onerous costs incurred by those (presumably lords or kings) responsible for constructing and maintaining bridges. The extent and productivity of this early medieval pett is unknown but, if the value of Pitpointie in 1802 (above) is anything to go by, this appears to imply a major commitment to funding bridgework, with possible implications for the number and/or size of the bridges involved (below).

It may be tempting to draw an analogy between this hypothetical model for financing bridgework and better-documented practices in Anglo-Saxon
England and on the Continent (see Brooks 1971; 1995, 15; Cooper 2006, 8–65; Harrison 2007 vii, 35–43, 186–90). This may imply that, as the Pictish kingdom(s) developed, regulations or laws were introduced to direct the labour and raw materials required for building and maintaining bridges. However, Anglo-Saxon and continental analogies indicate that it is anachronistic to assume that the direct conscription of labour was commuted to the payment of renders and that specific landholdings were earmarked for the funding of bridgework before the tenth century, i.e. while the Pictish language was still extant. On the other hand, a possible scenario may be envisaged which saves the hypothesis of a landholding reserved for the funding of bridgework from anachronism. If Pictish *pont ‘bridge’, like *pett, was adopted into early Gaelic and both elements were still current in the Gaelic place-naming vocabulary of the region when such fiscal arrangements were introduced, then Petpuntin could have been coined during a period when these linguistic, toponymic and fiscal processes coincided.

If Pitpointie did acquire its name because it generated income which was used to fund bridgework then it is unclear why this place-name is unique. Given that over 300 *pett- place-names are recorded (above), other examples of *pett-pont place-names might be expected to have survived, although very few Pit- names occur more than once. Of greater concern, there do not appear to be any Gaelic place-names that could be interpreted as referring to fiscally-reserved landholdings referring to bridges. Such place-names are also unattested in early medieval England. Despite detailed discussion of English brycg and Scandinavian bryggja (Parsons and Styles 2000, 51–61), none of the examples cited refer to landholdings devoted to financing bridgework and the possibility of this is not even mentioned. Similarly in Scotland, place-names such as Drumnadrochit pertain to bridges but not to a landholding devoted to funding. Although the English place-name Brigham ‘homestead at the bridge’ (Cumberland, East Yorkshire), may appear to be the closest in form to *pett-pont, these ‘may be particularly early’ formations, ‘perhaps denoting Roman bridges’ (Parsons and Styles 2000, 52). More fundamentally, it is unclear whether any Celtic or Germanic place-names in Britain refer to properties or landholdings whose income was reserved for secular purposes. Although firm conclusions cannot be drawn from the absence of evidence, this lack of parallels weakens the proposal that Pitpointie may refer to a landholding whose profits were used to fund bridgework. This, coupled with the possibly anachronistic nature of this interpretation (above), means that it should probably be rejected.

Despite these difficulties, the possible link proposed between Pitpointie and bridgework may have wider implications for the interpretation of *pett place-names and the study of the landscapes in which they are located. Pett place-names with ecclesiastical associations, of which around fourteen are recorded


Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ as a place-name element: Pitpointie in its wider contexts

(Watson 1926, 267–68; Nicolaisen 1996, 11–12; PNF 5, 221), illustrate this point. For example, Pittentagart (ABD), from Gaelic *Pett an t-Sagairt ‘the priest’s share, priest’s portion’ (Watson 1926, 267; Nicolaisen 1996, 12), may not refer literally to a land-holding or farm occupied, owned or worked by a priest. Instead, the land-holding concerned or the income it generated may have been used to support a priest and would have been granted by a secular patron for this purpose, presumably in return for the priest concerned offering prayers for the souls of his patron and his family. This type of relationship is alluded to in a discussion of Pitenchagal (FIF), from Gaelic Pett na h-Eaglaise ‘land-holding or farm of the church’, which notes that this place-name refers to either ‘the eponymous church of Pitenchagal’ or ‘simply ... church-land’ (PNF 2, 451). A pett place-name referring to a church need not denote the site of an early ecclesiastical foundation, although there may have been one nearby, but may instead refer to an ecclesiastical landholding or farm or, more specifically, an area of land, the dues or revenues from which were granted to a church. Possibly supporting this, of the eight pett place-names with actual or possible ecclesiastical associations recorded in Fife, six have tenurial connections with churches dating to before c.1200 (PNF 5, 221).

This interpretation of the function of pett land-holdings is consistent with records concerning Pitpointie, at least by the time of the earliest recorded references to this landholding. The charters preserved in the St Andrews Liber reveal that the land of Pitpointie was granted to the priory of St Andrews between the late twelfth and mid-fourteenth centuries, on one occasion as a pension (St Andrews Liber, 399–400; Ash et al. 1999, no. 424). However, such arrangements are characteristic of the high Middle Ages and it is unclear how far back into the early medieval period they may be projected, if at all.

**ALTERNATIVE INTERPRETATIONS**

In the absence of more persuasive evidence that Pitpointie refers to a landholding reserved for the funding of bridgework, it is tempting to revert to the interpretation that the bridge (possibly) referred to in the place-name was located at or near this location all along. But, rather than accepting the interpretation of Pitpointie as preserving Pictish *pont ‘bridge’, borrowed into Gaelic, other options should be explored to see if they offer more plausible explanations. Three possibilities are worth considering: whether the element -pointie could have a Gaelic origin, is onomastic or hydronymic in origin. These are considered in turn.

Discussion of raising revenues from landholdings (above) may suggest an alternative interpretation of Pitpointie. In particular, it may be possible that -pointie is derived from an early Scottish Gaelic equivalent of Middle Irish...
punt or its variant form pont (eDIL, s.v. punt, pont), Modern Gaelic punnd ‘a pound weight’ and, by the time the monetary assessment of land values was introduced, a unit of currency. If so, then Pitpointie may mean ‘portion [of land] worth/yielding a pound [in weight or value].’

Another possibility is that the place-name element *pont may be a personal name. Neither Pont nor Pontin, Pontyn are recorded in Black’s Surnames of Scotland (1946). Despite this, Pont is familiar to toponymists as a Scottish surname from the work of the pioneering cartographer Timothy Pont (c.1565–1614). However, Pont ‘dweller by the bridge’ is identified as Old French in origin and is described as ‘A scarce surname mainly found in Sussex’ (Titford 2009, 366). A more plausible origin for the Scottish surname Pont may be as a contraction of a place-name in -pont. Supporting this, the surname of Timothy’s father, Robert Pont (c.1524–1606), was recorded as Kylpont when he attended St Leonard’s College, St Andrews, in 1554 and also as Kynpont at the first and subsequent General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, from 1560 (Lee 1860 Vol. 1, 230; Marwick 1911, 87). Although Robert Pont was born in Culross (now FIF, then PER), his surname presumably originated in the place-name Kilpunt, Kilpont 1467 (WLO) (see below) or another, unidentified, place with the same or a similar place-name.

Other surnames may suggest an alternative interpretation of the place-name element pontin, interpreted above as *pont + the locational suffix -in. Of possible relevance here are the surnames Panton, Ponton and Punton (see Black 1946, 646, 668, 675). Ponton, in particular, is well-documented as a medieval surname in southern Scotland. Black (1946, 668) derives all three surnames as probably from Ponton – Pamptune, Pamtone 1086, Pantone 1135–1154, Panton 1194, Pontoune, Puntoone 1541 – near Grantham (Lincolnshire) (see also Titford 2009, 347, 366; Hanks et al. 2016 Vol. 3, 2038, 2040). This origin is both phonologically and historically plausible because Ponton was near estates belonging to David I’s earldom of Huntingdon and this region was a rich source of noble and knightly settlers in the feudalisation of Scotland (Ritchie 1954, 214; Barrow 1980, 97–101). However, the surnames Panton and Ponton may have different etymologies, the former possibly derived from Old English *pamp ‘hill’ or panne ‘pan’, in a transferred topographical sense ‘depression, hollow’ + tūn ‘farmstead, estate’ (Hanks et al. 2016 Vol. 3, 2038). Although similar in form to -pontin, -puntin, these surnames are not identical and there is no evidence to indicate that Pitpointie is derived from a surname. Moreover, there are no pett- place-names to parallel the proposed derivation of Pitpointie from a surname. Although several place-names combine pett- with a personal name, for example Pitcarmick (PER) ‘Cormac’s share’ (Nicolaisen 2001, 196–97), these are not surnames of Anglo-Norman origin but Gaelic first names in every case.
Another possible etymology is that *pont may be derived from a hydronym. Pont occurs as a hydronym in the River Pont – from which Ponteland (Northumberland) ‘island formed by the River Pont’ (Mawer 1920, 159), ‘Pont island’ (Watts 2004, 477) derives its name – Pont Burn (Co. Durham), Pont Gallan Burn (Northumberland) and the lost river Pont, Ponte 1268 (Northumberland). These examples demonstrate that, at least in north-east England, Pont can be a hydronym. Ekwall (1928, 332; see also Watts 2002, 96–97; 2004, 477) equates these hydronyms with that of the River Pant (Essex), deriving them from Brittonic pant ‘hollow, valley’. Similarly, Alan James (2009, 152–53; BLITON Vol. 2, 301) derives the Pont hydronym, presumably by metonymy, from Brittonic pant. Given its etymological obscurity, Pictish *pant, or a different word emerging as *pont/ pant, may conceivably have referred to a watercourse in earlier times, possibly an earlier name for the Fallaws Burn in the case of Pitpointie. This leaves open the possibility that *pontin originated as a stream-name with a suffixed form of *pont-. But although the status of *pont as a hydronym may appear to be strengthened by the Pointack Burn, this is a secondary hydronym, derived from the adjacent place-name (below). In addition, pont hydronyms appear to be specific to north-east England, a region which underwent very different linguistic developments and cultural influences from north-east Scotland. Although the evidence from north-east England is suggestive, there are no unambiguously attested examples of pont as a hydronym in Scotland. Moreover, the construction of pett + hydronym is unattested. Emphasising the wider complexity of the pont place-name element, the etymology of place-names in pont elsewhere in England – including Pontesbury (Shropshire), (Great and Little) Ponton (Lincolnshire) and Pontshill (Herefordshire) – remains uncertain (Watts 2004, 477).

Possible alternative explanations of *pont, as being derived from either a surname or a hydronym, are both problematic. In particular, the absence of parallels appears to weaken the case that Pitpointie and Pointack derive their names from those of watercourses. In addition, the compounding of the pett- place-name element with a hydronym is also unparalleled. While these alternatives may appear to be plausible interpretations for *pont in isolation, they begin to look less convincing when the place-name Pitpointie is considered as a whole.

**Pictish *pont in other place-names**

Despite the weakness of alternative interpretations, it is difficult to make a convincing case for the Pictish place-name element *pont ‘bridge’ from a single instance. The focus shifts, therefore, from Pitpointie to other place-names incorporating the element *pont in an attempt to seek supporting parallels.
Only one other place-name in *pont in the area of historical Pictland has been identified previously. *Poyntok 1546 × ?1607 (Campbell 1899, 404), *Pointok 1601 (*RMS vi no. 1267), now Pointack (FIF) (NO352239) is interpreted as ‘? Pictish *pont + ? -ōc’ ‘place at a bridge’, where -ōc can represent either ‘place of’ or denote a hydronym (PNF 4, 185–86; see also PNF 5, 472). Although Pointack is compared with Pitpointie (PNF 4, 186), the tentative identification of this place-name as Pictish is understandable, given the limited number of attestations of *pont. By contrast, Rhys disputes the interpretation of Pointack as originating in Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ on topographic grounds. Echoing his argument on Pitpointie, Rhys (2015, 240, n.497) claims that there are ‘only minor streamlets in the vicinity [of Pointack], certainly nothing that would have required a bridge’, adding that ‘there are several features in the vicinity which could be classed as pant ‘hollow, depression, valley’.

Rhys’s objection may also be dismissed in this case. Pointack is located on the Pointack Burn or the Burn of Pointack, the hydronym possibly representing a secondary formation derived from a settlement and lands beside it (PNF 4, 186). This watercourse was significant enough to mark the boundary between the estates of Balmerino and Birkhill (Campbell 1899, 377) and, in 1601, to define the east march of Balmerino wood ‘as it flows into the Tay’ (*RMS vi no. 1267; transl. PNF 4, 185). The requirement for a bridge may not always be evident from the size of a watercourse as it appears today (above) but was presumably dependent on a combination of factors, including the location of settlements, patterns of landholding, transport routes, resources available and, of course, the hydrography of the watercourse concerned during the early medieval period. In the absence of any evidence, there are no grounds for rejecting the (former) presence of a bridge when a bridge appears to be clearly attested in a place-name.

Both Pitpointie and Pointack attest a similar development from -u/o- to -oi/oy- (PNF 4, 186). This suggests that other place-names in point may be derived from Pictish *pont. Unfortunately for this line of enquiry, this is identical in form to Scots point ‘anything salient or tapering, as a pointed hill or tapering piece of land …; a promontory or cape’ (*DSL, s.v. point n.2), a common place-name element, while place-names in point could also be derived from Gaelic punc ‘point’ instead. Notwithstanding the examples of Pitpointie and Pointack, the potential for confusion with SSE point suggests that the quest for further attestations of Pictish *pont should focus on names in pont rather than point. This narrows the field considerably, as this place-name element is very rare in Scotland north of the Forth. Four recorded examples, all in Aberdeenshire, stand out:
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\[\text{Pontalond}^3 1600 \text{ RMS vi no. 1050; transl. Robertson 1862, 665, n.1}\]
\[\text{Pontalbon} 1618 \text{ RMS viii no. 1927}\]
\[\text{Pontellewen} 1664 \text{ RMS xii no. 647}\]
\[\text{Pontlowin} 1688 \text{ Aberdeen Sasines in Register House, cited in Alexander 1952, 347}\]
\[\text{Panty Land} 1807–09 \text{ RHP3897/14}\]
\[\text{Pantyland} 1832 \text{ Thomson 1832}\]
\[\text{Pantielands} 1868 \text{ Ordnance Survey six-inch map, Aberdeenshire, Sheet LXX, surveyed 1868, published 1870}\]
\[\text{Pantieland ‘now extinct’ Alexander 1952, 347}\]

Despite the different second elements in the seventeenth-century attestations, these may be identified as either variant forms of the same place-name or alternative names for the same place from their contexts, confirmations of grants of the same lands in the Barony of Kinaldie, part of the Invercauld estate at Logie-Coldstone, Strathdon (NGR NJ 41771077).

Both elements of this place-name present challenges of interpretation. Pontalond/Panty Land raises the by now familiar dilemma of whether the first element is *pont ‘bridge’ or *pant ‘hollow, depression, valley’, although forms in Pant- are actually attested on this occasion. Both are plausible, given the location of this place-name near the confluence of the Tomdubh Burn with the Deskry Water, a short distance upstream from the bridge over the latter at Rippachie. In addition, this may be another possible example of *pont as a hydronym, perhaps an earlier name for either the Tomdubh Burn or the Deskry Water.

The only published interpretation of this place-name suggests that it is ‘Perhaps a form of Punder-land, Pund-land, a place for the impounding of strayed cattle’ (Alexander 1952, 347). No evidence is cited in support of this and all the recorded examples of Punderland appear to be located south of the Forth.\(^4\) If Pontalond represents Punderland then yet another interpretation is possible, that it refers to ‘A piece of land orig[inally] assessed at the annual value of one pound ... fixed as equivalent to half a ploughgate or four Oxgangs in 1585’ (DSL, s.v. pundland). However, while Punderland is recorded as a place-name

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\(^3\) Alexander (1952, 347) gives this as Pontaland but the form recorded in RMS is Pontalond.

\(^4\) For example, Ponderlandis 1565 (STL) (RMS iv, no. 1662 (p.400)), Punderlandis 1580, 1603, Pounderland 1591 (ELO) (RMS iv, no. 3037 (p.834); v, no. 1863 (p.631); vi, no 1418 (p.506)).
in south-west Scotland, where it survives as *Poundland, it does not appear to be attested elsewhere. Moreover, the forms *Pontalond, *Pontalbon, *Pontellewen, *Pontlowin are sufficient to reject the ‘pound’ derivation.

A more plausible alternative may be to seek a Gaelic origin for this element, perhaps an early Scottish Gaelic equivalent of Middle Irish punt, pont, Modern Gaelic punnd ‘a pound weight’ and, by the time of monetary assessment of land-values, a unit of currency. Indeed, this may even suggest an alternative interpretation of the -pointie element in Pitpointie, although no other Pit-place-names include references to the fiscal value of land. Ultimately, the suggested identification of *Pontalond with *Punderland or *Pundland, regardless of its meaning, is unconvincing because the elements Pund-, Punder- contrast with the Ponta-, Panti- and Panty- of recorded forms. A better comparison may be -pontie, as in Pitpointie, possibly suggesting that *Pontalond, Panty Land also originated in a place-name in *pont.

The earliest recorded forms indicate that the first place-name element in *Pontalond is *pont-. Pont- appears in three seventeenth-century attestations, pre-dating records of the Pant- form by over two centuries. The considerable variation in attestations of the second element – *-albon, -*alond, -*ellewen and -*lowin – does not instil confidence and may be interpreted in various ways. For example, -*lowin and -*ellewen may be compared with Northern Brittonic *loβ and *le:β, perhaps suggesting a hydronym belonging to the ‘Leven’ family (BLITON Vol. 2, 171–73, 185). This would be consistent with the interpretation of the Pont- element in these place-names as ‘bridge’, suggesting that these may be variant forms of a place-name in the ‘bridge of hydronym’ format. Alternatively, *Pontalond implies that the second element is Scots lond, a variant of ‘land’ (DSL, s.v. lond), while SSE land(s) is clearly attested in the later forms Panty Land, Pantyland, Pantilands. If so, this may cast doubt on the interpretation of the first element as Pictish *pont ‘bridge’, because a Pictish generic, borrowed into Gaelic, with a Scots specific makes an impossible formation. More plausibly, however, Scots lond, SSE land(s) represents a phonological adaptation of an element, the original significance of which had become lost.

Pett- place-names demonstrate that what originated as Pictish toponymic terms only survive in Gaelic formations and, therefore, are likely to be paired with Gaelic specifics. Consistent with this, the element concerned may be derived from Gaelic lann ‘field, land, enclosure’ (Simon Taylor, pers. comm.; see PNF 5, 419–20). If Pictish *pont was adopted into Gaelic, then *pont na

5. For example, *Pundland (DMF) 1589, 1592, 1631, 1643 (RMS v, no. 1683 (p. 578), no. 2032 (p. 689); viii, no. 1745 (p. 593); ix, no. 1427 (p. 537)). Surviving examples of Poundland include those near Dailly and Pinwherry (both AYR), near Dunscore and Moniaive (both DMF) and near Parton (KCB).
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lanna, lainn or even loinne may be a possible place-name referring to a bridge, with Pontalond possibly representing *pont na loinne. However, in the case of Pontalond, it seems unlikely that the middle syllable would then reflect a definite article, whatever that was in Pictish, because very few place-names in the form noun + article + noun are recorded in any of the Celtic languages before the tenth century (see Toner 1999). Although located near watercourses, Pontalond is of uncertain significance. The late and varied attestations and the availability of alternative interpretations make Pontalond a possible, but perhaps more realistically a doubtful, example of Pictish *pont. Pantilands and its earlier forms require more detailed analysis, although a definitive derivation seems likely to remain elusive.

This brief search for other place-names derived from Pictish *pont has achieved mixed results. Pontalond, although of intrinsic interest, is of ambiguous significance and meaning. On the other hand, although its attestation is relatively late, Pointack may corroborate the presence of *pont as a place-name element within the area of historical Pictland. Despite the limited and challenging evidence, the identification of the Pictish place-name element *pont ‘bridge’ does not rest on a single attestation. Even so, it is difficult to explain why this is such a rarely-surviving toponymic element within the area of historical Pictland.

Pictish Bridges?

Another possible objection to the interpretation of Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ concerns the presence of bridges in Pictland. Did the Picts even have bridges? On the one hand, this may seem an unnecessary question, given the barriers to travel and trade presented by the many watercourses of Pictland. On the other hand, it might be assumed that the Picts had no bridge-building tradition because their territory lay beyond the frontier of the Roman Empire, where such technology is less likely to have been encountered, although this contrasts with the evidence for bridges in Ireland (below). Curiously, despite their many implications – technological and socio-political as well as linguistic and toponymic – the issue of Pictish bridges has not been considered before. Despite a plethora of publications on early medieval Scotland in general, and the Picts in particular, in recent decades, none discuss or even refer to bridges. Is there any evidence for Pictish bridges?

The earliest references to bridges in Scotland do not occur until the twelfth century, when bridges at St Andrews and over the River Leven are recorded (Barrow 1984 [1992, 212]). However, this probably reflects the greater availability and survival of textual records from this period, rather than (necessarily) the absence of bridges before the twelfth century. This is supported by a mid-eleventh-century reference to bridgework (below). On the other hand, it is
interesting that the Gaelic place-name *Chendrohedalian* (Kindrochit-Alian, now Braemar) (ABD) is recorded in the longer version of St Andrews foundation account, dating from the 1140s, together with its earlier, presumably Pictish, name *Doldauha* (FAB, §4, in PNF 3, 571, 578, 591–92). The medial component of *Chendrohedalian* may be identified as Gaelic *drochaid* ‘bridge’, presumably referring to a structure crossing the River Clunie. However, it is difficult to know if anything can be inferred from the absence of a reference to a bridge in the Pictish place-name for the same location, given that this is only a single example.

Bridges and fortresses were the largest secular structures in early medieval Europe. Fortifications in Pictland are amply attested in the archaeological record (for different perspectives see, most recently, Ralston 2004; Konstam 2010; Foster 2014, 44–52; Noble 2016). By contrast, no archaeological evidence of Pictish bridges has been discovered and their sites, if there were any, remain unidentified. Unless and until their sites are located and investigated, the only evidence for Pictish bridges lies not in the structures themselves but in what may be inferred from limited textual references and perhaps place-names.

Alongside military service and constructing fortifications, building, maintaining and repairing bridges for kings were the most onerous obligations in early medieval societies and are well-attested in, for example, Anglo-Saxon England from the eighth century onwards (Brooks 1971; 1995, 15; Cooper 2006, 8–65; Harrison 2007, vii, 35–43, 186–90). The situation is less clear among the Celtic-speaking peoples of early medieval Britain and Ireland. When Unuist son of Uurguist, king of the Picts (AD 820–834), granted *Kilrymont* (St Andrews) to God and St Andrew, he exempted its inhabitants from all secular exactions, including hosting, castle and bridgework (*de exercitu et de operibus castellorum et pontium*), according to the St Andrews foundation legend (FAB, §5; eds and trans PNF 3, 573, 579). Although this initially appears to record the existence of similar burdens among the Picts, this text dates from 1140 × 1152 (Taylor 2000). Moreover, the details of this exemption ‘are almost certainly spurious’, revealing more about labour services during the mid-twelfth century than the ninth (Taylor 2016, 95) and suggesting that it was added by the compiler of the text. In support of this later date, this exemption may be compared to others dating from the mid-eleventh to twelfth centuries. For example, similar exemptions were granted to the vill of Kirkness, Lochleven, by Macbeth in 1040 × 1057 (*St Andrews Liber*, 114; eds and trans Taylor et al. 2017, 568, 575–76), although this is recorded in a charter translated from Gaelic into Latin in probably the late thirteenth century (Taylor et al. 2017, 566), and by Dunfermline Abbey in 1161 × 1164 (*RRS* i no. 213 (p. 243) [= Dunf. Reg., no. 49 (p. 27)]). Despite the limited textual evidence, the apparently formulaic nature of these exemptions may imply that bridge-building burdens were more widespread and already well-established in...
Scotland during this period. Such obligations may have provided the labour for bridgework which may have been financed by the income received from grants of land such as that at Pitpointie.

Other sources are no earlier and less reliable. The flooding of the *Pons Servani* ‘Bridge of St Serf’ is related in Jocelyn’s *Life* of St Kentigern (ed. and transl. Forbes 1874, 49, 176; on which see Forbes 1874, 328; Jackson 1958, 307–09). This is explicitly described as being located on the north side of the *Frisicum Litus*, the Firth of Forth, although the geographical context – west of Culross – may place it in Clackmannanshire, which is usually considered to have belonged to the northern British territory of Manau, rather than to have been part of Pictland (e.g. Jackson 1969, 69–75). Although compiled c.1185, the presence of early features in the text, including Northern Brittonic (or ‘Cumbric’) personal names (Jackson 1958, 300–01, 310–11; Breeze 2008), indicates that the Life of St Kentigern is based on early medieval traditions, although their dating is contentious (MacQueen 1956; Jackson 1958; Clancy 2003; Irvin 2010).

In the only explicit reference to a Pictish bridge, Hector Boece records that the Picts constructed a wooden bridge ‘not far from Stirling’ (*Historia Gentis Scottorum* X, 66; ed. and transl. Sutton 2010). Although its location suggests that this bridge may have crossed the River Forth, the major watercourse at Stirling, Boece gives no more information. However, Boece’s *History* is a much later (1527) and notoriously unreliable source. As there is no reliable evidence for a bridge at Stirling until the thirteenth century (Page 2010), Boece may have been projecting the presence of this strategically important crossing, the lowest bridge on the River Forth, back into the distant past. By contrast, genuinely early sources record the presence of fords across the Forth, which were probably upstream from Stirling. For example, the Chronicle of the Kings of Alba records that Cináed son of Máel Coluim (971–995) *uallauít ripas uadorum Forthin* ‘fortified the banks of the fords of the Forth’ (ed. and transl. Hudson 1998, 151, 161). The Fords of Frew is usually assumed to have been the principal early crossing point on the Forth, although other fords were available further downstream, depending on river levels.

The existence of bridges in Pictland is otherwise unattested. It has been suggested that a bridge is depicted in the battle scene on Sueno’s Stone (MOR) (Duncan 1984, 140), a massive Pictish cross-slab dating to the ninth century (Henderson and Henderson 2004, 135–36; on Sueno’s Stone generally, see Sellar 1993). However, as several other interpretations have been proposed for the same feature, little reliance can be placed on this.

The textual evidence for Pictish bridges is extremely limited in both quantity and quality. All that can be inferred from Boece and the Life of St Kentigern is that they attest the existence of later traditions concerning the presence of bridges in
early medieval eastern Scotland north of the Forth. The St Andrews foundation legend presumably claimed that an exemption from secular exactions, including bridgework, existed from the reign of Unuist son of Uurguist in order to provide a precedent rooted in the power of a distant past. As a result, no reliability can be placed on this source as evidence for a bridge-building tradition among the Picts. However, a record originating during the reign of Macbeth (above) reveals that obligations concerning bridgework existed in Scotland by the mid-eleventh century. This may reflect earlier practises and be paralleled by secular exactions in Anglo-Saxon England, although the absence of surviving Scottish charters from before the twelfth century makes definitive conclusions impossible. The paucity of relevant textual sources underlines the importance of toponymy in this debate.

The evidence from Ireland may be relevant here. Bridges are referred to in at least three early Irish legal texts, including a seventh-century law tract on watermills, which records the regulations relating to a bridge (cain drochet) (Kelly 1997, 393). That jurists felt the need to legislate for bridges implies that they were a common feature in the early Irish landscape, although Old Irish drochet could also refer to a ‘causeway (over [a] marsh, etc.)’ (eDIL, s.v. drochet). Similarly, OE brycg, preserved in the place-name Birgham (Berwickshire) (BPNR, s.v. Birgham), means not only ‘bridge’ but also ‘causeway’ (Parsons and Styles 2000, 51). These examples suggest that there may not have been a well-defined distinction between bridges and causeways in an early medieval context. However, the existence of a ‘proper’ bridge is demonstrated by the wooden remains discovered in the River Shannon at Clonmacnoise (Co. Offaly), its construction dated by dendrochronology to c. 804 (Moore 1996; O’Sullivan and Boland 2000). The Picts were as equally accomplished as their Irish neighbours in a range of engineering and practical skills, as their fortifications (above), metalwork and sculpture (Henderson and Henderson 2004) amply attest. This suggests that the Picts were just as capable of constructing bridges, although there is no evidence to confirm that they did so.

**Pictish *pont as a Latin loan-word**

Another potential, but apparently previously unexpressed, objection to the interpretation of Pitpointie as ‘place of/at bridge land-holding or farm’ concerns the presence of Latin loan-words in the Pictish language in general and the use of a Latin loan-word for ‘bridge’ in particular. Even if the Picts did possess bridges, is there any evidence that they would have referred to these by a Latin loan-word? Two arguments may be cited in support of the possibility of Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ as a Latin loan-word.
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The first rests on analogy with cognate terms in other Insular Celtic languages. The Common Brittonic language, spoken by the Celtic peoples of Britain, is said to have been ‘packed with Latin loanwords’ (Schrijver 2002, 87; see also Schrijver 2007; 2013, 29–33), the result of Latin being spoken within the Roman province of Britain for almost 400 years. More than 800 of these Latin loan-words are estimated to have survived in Brittonic (Jackson 1953, 76–121). According to Kenneth Jackson, this occurred principally in the ‘Llowland Zone’ of Britain, comprising roughly the southern and eastern half of England, but that these loan-words were later absorbed into the Brittonic spoken in the ‘Highland Zone’ of western and northern Britain, particularly during the fifth and sixth centuries. Schrijver (2007, 167) places this earlier, noting that ‘Highland British Celtic borrowed masses of Latin loanwords during the [Roman] Empire as Latin was at that time a prestige language’, a status which it lost after the collapse of Roman power in Britain in the early fifth century. Nevertheless, the currency of vernacular Latin in Roman Britain and its possible influence on Brittonic in general, and Schrijver’s ‘maximalist’ assessment in particular, are still hotly-debated (e.g. Coates 2007; Parsons 2011; Russell 2011). Even here, however, Coates (2007, 172–73) acknowledges that the Brittonic languages are basically deeply latinised British Celtic.

Given the limited evidence relating to the Picts, it is easy to fall into the trap of assuming that linguistic processes attested in Britain south of Hadrian’s Wall will also have had a significant impact, whether directly or indirectly, north of the Antonine Wall. However, of the 31 potentially Pictish place-name elements discussed by Taylor, only one, *eclēs, is of Latin origin (Taylor 2011, 88). Moreover, James (2014, 42) discusses many possible loan-words but concludes that ‘the toponymic evidence for introductions from Latin in the Brittonic of the north seems pretty thin. The number of such elements whose presence in P-Celtic place-names is reasonably secure amounts to no more than 10’. Although its interpretation is debatable, it cannot be inferred realistically from this limited toponymic evidence that Latin vocabulary was in widespread use in northern Britain. Nevertheless, some Latin words may have been borrowed into northern Brittonic as specialised terms, referring to concepts or things which were originally associated with or derived from Roman Britain. Significantly, this includes words referring to the built environment. James (2014, 7) notes that ‘Roman building and engineering, mainly military in the north, undoubtedly made an impression on Celtic-speaking people’ and, consistent with this, accepts not only *pont but also *mūr ‘wall’ as loan-words from Latin into Northern Brittonic (James 2014, 7–8). Latin pont-, in oblique forms of pons ‘bridge’, was adopted as Brittonic *pontā- (James 2014, 9; BLITON Vol. 2, 321), becoming Welsh pont (GPC, s.v. pont), Cornish pons (George 2009, 531) and Breton pont.
(Deshayes 2003, 591). As the Pictish language is now widely thought to belong to the Brittonic branch of the Insular Celtic languages (Nicolaisen 1996; 2001, 192–204; 2006; Forsyth 1997; 2006; James 2013; Rhys 2015), it may also contain Latin loan-words.

James (2014, 9; BLITON Vol. 2, 321) suggests that, perhaps initially, Brittonic *pont may have referred specifically to a masonry bridge in the Roman style but that it was subsequently adopted as the generic term for ‘bridge’ in all the Brittonic languages. The borrowing of Latin pons, pontis ‘bridge’ into Northern Brittonic and Pictish, or a language ancestral to them, seems plausible, given that both the northern Britons and the Picts probably acquired their awareness of masonry bridges from Roman examples. The bridges concerned may have been in northern Britain or, if the borrowing occurred at a later date, may have been encountered by pilgrims in or on their way to Rome. Although the earliest Pictish presence in Rome is not recorded until 721, this presumably reflects the status of Fergus Pictus as a bishop and his attendance at a synod (see Hefele and Clark 1896 Vol. 5, 257). Less senior Pictish pilgrims, clerics and lay persons alike, may have made the pilgrimage to Rome long before this.

NORTHERN BRITTONIC *PONT

The clearest evidence for the borrowing of Latin pons, pontis ‘bridge’ is in pont place-names, primarily in Welsh (above), but also Cornish (Padel 1985, 190) and Northern Brittonic. The northern Britons, speakers of Northern Brittonic, were near neighbours of the Picts, making Northern Brittonic place-names in pont of particular relevance to this debate. Pont is an uncommon place-name element in Scotland but is attested south of the Forth. In particular, its combination with penn ‘end, head’ in Penpont (DMF), a combination of elements familiar in Cornwall and Wales (see Padel 1985, 180; Owen and Morgan 2007, 371), attests the Northern Brittonic origin of this place-name (Watson 1926, 180, 348, 356; Johnson-Ferguson 1935, 107–08; Barrow 1984 [1992, 214]; Nicolaisen 2001, 212; Anderson 2010, 106; BLITON Vol. 2, 311, 321; Vol. 3, 29). Kilpunt, Kenpunt 1208 × 1211 (RRS ii no. 486), Kenpvnt 1296, Kenpont 1307–20, Kilpon 1467 ‘Head of the Bridge’ (WLO) (MacDonald 1941, 43), presumably also originated in Northern Brittonic *Penpont, by way of the partially gaelicised *Cennpont (Watson 1926, 348; Wilkinson 1992, 26; James 2014, 9; BLITON Vol. 2, 321). In addition, Pinkie

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6. Although lack of evidence makes it impossible to demonstrate that Pictish was Celtic at its core and some scholars still maintain that at least some Picts may have spoken a non-Indo-European language (e.g. Isaac 2003, 155; 2005). For the latest thoughts on this, based on an analysis of Pictish ogam inscriptions, see now Rodway 2020.
Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ as a place-name element: Pitpointie in its wider contexts

(ELO) was known as *Pontekyn during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Dixon 1947, 207). No other place-names in pont appear to be reliably attested in Scotland south of the Forth.

As with Pitpointie, opinion has been split on the presence of Brittonic *pont ‘bridge’ in these place-names. Nevertheless, Penpont is a strong candidate for the site of a bridge. Its location on an old route which joins a probable Roman road indicates that, ‘whether Roman or not, a bridge existed near Penpont from early times .... perhaps as far back as Roman times’ (Anderson 2010, 106–07). While Watson (1926, 348) accepted Kilpunt and Penpont as pont place-names, Dixon (1947, 249, 456–57) and Nicolaisen (2001, 24) believed Pontekyn to be a compound of pant ‘valley’ and cyn ‘wedge’. However, this is not supported by any of the early forms, all of which record the element concerned as pont, not pant. Moreover, the -yn suffix of Pontekyn appears to be the -in locational suffix (above), which generally appears latterly as -ie/-y, which is exactly what it does in Pinkie. This undermines the interpretation cyn ‘wedge’. Indeed, the form Pontekyn suggests its origin in a formation something like *pont-ǭg-in ‘place of a bridge (or bridges)’; the first two elements of which may be equated with Pointack (above).

‘Place of a bridge’ fits the topographic context of Pontekyn. Pinkie is located on the east bank of the River Esk, which is joined to Musselburgh by the Old Bridge, popularly known as ‘the Roman Bridge’ (NT34077254). Although the surviving structure is thought to date to the mid-sixteenth century (Canmore ID 53885), it probably stands on the site of a Roman bridge which carried the Roman road between the forts at Inveresk and Cramond and on to the Antonine Wall (Dennison and Coleman 1996, 85). Both toponymy and topography point to Pontekyn as a plausible place-name in Northern Brittonic *pont ‘bridge’.

A topographic objection has been raised to the interpretation of Kilpunt as a place-name in Northern Brittonic *pont. Kilpunt appears to be the direct equivalent of Northern Brittonic and Welsh Penpont ‘bridge-end’. However, noting that ‘the existing settlement is ... not near any known ancient bridge or any substantial watercourse’, James (2014, 10; see also MacDonald 1941, 43:

7. Pontekyn pre-1198 (Dunf. Reg., no. 301 (p.191)), early undated charter (Neubottle Reg., nos 65–66 (p.53)); Pontekin pre-1198 c.1300 (Dunf. Reg., no. 391 (p.191)); Ponttekyn early undated charter (Neubottle Reg., no. 64 (p.52)); Pontkyn 1200–1240 (Soltre Reg., no. 14 (p.13)); Pinckin 1531 (Dunf. Reg., no. 464 (p.362)); Pincking 1531 (Dunf. Reg., no. 464 (p.362)).

8. Although its form is suggestive, Ponpens (STL) 1666 (RMS xi, no. 885 (p.445)) may be rejected as a transcription error for Powpenis 1539 (RMS iii no. 1964), Powpen 1665 (RS59/2 f.116v; Reid 2009, 170), Powpowne 1678 (RS59/5 f.416v). Similarly, Pontheugh 1698 (Retours, BWK no.474), cited by both Watson (1926, 348) and James (2014, 10), appears to be a transcription or editorial error for Peilheuch 1624 (RMS viii no. 625).
BLITON Vol. 2, 321) suggests that an origin in ‘Brittonic pant- “hollow, valley-bottom” is ... not impossible at Kilpunt’. As at Pitpointie, the presence of a ‘substantial watercourse’ may not have been a necessary prerequisite for the construction of a bridge. Indeed, because bridging rivers presents greater engineering challenges, with implications for the expertise and resources required, minor watercourses were perhaps more likely to have been bridged at an early date. Although no early bridges or their sites have been identified in this area, the Brox Burn, a tributary of the River Almond, provides a plausible requirement for bridging. Indeed, there are no fewer than three bridges within the vicinity of Kilpunt. The farmstead of Kilpunt, now converted into dwellings and known as Kilpunt Steadings (NT09827177), lies only 350m south-south-east of a bridge across the Brox Burn. Moreover, Kilpunt gives its name to two other nearby bridges, both dating to the nineteenth century. Kilpunt Bridge No. 21 (NT092711), on the Union Canal, and Kilpunt Railway Bridge (NT093710) are located approximately 850m south-south-west of Kilpunt. If Kilpunt can give its name to these bridges, then the converse may also be plausible. Kilpunt may have derived its place-name from a bridge over the Brox Burn, which lies even closer to Kilpunt than the Union Canal.

More significantly still, the place-name Kilpunt appears to have moved over time: ‘the original Kilpunt stood to the north-west [of Kilpunt Steadings], in the croft now called Kilpunt Garden, and near the Broxburn’ (Primrose 1898, 112). An Ordnance Survey map of 1898 shows Kilpunt Gardens as a small building at the south-west corner of a rectilinear enclosure, which earlier Ordnance Survey maps depict as partially occupied by what appears to be an orchard (NT094719). This enclosure may be identified with ‘the wall of stone and lime that formerly bounded the policies of ‘the mansion of Kilpunt’, which was located ‘to the east of this ancient site’ (Primrose 1898, 112). The former location of Kilpunt may be indicated on nineteenth-century maps by what appears to be a driveway leading from Kilpunt Gardens to a site beside the confluence of the Brox Burn and the Caw Burn. This is consistent with Roy’s map of 1752–1755 (Sheet 7/6d), which depicts Killpunt at the centre of an estate with an unnamed building, possibly ‘Old Kilpunt’, at the edge of an enclosure to the north-west. Kilpunt appears to have been relocated from beside or near the Brox Burn into more open land a short distance to the south-east, presumably to place it at the centre of the extensive landscaped policies depicted on Roy’s map, sometime before the mid-

eighteenth century. Although its origins are unclear, ‘Old Kilpunt’ may have been the location of a medieval baronial *caput* – the administrative seat, often a castle or manor house, of a medieval barony – perhaps occupying an even earlier site. The granting of the lands of *Kenpunt* to William Noble by Henry de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, was confirmed by William the Lion in 1208 × 1211 (RRS ii no. 486).

Claims that the place-name Kilpunt cannot mean ‘bridge’ because it is not associated with a watercourse do not withstand detailed analysis. In addition, the proximity of a watercourse to Kilpunt is indicated by the (now lost) place-name *Kinpunt-myln* 1608 (Retours, Linlithgow no. 58). This mill would have required a source of power, which is most likely to have been provided by running water, probably either the Brox Burn or the Caw Burn. Whether there was an early bridge over the Brox Burn and/or Caw Burn at ‘Old Kilpunt’ is of course another matter. However, the identification of an earlier and much closer relationship between Kilpunt and local watercourses implies that there was a requirement for a bridge. Moreover, the *pont* place-name element not only indicates that there was a bridge at ‘Old Kilpunt’ but that this may have been a defining feature of this location, important enough for it to be named Kilpunt ‘bridge end/head’.

As with Pitpointie and Pointack (above), more detailed investigation reveals that the topographic contexts of *pont* place-names in southern Scotland are more plausible locations for bridges than previous commentators have recognised. This supports the case for the existence of the Latin loan-word *pont* ‘bridge’ in Northern Brittonic and the word is included among Northern Brittonic place-name elements (BLITON Vol. 2, 321). *Pont* belongs to a wider linguistic process, one of 42 Latin loan-words (not including ethnic names) identified or inferred in Northern Brittonic (James 2014). Moreover, Nicolaisen (2001, 192–221, esp. 220–21; see also Forsyth 1997, 27; Rhys 2015, 346–49) demonstrates that there is little to distinguish Pictish from Northern Brittonic linguistically and perhaps that Pictish should be regarded as a dialect of Northern Brittonic. If *pont* ‘bridge’ is accepted as a Latin loanword in Northern Brittonic, then there appears to be no reason, in principle, why it may not also occur in Pictish.

Unusually, a Pictish source may provide additional and independent support for the existence of Pictish *pont* ‘bridge’. The Brude list, a short text traditionally known as the ‘Thirty Brudes’, occurs in the longer version of the Pictish regnal list, the best preserved text of which is in the Poppleton MS (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 4126; ed. Anderson 1980, 245). According to its Latin introduction, *Brude Bont* was the first of thirty kings named Brude who held the kingship of Pictland and Alba for a total of 150 years. Previously unintelligible, a case has recently been made for the interpretation of the Brude list as a poem praising a Pictish king named Brude, the gaelicised form of the
Pictish personal name Bredei, Bridei, listing his many praiseworthy attributes or epithets (Aitchison 2019). Bont may be compared with the mutated form of Welsh pont ‘bridge’ (GPC, s.v. pont), a common place-name element in Wales and which also occurs as the simplex Y Bont ‘the bridge’ (Monmouthshire) (Owen and Morgan 2007, 40–41, 89, 128, 244, 362, 381, 454–55). As Welsh pont becomes bont in the genitive case after a personal name, this suggests the epithet Brude Bont ‘Brude of (the) Bridge’, reflecting the status of the bridge as a metaphor of physical strength and/or royal authority (Aitchison 2019, 30–31). This may be paralleled by the well-known episode in the tale of ‘Branwen’ in Y Mabinogi in which Bendigeidfran (‘Bran the Blessed’) enables his army to escape by making a bridge with his outstretched body over a river, uttering the words *A uo penn bit pont. Mi a uydaf pont* ‘He who is a leader, let him be a bridge. I will be a bridge’ (ed. Williams 1930, 40–41; transl. Davies 2007, 30; see Aitchison 2020; compare Zimmer 2003).

The Brude list is of added interest to the debate surrounding Pictish *pont because its heroic attributes or epithets include Leo and Pant.” Leo ‘lion’, figuratively ‘hero, warrior’, may be identified as a Pictish loan-word from Latin (Aitchison 2019, 28–29), cognate with Old Welsh leu, Middle Welsh lew, Modern Welsh llew (GPC, s.v. llew 1, 2a) and Old Irish léo (eDIL, s.v. léo¹). This supports the case for the presence of Latin loan-words, possibly including *pont, in the Pictish language. Pant elsewhere in the Brude list suggests the currency of both *pant and *pont as discrete words in the Pictish lexicon and as toponymic terms, furthering weakening Rhys’s attempt to interpret the place-name element *pont as *pant (above).

**BRIDGING POINTS: THE WIDER LANDSCAPE CONTEXT**

The wider topographic context of Pitpointie invites an alternative location for the bridge apparently referred to in its place-name, particularly if the upper reaches of the Fallaws Burn was too minor a watercourse to require a bridge. If the hypothetical interpretation of Pitpointie as referring to an area of land used to fund bridgework, rather than the location of a bridge, is accepted (but see above), then this may make it more difficult to identify the site of the bridge concerned. In addition, it is unclear whether only a single bridge or more than...
one may have been financed by this land. The identification of the site(s) concerned is exacerbated by the fact that Pitpointie is located within the heart of historical Pictland. However, this need not sever the topographical relationship between Pitpointie and the bridge(s) it funded entirely. Knowledge of the socio-economic basis of Pictish society is, like so many other aspects of the Picts, very limited. Nevertheless, on the basis of analogy with later pre-feudal society in eastern Scotland, it may be inferred that labour was raised and deployed locally, based on a local administrative unit akin to, and perhaps the Pictish predecessor of, the shire or thanage (on which see Barrow 1973 [2003, 7–56]). This, combined with the logistical difficulties and additional costs incurred by transport, probably ensured that dues and labour raised for bridgework were deployed nearby. In practice, this may be interpreted as ‘within walking distance’, which may enable the possible location of the bridge concerned to be narrowed down and perhaps even inferred.

Although Pitpointie is not located on a river, it is near one. The Dighty Water, a tributary of the Firth of Tay, flows 2km south of Pitpointie at its closest. Formerly used extensively for powering mills, the Dighty Water was grandly described as ‘the most considerable stream of water in the vicinity of Dundee” (NSA Vol. 11 (1845), 55). The historic crossing point of the Dighty in this area is at Bridgefoot (NO37683538), formerly known as Kirkton of Strathmartine, 3.3km south-east of Pitpointie. Early maps depict a bridge at (Edward 1678, Moll 1745), or a short distance upstream from (Pont 26), Kirkton of Strathmartine, although its antiquity is unknown. Kirkton of Strathmartine was a parochial centre until the parishes of Mains and Strathmartine were united in 1799 (NSA Vol. 11 (1845), 56). That this was an important ecclesiastical centre under powerful secular patronage during the early medieval period is apparent from what must once have been an impressive collection of Pictish sculpture from the churchyard there (NO37843525), but is now mostly fragmentary and/or lost. This assemblage includes ten cross-slabs (Strathmartine nos 3–7, 9–13), a free-standing ringed cross (Strathmartine nos. 8, 8a) and a complete recumbent gravestone (Strathmartine no. 2) (Stuart 1856, 24, pl. 77, 41, pl. 132, 44, pl. 138; 1867, 58, pl. 101; ECMS, vol. 2, 230–34, 266–67; Canmore IDs 31879–85, 319756–60). Another two items of Pictish sculpture within a short distance of Pitpointie emphasise the importance of this area during the early medieval period. St Martin’s Stone, the lower part of a Class II cross-slab stands, apparently in situ, at Balluderon (NO37483758) (ECMS Vol. 2, 215–16; Mack 1997, 62; Canmore ID 31864), 2.1km east of Pitpointie. In addition, a Class I symbol stone (Strathmartine no. 1) was formerly incorporated in a wall near Strathmartine Castle (at NO36923024) (ECMS Vol. 2, 208–09; Mack 1997, 59; Fraser, 2008, 60, no. 68; Canmore ID 31886).
2.2km south-east of Pitpointie, but is now in Dundee Museum (accession number 1969–269).

In addition to its apparent status as a Pictish ecclesiastical site, Bridgefoot may be a candidate for the location of an early administrative centre from which the collection of tribute and renders was organised on behalf of the king or lord. Pitpointie is even closer to, and is overlooked by, a multivallate hillfort on Auchterhouse Hill (NO35433975) (Canmore ID 31874), 1.2km to the north. Although undated, this may be a fortified secular power centre. Perhaps significantly, the most direct route between Auchterhouse Hill and Dundee Law, the location of another hillfort (Canmore ID 31936), crosses the Dighty Water at Bridgefoot. Although the hillfort on Dundee Law is dated to the Iron Age (Driscoll 1995), this site is heavily disturbed and the only archaeological excavations conducted to date were on a small scale. As a result, a previously undetected phase of early medieval occupation and/or fortification may await discovery there. Although neither a chronological nor a functional relationship between these diverse elements – a pett-place-name, Pictish sculpture, an early ecclesiastical site and possible administrative centre, fortresses, routeways, a river crossing and possible bridging point – can be proven, their physical relationship is at least suggestive and worth investigating in more detail. In particular, their close proximity may imply that the lands of Pitpointie financed the construction, repair and/or maintenance of a bridge over the Dighty Water at Bridgefoot.

Clearly, much further work is required before Pictish routeways and river crossings can be identified with any confidence. Nevertheless, Pitpointie illustrates the potential role of toponymy in identifying possible relationships between previously isolated elements within the wider landscape and society of the Picts.

Conclusions

This paper has sought to overcome previous confusion surrounding the interpretation of *pont ‘bridge’ as a place-name element of Pictish origin by studying the place-names concerned within their wider toponymic, topographic and linguistic contexts. Although hindered by the small number of recorded examples and their late attestations, this study has at least considered the evidence and issues involved. Moreover, it has attempted to advance the debate by dispelling some unwarranted doubts about the relationship between *pont place-names and watercourses and, therefore, plausible requirements and locations for bridges. In particular, Rhys’s claim that *pont should be interpreted as pant ‘hollow, depression, valley’ on the grounds that there are no watercourses requiring a bridge at Pitpointie and Pointack may be demonstrated.
Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ as a place-name element: Pitpointie in its wider contexts to be unfounded. *Poynntok gives its name to the Pointack Burn, while Pitpointie is located on the upper reaches of the Fallaws Burn and near a historic crossing on the Dighty Water. On both linguistic and topographic grounds, Pitpointie and Pointack are therefore plausible attestations of *pont ‘bridge’. Although Pitpointie and Pointack are Gaelic place-names, the absence of (other) attestations in Gaelic implies that *pont ‘bridge’ must have been borrowed from Pictish. The possibility that Gaelic *pont was borrowed directly from Latin pons to make these place-names seems less likely, not least because this would be expected to be an early loan and therefore borrowed as *cont or similar. Moreover, there appears to be no evidence to support alternative interpretations, primarily that *pont is derived from either a hydronym or a surname.

In the quest for wider linguistic parallels, possible cognates in other Brittonic languages have also been sought. This has focussed on *pont in Northern Brittonic, the language most closely related to Pictish. Pitpointie and Pointack belong to a wider geographical distribution of place-names in *pont which also includes three examples south of the Forth, Kilpunt, Penpont and Pinkie. As with Pitpointie and Pointack, previous concerns about the proximity of the place-name Kilpunt to a watercourse may also be shown to be misplaced. These examples emphasise the importance of conducting detailed analyses of place-names within their historical and topographical contexts before drawing any conclusions about the interpretation of topographic elements, as the relationship between a place-name and the feature within the landscape it refers to may have altered over time. This is more likely to be the case with early names, where the landscape may have changed and/or the place-name may have moved since it was originally coined, adding to the complexity of their analysis and interpretation.

Given that there is no evidence for the derivation of the place-name element *pont from a surname or any unambiguous examples of *pont as a hydronym in Scotland, the most likely interpretation appears, on balance, to have been that *pont is indeed a Brittonic and Pictish place-name element meaning ‘bridge’. Contrary to previous claims, this fits the topographic contexts of those place-names in *pont. Fundamentally, analysis of the *pont place-name element in Scotland can no longer continue to deny its historical association with watercourses.

The very small number of place-names incorporating *pont within the area of historical Pictland contrasts with the large number of Pit- place-names. But here it is pett, not *pont, which is unusual as a result of being such a productive and commonly-surviving place-name element. Other place-name elements of Pictish origin also survive only in small numbers, such as *cupar ‘?confluence’ and the hydronymic element *pevr ‘beautiful, shining’, with only three examples
of each attested (Taylor 2011, 85, 96). Pitpointie and Pointack appear to be the only surviving examples of the loan of Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ into Gaelic. In addition, the two examples from the area of historical Pictland may be compared with the three from Scotland south of the Forth.

A case may therefore be made for including *pont in Taylor’s Category 2 of ‘Pictishness’, comprising ‘P-Celtic words borrowed into Gaelic but attested only in place-names’ (Taylor 2011, 72, with examples at pp. 100–03). Moreover, the presence of what appears to be its mutated form, Bont, in the Brude list, may strengthen the case for the presence of *pont in the Pictish lexicon. Indeed, Bont /*pont appear to belong to a wider range of (presumably) Pictish topographic terms which are not only attested in place-names but also occur in the Brude list (Aitchison 2019, 30–31, 33–34, 38), thereby comprising a category of Pictish place-name elements for which there is lexical evidence. Recognising a closely related form and meaning within two very different contexts, toponymic and textual, not only provides new insights into the interpretation of both sources but also has wider potential implications for the study of Pictish culture, language and toponymy, although these lie beyond the scope of this study.

Although the evidence is limited and late in date, these examples suggest that Northern Brittonic and Pictish *pont ‘bridge’ was an early toponymic element and, therefore, that there were at least some bridges in early medieval northern Britain. The study of bridges and their role in the landscape, society and symbolism of the Picts and northern Britons deserves more attention than they have received previously. Place-name evidence should assist this. In addition, the identification of possible bridge sites at Pitpointie or Bridgefoot, Pinkie, Pointack and Kilpunt provides some pointers to the location and, hopefully, archaeological investigation of early bridges, or at least bridging sites, and their associated routeways within the wider landscape.

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FETLAR

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ABSTRACT

This article rehearses the history of attempts to account for the name of the island of Fetlar in Shetland. It is concluded that explaining it as pre-Celtic is beset with philological difficulties and that it is probably, after all, Scandinavian, though details of its etymology remain open to debate.

The name of this island is regularly presented alongside those of neighbouring Unst and Yell as a linguistic anomaly in Shetland. This is because they are not obviously Scandinavian, especially as regards their apparent morphology; see for example MacDonald (1977, 107–111); Stewart (1987, 3–4); Fellows Jensen (1996, 116–117); Nicolaisen (1996, 4); Kruse (2005, 141–143); Gammeltoft (2005a, 123; 2007, 4, and 2010, 18–19); also Lindqvist (2015, 50–51), who, like others, regards all three names in their (post-)medieval guises as ‘Deopakisierungen’, ‘de-opaque-isations’, i.e. as the result of ‘folk-etymology’ or analogical reformation). The present writer has attempted (Coates 2007) to explain Yell as Celtic, but several of the larger northern and western Scottish islands are still viewed as presenting a historical onomastic challenge for which no overarching Celtic solution has been or is likely to be found.1 This paper aims to review the history of the quest to explain Fetlar and to clear the ground for an attempt at an etymology in which I think the direction of travel is justified even if the accommodation at the destination may get mixed ratings.

The one firm fact is that fetlar (singular fetill) is Old Norse for ‘carrying-straps, shoulder-straps’. However, no-one has come up with a plausible reason for believing this could be the ultimate source of the island’s name. The form of the word is plural; Haswell-Smith (2004, 473, Fetlar, entry 11.24) muses that Norse writers referred to Fetlar as if it were two isles, east and west.2 He suggests

1. As for Celtic in the Northern Isles, Gammeltoft (2010, 21–22) also sees a connection between the Het- which forms the original shape of the first element of Shetland and the Middle Irish ethnonym seen inInst Cat, in addition to the well-recognised Celtic base of the name Orkney (cf. Old Irish orc ‘salmon’; ‘piglet, young boar’; ‘whale’ – the relevant etymological sense is much debated, but always animal; Nicolaisen 2003, 140). See also Jennings (2011a).

2. Est Isle and Wast Isle, as (?)first) reported by Stewart (1968, 175), who says that the island ‘was always spoken of as a pair’ with these names, but gives no source material. (See also Lowe 1988 I, 245.) Following and embellishing Stewart’s remark, Haswell-Smith (2004, 473) states ‘... early Norse records always spoke of Fetlar as Est Isle and

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the name is to be understood as if in reference to two islands united by the significant earthwork, now degraded in parts, known as the Funzie Girt (Funzie Gurd, Finnigirt, Finjigert); see Map at end of article. This feature appears to be named from being the western boundary of the East Isle settlement called Funzie /ˈfɪɲi/, /ˈfəɲi/, but it has been explained by Jakobsen (1936, 175) as being from Old Norse Finna garðr ‘Finns’ fence’, where Finnar ‘Finns’ denotes the (mythical) early inhabitants of the island identified or postulated by Norse speakers. The settlement name itself is of unknown origin, but it can hardly be from the bare genitive plural Finna embedded in the supposed ‘fence’ name. It seems simplest to strip the Funzie Girt of its mythology, despite the alleged concentration of supernatural activity around it (Jakobsen 1936, 175) and conclude that it is ‘the fence of Funzie’, since there is no evidence that contradicts this. Jennings (2007) suggests that the place-name itself might derive from an (unspecified) Old Norse word meaning ‘a place to look for, steer for, or head for’. Funzie was traditionally the first Shetland landfall for sailors from the east.

However, even if Haswell-Smith were right, ‘(the) carrying-straps’ hardly seems an appropriate way of expressing the twin-isles concept in a name. Gammeltoft (2005b, 263) notes that such a plural name would be ‘entirely

Wast Isle.’ This cannot be literally true since isle is a French borrowing into Scots. Moreover, I have found no such forms in Norse/Norn documents in SD (Smith and Ballantyne 1999). However, names of this form do not need to be understood as denoting separate islands; compare South Isle and North Isle on Mousa, separated by a declivity crossing the island, much as Fetlar is dissected by two deep dips, though neither is so striking on the map as Mousa’s — and the Funzie Girt (see immediately below) does not truly shadow either of them. The Mousa names are interpretable as ‘north/south part of the isle’. On the other hand, the North and South Isles of Gletness are true separate islands. For the division of Fetlar into two groups of five scattalds, see Lowe (1988 II, 278, Fig. 53) and, somewhat differently, Stewart (1968, 175). This does not sit easily with Jakobsen’s observation from his stay on Fetlar in the 1890s (1897, 117) that an old woman ‘informed me, that she had been told by her grand parents, that the island … had once been divided into three separate districts, each with its own ting or law-court’, Herra being one. [Scattald: a unit of rough upland grazing (Smith 1984; Coull 2003).]


4. Funzie is a township (Feinzie, 1578–79, SD 260), but there is no individual croft of this name. For some discussion of the place’s farming history, see Thomson (1970, 176), who suggests nevertheless that the place originated as a single farm of that name. His article does not mention the Funzie Girt. Jakobsen (1936, 175) guardedly equates the place-name with Funningur on Eysturoy in the Faroe Islands, but that does not look right.
unprecedented’, echoing mildly the blunter words of Jakobsen (1936, 118) about earlier proposals: ‘... the explanations hitherto offered are useless.’ Johnston (1892, 110) had toyed with a link with Icelandic *fitla* ‘to touch lightly’. Edmondston (1866b, 150) had attributed to P. A. Munch a connection with Old Norse *fótr* ‘leg or foot’ and *laer* ‘thigh’ (cf. Munch 1875, 153–154; Taylor 1954, 118), ‘from a fanciful resemblance in the shape of the island to a human thigh’, according to Dasent in his introduction to his translation of Orkneyinga saga (1894, viii). Edmondston mentions various other similarities to words in Scandinavian languages with proper scepticism. I assume that such ideas are the ones diplomatically anonymized and panned by Jakobsen.5

Haswell-Smith’s apparently preferred suggestion (2004, 473) is followed by the author of the page about Fetlar (2011) on the Undiscovered Scotland website6 in suggesting that the name comes ‘from the Old Norse for prosperous or fat land’. But the earliest spellings, to which we now turn, do not support derivation from Old Norse *feitr* ‘fat’.7

The textual evidence
The textual evidence from the Middle Ages is sparse, but appears as follows:

In poetry
References follow the edition Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages.

5. Edmondston (1866b, 150):

... said to have been anciently written Foetilor and Fotilara, and, according to Munch, Foetalar, and Fétélaa, and Fotlara. In Norse, Foti means a foot, and Laer the thigh; Leir is clay or mud (argilla). Fótilagr is short-legged. Fotul, or Fetill, a band to bind with, a fettle. ... (151) Also, in Norse, is a word Fidtlur, explained by [Óskar] Haldorsson as “Tricke, Ililde, Forvikling’... entangling or fettering. All this, however, is very doubtful. It has been suggested to me that this island was formerly ‘Fedorsoy’ – i.e. ‘Theodore’s Island.’ For more on the post-literary attested name-forms, see below.

The material in glossaries of Shetland vocabulary reveals nothing that is likely to have a bearing on the etymology of Fetlar except insofar as it continues Old Norse. Edmonston (1866a, 30–33) records *faittle* ‘to wind a band around an object’, *fettle* ‘a horse-girth made of straw, a straw-rope’, *feytlins* ‘the skin from the legs of an ox, of which “rivlins” [*rawhide sandals*, RC] are made,’ and *fittl* ‘to take short steps in walking’. Stout (1914, 43) has *fettle* ‘bearing-band’, which in the applications of this form noted by both authors is clearly from the singular of Old Norse fetlar.


7. A number of works on Scottish place-names, or on British names more generally, which might have included Fetlar are silent about it: Darton 1994, Nicolaisen 2001, Room 2003.

*fætilǫr* (normalised *Fetilǫr*) c.1300 (A)

The text is believed to have been compiled c.1200, and the only significant manuscript is AM 748 1 b 4° (A), c.1300–25. *pula*, plural *pulur*: a versified catalogue (from about 1200) of poetic terms, in the case of *Pul Eyja* terms for islands. *Pul Eyja* 4 contains mostly Norwegian names, but also includes three from Shetland.

<æ> in this MS occurs for both historic [e] and [æː], the latter representing the i-mutation of <á>. The metre of the *þula* requires that the vowels in the name are short, with so-called resolution of the first two syllables, i.e. two short syllables functioning as the metrical equivalent as one long.¹

Note also:


(i)*fetla firði* (normalised (i) *Fetlafirði*) c.1250–1300 (Holm2)

The form (confirmed in other MSS) is dative singular, implying a nominative form *Fetlafjǫrðr*.

*Sigv Vikv* 12, composed in the early eleventh century, is quoted within a narrative of raids on southern Europe in two related works by Snorri Sturluson (died 1241): *The Separate Saga of S. Óláfr* and his great compilation *Heimskringla*. The name also occurs in the preceding prose. The oldest MS. of the *Separate Saga* is Holm perg 2 4o (Holm2, c.1250–1300), while for most of *Heimskringla* seventeenth-century paper transcripts of Kringla constitute the best witness, since the medieval MSS only survive in small fragments.

*(vestr i)* *Fetlafjörð* is also found in a corresponding narrative in the saga-compilation *Fagrskinna* (c.1220; main MS Oslo University Library 371 fol⁸ (Fsk B⁸, c.1700, fol.40v; ed. Finnur Jónsson 1902–03, 143). Sigv Vikv 12 is not cited, but other verses from the poem are, and the compiler may well have known this one.

This is a (the only) certain toponymic occurrence of *fetill*. It appears in a very early (11th-century) Old Norse verse, though the scholarly tradition

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¹. I am indebted to Professor Kari Ellen Gade for confirming this point through the good offices of Professor Diana Whaley.

². þaðan for hann vestr i Fetlafjörð oc atte þar orrastu hina tolfto ‘from there he went west to F. and had the twelfth battle there’.
does not associate it with Fetlar, not least because the word is compounded with *fjǫrðr* ‘sea inlet, firth’,\(^{10}\) and *fjǫrðr* ‘sea inlet, firth’ does not match the topography of Fetlar. Moreover, and crucially, the narrative sequence in both poem and sagas points to a much more southerly location, as we shall see. Despite this, the existence of this name is helpful in establishing that the word may appear as the qualifying element in a place-name and, if the place could be identified, it might help in establishing what kind of topography (if any) it denoted. In its narrative context, a numbered sequence of coastal military engagements in Europe (here the twelfth), it has been taken to be the major arm of the sea called *a Ría de Betanzos* (‘the firth of Betanzos’) in Galicia (e.g. Finlay 2003, 314 (index); Jesch 2012, stanza 12, line 3, citing Johnsen 1916, 16–17; probably not France as suggested by Finnur Jónsson 1902–03, 408, and Taylor 1954, 118). At the head of this inlet is Betanzos, identified as the Roman town of Flauvium Brigantium. Scrutiny of Google Earth images has not led me to identify any feature that suggests the reason for the Norse name; but see further below.

In prose

*Magnúss saga skemmri* (‘The shorter saga of Magnús’) chapter 20 (ed. Finnbogi Guðmundsson 1965, 328)

*(norðan of)* fetilár c.1400 (235)

The saga of St Magnus of Orkney probably originated at the end of the twelfth century and the ‘short’ version is preserved in AM 235 fol. (235, c.1400,\(^{11}\) fol.10ra). The phrase is sometimes cited as *af* (‘from’) *Fetilár*, but the photographic image of the page on the *Skaldic Poetry* and *Handrit* websites shows clearly that the preposition is *of* (‘over, through’). *Af* would require the dative case, which renders the phrase as transmitted problematic because an indication of the dative case of a recognisable noun is lacking. *Of* may take the accusative, which, if a suggestion I make two paragraphs below is accepted, is unproblematic.

The *<e>* generally indicates a short vowel in this manuscript, but it might in theory represent long [e:]. This would however not allow an interpretation of *fetilár* in any of the languages mentioned in this paper, and would be

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10. Fetlar is separated from neighbouring Yell by seaways with the Norse-derived name-element *sound* (*<* sund) and the two major inlets in the island itself are named with the Norse-derived *wick* (*<* vík). It has no *fjǫrðr*.

11. So most sources, though the *Skaldic Poetry* website gives c.1275–1300.

12. [https://handrit.is/en/manuscript/imaging/da/AM02-0235#page/9v++(22+of+140)/mode/2up](https://handrit.is/en/manuscript/imaging/da/AM02-0235#page/9v++(22+of+140)/mode/2up).
inconsistent with the point about the metre of the þula explained above. The significance of the apparent stroke on the <a> is not fully clear. If it is authentic and not an error, and if it indicates vowel length, which seems inescapable but highly unusual in this manuscript, it suggests that the second element of the island name might be the plural of lá f. ‘the line of shoal water along the shore, edged by the surf’ (Cleasby - Vigfusson; so also in Modern Icelandic (Zoëga, s.v.)). Of fetilár would thus mean ‘across the ... lines of shoal water’; for a further possibility involving á f. ‘river’, see below.

Note that

Orkneyinga saga (‘The saga of the Orkneymen’) chapter 57 (ed. Finnbogi Guðmundsson 1965, 126 and n. 2) makes reference to the Faroe Islands at the corresponding point:

ór Færeyjum

Magnúss saga lengri (‘The longer saga of Magnús’) chapter 34 (ed. Finnbogi Guðmundsson 1965, 377) makes a more general reference to Shetland at the corresponding point:

af Hjaltlandi

Magnúss saga skemmri chapter 20, on the other hand, has Fetilár. Taking into account the relative geographical salience of the three named places, this would appear to be the lectio difficilior and is accepted here as an authentic medieval reference to Fetlar.

In pre-1588 non-literary texts

Documents are in Scots unless stated otherwise.

Fotolare 1490 Diplomatarium Norvegicum [DN] VIII, no. 426, variants Søtalare, Søthalar; in Norwegian. [This is transcribed Føtalar 1490 Shetland Documents [SD] 32, from a certified copy (vidisse) of a document of 1516, translated into English, but names and terms of art are diplomatic.]

Given the literary records cited above and the evidence that follows, it is probably safe to regard the <ø> in this form as anomalous. Perhaps it is due to local labialisation after initial [f], as in Faroese, or perhaps it arises through a sequence of scribal reinterpretations <æ> >> <œ> >> <ø>.

Fetlar 1554 [copy dated 1624] SD 98
Fetler 1554 SD 99
Fetlar, Fetler 1558 SD 112
Fatler [x 3] 1560 SD 123
Vettelo, Vetelloe 1562, Staatsarchiv Bremen; correspondence in Low German preceding SD 140 and cited in a note to that document; <v> is a Low German
representation of /f/

Fetlo 1563 SD 140; original in Low German; as with the previous item, the indigenous name is clearly reduced and compounded with Middle Low German ô ‘island’

Fetlare 1563 SD 183, 1572 SD 193, 1576, 1578 Stipends of ministers (SD appendix 5)

Fetlair 1560s Books of Assumption (SD appendix 4) 132r, 1576 Stipends of ministers (SD appendix 5), 1577 SD 237 11v, 13r, 14r, 16v, 17r, 19v, 20r, 20v, 21r [otherwise occasionally Fetlar], 1587 Shetland Documents II 102

Fettlar 1560s Books of Assumption (SD appendix 4) 134v [otherwise Fetlar]

Fetelaa 1575 SD 212; in Danish ‘with one or two Norwegianisms’

Other mentions, including some interpretations as opposed to sourced citations, include

Faetilör, as cited by Goudie (1892–96, 307)
faetilø˛r [sic], as cited by Jakobsen (1936, 127), apparently knowing Pul Eyja 4/3

Fotlara, or Pheodor-øy 1582 George Buchanan, Rerum Scoticarum Historia, Book I, 47. Buchanan apparently knew of the spelling in DN VIII 426 (above), but the source of the alternative is unknown. Edmondston (1866b, 151) clearly knew this form, mentioning an anonymous suggestion made to him that it represented Theodore.

Pheodor Øy 1665 Blaeu’s map, following Buchanan13

Fetlor 1703 Martin Martin, A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland

The most frequently encountered ancient spelling of the name outside academic literature is Fætilar. This, so far as I can tell, was first used by Anderson (1873, Preface), but I do not know on what authority. It is the sole form cited by Field (1980, 71) and it is the form used in some versions of Wikipedia. For example, Gaelic Wikipedia says ‘Lochlannais/Nornais [sic for Nòrnais]: Fætilar’. But Faroese Wikipedia offers Føtilør (1490), which is not a correctly cited form.14 The variety of spellings in the record led Taylor (1954, 118) to suggest pre-Norse origin and ‘that there may never have been any one definite ON form’. This is too pessimistic.

13. These aberrant forms in <Ph->, and a few similar ones with <F->, are explained by Stewart (1968, 175) as possibly from [Old Norse] foeda ‘food’ + øy ‘island’, but that does not suit forms with medial <r>.

14. Also a variant of an etymology mentioned above which is not supported by the record: ‘Navnið er helst av piktiskum uppruna, men kann eisini vera norrønt “Fetaland” i týdningsnum “fitilendi”.’ (‘The name is probably of Pictish origin, but can also be Norse “Fetaland” in the sense “fat pasture” [a technical term of husbandry in the Faroe Islands, RC].’)
Discussion

As we have seen, the current consensus is that, despite the heavily Scandinavian cultural context and despite its superficial appearance, the name is ‘pre-Scandinavian’ or ‘pre-Norse’. However, Gammeltoft (2005b, 259; 2010, 19) makes, in passing, an appropriately qualified claim that deserves deeper analysis, namely that Unst, Yell and Fetlar ‘seem to be adaptations of Pictish names to Old Norse.’ It appears that he is using ‘Pictish’ as a default equivalent of ‘pre-Scandinavian’, but there is reason to be wary.

It is now widely accepted that Pictish was a P-Celtic language which had absorbed some toponymy from an earlier, unidentified, substrate (Forsyth 1997, especially 21–22). Pictland may or may not have extended as far north as Shetland; there seems to be no corroborative linguistic evidence that it did, and much would therefore hinge on whether it is defensible to equate the bearers of the broch-building culture or the carvers of the ‘Pictish’ stones with speakers of the Pictish language. But if Pictish shared key phonological features with Brittonic, it would follow that it had no inherited initial /f-/.

Such a phome develops in Brittonic from Proto-Celtic initial sequences */sp-/* /sr-/. These developments occur no later than the second half of the sixth century (Jackson 1953, 526, 528). The new pronunciations might therefore have been heard in the mid-first millennium in Brittonic-speaking territory but, even it had been, the appearance of unlenited intervocalic /t/ in early spellings of Fetlar rules out a Brittonic-type, or indeed a Gaelic-type, etymology without special pleading. It is therefore improbable that Fetlar is of any kind of Celtic origin unless that Celtic was of an untypical and undocumented type; and indeed there is no obvious etymology to be gained out of a form *fet-/*fed- with P-Celtic initial *s + consonant, as can be judged from the comprehensive list of toponymic elements discussed by James (2019) or from Continental Celtic place-names (Falileyev 2010). In addition, if early Pictish/P-Celtic had absorbed an unknown earlier toponymy, any earlier name with initial /f-/ would not have survived adaptation intact.

The problem of the initial consonant is all the more acute because not one of the other languages which, however implausibly, have been considered candidates for involvement in the prehistoric toponymy of Britain had an initial /f/. That rules out not only Proto-Indo-European or Proto-Celtic and their immediate descendants, but also North-West Semitic (Gzella 2011, 432–35) and its daughters (Phoenician and Punic), and Pre-Basque (Trask 1997, 125–28, 132); that is, neither Old European nor Vennemann’s hypothesised

15. Forcus on the Drosten/St Vigeans 1 ‘Pictish’ symbol stone is evidently Celtic, indeed Gaelic, with <f> for proto-Celtic */w-/, as has long been established (Jackson 1956, 140; Clancy 1993 and 2017).
'Semitidic' and 'Vasconic' substrates can be of any help (Vennemann 2003), and the hypothetical Mediterranean sailors of Coates (2012) cannot have contributed the name.

Unless we continue to favour attribution to an unknown source, or settle for complete agnosticism, it seems that we must come back to Old Scandinavian, which did indeed have initial /f-/s. We might bear in mind that North Germanic had no native initial */p-/, and that that phoneme appears only in loanwords. Might [f] have been a very early attempt to render the [p] of some other language? Proto-Celtic */p/ is generally believed to have passed through a stage [ɸ], a voiceless bilabial fricative (see for example Lewis and Pedersen 1961, 26), which has evident articulatory and perceptual affinities with labiodental [f]. But, with a few special caveats, that change and the subsequent general loss of the fricative were complete in both branches of insular Celtic in prehistoric times (Thurneysen 1946, 138–39; Jackson 1953, 394). It is impossible to envisage any scenario in which such an early Celtic development could have been heard by speakers of North Germanic/Old Scandinavian in a Shetland colonised by them in the eighth century. Since North Germanic had no native /p/ (see above), one might contemplate a very early adaptation of a P-Celtic (i.e. here Pictish) [p] by phoneme substitution. But there is no solid linguistic evidence for P-Celtic Pictish north of the southern part of Sutherland (as witness the three lexical maps in Nicolaisen 1996; also Jackson 1956, 149–53). In any case, that most characteristic of Pictish toponymic elements, pett ‘share, piece’ (or a borrowing of it into other languages), which might excite attention here as a possible source for Fet-, has not been found to occur in an island name. Jakobsen (1936, 169–73) noted a few local names in Pett- in Shetland. He believed the word derives from the name of the Picts and implied that folk memory has associated the word for the possible older inhabitants with trolls or other supernatural beings present in the landscape. It follows from that that local names of the type Petta-X are Norse, because X is invariably a Norse generic, and that they mean something like ‘trolls' X’. Whatever the truth about this anthropologically interesting matter, the existence of such names definitively removes the possibility that the island name can have descended from a Celtic form with initial /p-/. It is safe to say that Fetlar cannot be Pictish, nor P-Celtic more generally.

Steps forward?

A Scandinavian solution may be possible after all.

The name as first transmitted has three syllables. The many records clearly suggest that the first syllable contained an unrounded mid to low front vowel. The conventions used in writing Old Norse allow the possibility that
where <æ> or <e> appear in the first syllable they might be for a long mid-low front vowel of the type [εː]; or for a short high-mid vowel of the type [e] (which seems required by the weight of the manuscript and modern phonetic evidence alongside the metrical evidence for a short vowel); or conceivably [œː], i.e. a reflex of i-mutated [ɔː] (Gordon, Taylor 1957, 266–67). There is one (Norwegian) record (Føtalare in 1490) suggesting a rounded vowel. The second vowel is [i]. The third is either a front mid rounded vowel whose length cannot be ascertained, [õ], or else [a]. The poetic record favours [õ] or the like; in the prose record we find [a]. The early-modern record also appears to favour [a], but it is possible that <a>-spellings of this period represent local reductions of an [õ]-like vowel to schwa. The consonant frame is completely consistent [f…t…l…r], with minor adjustments arising only in a Low German documentary context.

It seems inescapable that, for whatever reason, the first element is fetill ‘strap’.16 Most previous commentators have not taken into consideration that the final syllable as transmitted does not necessarily represent the Old Norse plural suffix -ar. But Lindqvist (2015, 51) describes the form in Magnúss saga skemmri (fetilár) as ‘looking like a compound’. The most obvious such compound would be fetil-ár ‘strap rivers’. It is not clear to me in what sense the main south-flowing burns of Fetlar, those of Northdale, Feal and Aith, might be viewed as strap-like, unless straightness was an essential characteristic of fetilár; but in any case such a solution requires metonymy: a description of watercourses being applied as the name of the island which contains them.

Another possible solution which is not structurally difficult, but which offers an onomastic difficulty instead, is that the name represents the singular fetill + (following the poetic record) örr ‘scar’. That would suggest that the island is named by metonymy from (presumably) the Funzie Girt, itself understood metaphorically as the scar in the landscape in the form of a strap. This solution respects the lectio difficilior of the possible second element and the phonology implied by the earliest spelling, but introduces the difficulties that (1) so far as I know, neither fetill nor örr has otherwise been found in toponymic use in the Atlantic islands and (2) that early Norse toponymy is not noted for being metaphorical except in the sense that, as in other Germanic languages, some widespread and general landform words such as hryggr ‘back; ridge’ or hals ‘neck; pass’ are applications of body-part terms. These analogies may be enough to help the case, but I know of no other walls being named as

16. The word fetill is evidenced in the byname of Þorbiǫrn fetill in one manuscript of Ectors saga (1713). Kalinke (2012, 86, note 38) would prefer to normalise the word to fætill for MS-internal consistency, but Ordbog over det norrøne prosasprog, as cited in her article, opts for fetill.
if they were scars (?in the form of raised welts). The suggestion might also gain credibility if the unique spelling with a final <-e>, recorded in a legal document at the late date of 1490, could be interpreted as the otherwise absent reflex of ey ‘island’. However that does not seem to be defensible because <-e> for this element is otherwise unknown in Shetland.

A further and still less attractive metonymic solution might be that the second element is ögr ‘inlet, small bay or creek’; the loss of a voiced fricative representable by <g> in the Old Norse record would not be particularly remarkable from a general phonetic perspective, but I know of no analogy in Norse for this. The word is found in a local name in western Iceland: í Ögri, Ögrs-vatn (Cleasby, Vigfusson 1957, s.v.). But ‘strap inlet’ creates problems of its own, of both interpretation (as an island name) and identification (of the source of the metonym), although the point at which the Funzie Girt in its prime descended to the small bay at Houbie might be suggestive.

Fourthly, we might also consider vörr ‘fenced-in landing-place’ as the second element (Cleasby, Vigfusson 1957, s.v.), with <v> lost before a rounded vowel (Gordon, Taylor 1957, 279), but again a metonymic understanding of such a name (as ‘island with such a landing-place’) is required. This is evidently a topographical word, but I have not found it in toponymic use in Old Norse. If the spelling with <á> in the prose of Magnúss saga skemmri is the one to be taken seriously, then the best solution might be that the island-name is for *fetil-lár ‘strap shoals’, perhaps ‘shoals of a linear form’, used metonymically as a name for the island bordered by shoals showing unusual linearity. Of Fetilár in the saga is then unproblematically ‘over or through such shoals (used as the island name)’; in the accusative plural form. That said, there is no bathymetric evidence of any such shallows around Fetlar that differ in kind from those around the other islands of Shetland. However there is a long (over one kilometre) shallowly shelving sea floor in the north-west (landward) sector of Fetlar’s largest inlet, the Wick of Tresta on the south side of the island. Perhaps it is not too much to see the name as alluding to the curving ‘strap’ of partly vegetated dunes which separate these shallows from the freshwater lake Papil Water (see image).18

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17. The farm Ögur still exists, on the southern shore of Ísaþjardardjúp in the north-west of the island, close to a distinct small bay (Google Earth).
18. Laar in modern Shetland means ‘breeze’ (Dictionary of the Scots language), irrelevant here.
It is a large step, but if it could be concluded that *fetill* was, originally metaphorically, applied to a tombolo or a sand-bar of any description, then ‘shallows by the tombolo or sand-bar’ is not too fanciful a literal description of the landward end of the Wick of Tresta, though we still need to acknowledge a metonymic application of that description as the name of the island. But if that is an acceptable solution, the intriguing possibility arises that the *Fetlafjörðr* mentioned by Sigvatr Þórðarson can understood as ‘sea inlet marked with a tombolo or sand-bar’. A classic instance of a feature describable in this way is the Ría de Arousa, the firth in Galicia that allows the closest sea approach to Santiago de Compostela (Martínez-Graña et al. 2017). Near its entrance, on its southern side, is *O Vao* ‘the ford’ in Galician, known touristically as the site of the *Praia da Lanzada*, a large tombolo attaching the island-like peninsula on which the town of O Grove sits to the mainland of Pontevedra province. Such a location would not do any harm to the sequence of battles set out by Sigvatr in *Víkingarvísur*.

Arne Kruse (2005, 143) correctly notes that *Fetlar* is among those northern and western Scottish island names which ‘... are unusual because they are ... among the very few island names in the Norse colonies without the generic -ey, and semantically they are atypical because they do not have a content which instantly relates the island to a location, shape or ownership in the form of a personal name.’ I acknowledge that each of the tentative suggestions just offered is partly atypical in these respects, especially where there is an appeal to metonymy, which amounts to a lack of ‘instant relation’ because it is a trope. But the conclusion I offer is that, whilst they each present difficulties, whether of form, chronology or literal applicability to the place, these are not collectively so great as to rule out the phonologically based possibility that the name of Fetlar is Scandinavian in origin. On the other hand it cannot, I submit,

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19. *Tombolo* ‘a bar or spit of sand or shingle joining an island to the mainland’ (OED).
be P-Celtic, and no other possibility seems thinkable. If it is a Scandinavian reinterpretation of an earlier name, there are insuperable phonological obstacles to identifying the language in which any such name was formulated.

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Map: The Funzie Girt, which curves round on a hillside on the west side of Vord Hill, petering out in the south.
1. Introduction

This paper develops research on the place-names of Pittenweem and Anstruther Wester published in Vol. 3 of Taylor and Márkus’s outstanding *Place-Names of Fife* (Taylor and Márkus 2009, 56–83 and 387–401), introducing significant new sources of toponymic material for this area: 435 original feu charters issued by the prior/commendator of Pittenweem between 1532 and 1567 and several field maps drawn for the Pittenweem and Anstruther Wester Sea Box Societies in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.

For their study of Pittenweem place-names, Taylor and Márkus drew substantially on the feu charters edited in the *Registers of the Great Seal of Scotland* (*RMS*). Invaluable as this source is, it has limitations. Firstly, the charters related to Pittenweem are crown confirmations of only a fraction of a myriad of lost originals. Secondly, the texts of the charters are often heavily abridged and their form modified to fit a fairly rigid template. The ‘new’ source material, not available to Taylor and Markus, consists of 435 original feu charters issued between 1532 and 1567, only a handful of which have left a trace in the *RMS* collection. They are contained in two cartularies from Pittenweem Priory which, to date, have not been published or even systematically described. As well as preserving copies of the burgh charters of Pittenweem dated 1541 (NRS C2/28 and C2/31, Pryde 1965, no. 56 and no. 206) and Anstruther Wester dated 1547 (NRS RH9/11/1, Pryde 1965, no. 219), these registers provide a wealth of information about the priory’s endowment, about the physical, demographic and economic state of the burghs of Pittenweem and Anstruther Wester and about the general process of setting church lands in feu-ferm. Since the documents deal principally with land and property, they incorporate a large number of place-names (many now obsolete).

The richness of the toponymic material contained in the charters is enhanced by the survival of a number of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century maps drawn for the Pittenweem and West Anstruther Sea Box Societies, who acquired much of the burgh lands in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Sea Box Societies raised funds by taxing shipmasters for each voyage made, hiring out mort cloths, renting out land and gathering interest upon loans. The money was used to help seamen and their families during periods of distress. Their records are currently lodged with their lawyers Thorntons Ltd., 1 St Andrews Road, Anstruther KY10 3HA, who have kindly allowed me to access and use their
material. Their field maps constitute a valuable onomastic resource, capturing, as they do, a good deal of the ancient field boundaries and strip system, and recording many of the now obsolete field-names.

Fig. 1 Part of Pittenweem Sea Box 1 (1826)

Three of the Sea Box maps are particularly useful for our purposes and we shall refer to them as Sea Box 1, Sea Box 2 and Sea Box 3. Map 1 (1826) presents only a small number of place-names but predates most nineteenth-century adjustments to field boundaries. Maps 2 and 3 are from the middle of the twentieth century and are cartographic transpositions of material drawn from a multiplicity of earlier maps. While providing a large number of field names, they bear the mark of modern re-groupings of fields.

2. The registers of Pittenweem priory
Pittenweem Priory did not figure in the ‘big league’ of Augustinian houses
comprising such abbeys as Holyrood, St Andrews and Scone. Its complement of regular clergy (first monks, later canons) never rose above nine, which placed it roughly on a par with Inchcolm Abbey further up the Forth. Unlike Inchcolm, however, Pittenweem has been largely ignored by historians, principally, we might suppose, because of its unusual history (Lodge, forthcoming). For the first century and a half of its life (c.1143–c.1300), the monastic establishment in Pittenweem was simply a *caput* manor serving a Cluniac (later Benedictine) priory on the Isle of May, which was itself a minor daughter house of the abbey of Reading (Berkshire, England). At the turn of the fourteenth century, May Priory was transferred to the Augustinians in St Andrews and the Reading monks abandoned the island. The May was not repopulated with canons from St Andrews, but Pittenweem continued in its traditional manorial function, now sending revenues to St Andrews instead of to the May. It was only in the middle of the fifteenth century that Pittenweem became host to a living community of its own, under the auspices of such powerful prelates as James Kennedy (bishop of St Andrews 1440–1465) and Andrew Forman (bishop of Moray 1501–1514, archbishop of St Andrews 1514–1521). It retained this role for about a hundred years, until the Scottish Reformation (1560), after which the priory church was abandoned and the community died out.

The transfer of ownership from Reading to St Andrews early in the fourteenth century entailed a switch in the priory’s monastic observance from the Benedictine to the Augustinian rule. This may have affected the management of its lands, since, unlike the Benedictines, the Augustinians did not have manual labour (tilling the soil) among their obligations. Their lands were leased to lay folk who had to pay rentals in money or in kind. The parcels of land alienated in the sixteenth century were not, therefore, new and in many cases may have been very old. During most of the priory’s life, records pertaining specifically to the establishment in Pittenweem, are sparse. However, towards the end the situation improves. The last prior, John Roule, began alienating the priory lands in 1532 and the process continued after his forced resignation twenty years later, under the aegis of the commendator James Stewart, future earl of Moray and regent of Scotland. Spanning the period 1532–1567, 435 feu charters have survived in two cartularies:

1. 1532–1554, the *Registrum Cartarum de Pittenweem* (St Andrews University Library, ms. 37521)


(These are referred to below as *Pitt. Reg. I* and *Pitt. Reg. II*, respectively.)
Pitt. Reg. I contains 265 charters, almost all of them in Latin, while Pitt. Reg II contains 170, most written in Latin until 1560 and thereafter in Scots. Fifty-three of the charters in Pitt. Reg. II are copies of documents issued earlier by John Roule, contained in Pitt. Reg. I. Six others, bound into the beginning of the Pittenweem section of the book (fols 199v–206), pertain to places other than Pittenweem and were evidently added later. Further copies of a number of these charters have recently been discovered in the Vatican Archives by Dr Alan Macquarrie, who kindly made certain ones available. These are referred to below by the abbreviation ASV, Reg. Supp. (Archivum Secretum Vaticanum, Registra Supplicationum).

Most of the microtoponyms in the Pittenweem charters are now obsolete and the more short-lived of them may have been descriptive terms rather than names. However, a valuable feature of these documents is the precision with which all the places named are identified. At an initial stage, the charters define each tenement according to the general vicinity in which it is found. In town this normally involves a street name or some distinctive landmark. Out of town it involves a local landmark or field name. At a second stage within the general vicinity each holding is defined in relation to its neighbours on all four sides. For example:

[...] unum ortum eiusdem alibi jacen. prope fontem Sancte Marie Magdalene, inter terras Johannis Gibsoun ex occidentali, ortum quondam David Greg ex australi, ortum Johannis Wanderstoun ex boreali, lie waist intermedia, et ortum quondam Johannis Rost ex orientali partibus¹

(Pitt. Reg. I, p. 286)

The fact that a high proportion of the priory’s landholdings were feued at this time means that, by fitting them together with their neighbours like pieces in a jigsaw, we can pin particular tenements reasonably accurately to positions on the ground, even when topographical reference is vague. We are helped in this by the fact that the East Neuk of Fife did not undergo major urban and industrial development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The medieval footprint is still traceable to quite a high degree in the modern urban as well as rural landscape.

¹. ‘[...] a garden of the same [tenement] lying elsewhere, near the well of Mary Magdalene, between the lands of John Gibson to the west, the garden of the late David Greg to the south, the garden of John Wanderston on the north, with the wasteland in between, and the garden of the late John Rost to the east.’
3. THE PRIORY’S ENDOWMENT OF LANDS

Pittenweem priory's endowment of lands and property straddled the Forth estuary: East Lothian (Mayshiel, Barro, Belhaven), Perth and Angus (Easter and Wester Rhynd, Arbroath Croft) and Fife (May Island, Crail Croft, Lingo, Fallside, Pittottar, Grangemuir, Cairnbriggs, Pittenweem and Anstruther Wester) (Duncan 1956–57). The vills of Pittenweem and Anstruther Wester were granted to the
monks of May in David I’s initial endowment of the priory in 1143, along with 600 ha. of the surrounding agricultural land bounded in the south by the sea and in the north by the Dreel Burn, which runs roughly west-east from Balcaskie to Anstruther. Ecclesiastically, Pittenweem found itself in the medieval parish of Anstruther Wester. The modern parish of Pittenweem was carved out of the medieval parish of Anstruther Wester in 1633 and rationalised in 1891.

Feudally, the vill of Anstruther Wester was a territorialum within the prior’s dominium of Pittenweem. This domain was roughly coterminous with the medieval parish of Anstruther Wester, supplemented by the vill of Inverie (modern St Monans) and by certain farms (Greendykes and Tarbreakes) situated contentiously close to the border with the parish of Abercrombie (the modern parish of St Monans). The vill of Pittenweem was not granted a charter until the fifteenth century but it enjoyed ‘semi-burgal status’ from the time of David I’s initial endowment of May Priory in c. 1143 (Barrow 1971, 258–59).

In order to keep the present study to an acceptable length, we will limit its scope to place-names in the modern parish of Pittenweem, as defined in PNF 3, 389. The charters contain a similar wealth of material for the modern parish of Anstruther Wester, not dealt with here.

Roy’s map of 1747 gives an idea of the immediate hinterland of Pittenweem as it was before the changes of the industrial era. In particular, it shows the

Fig. 3 The Modern Parish of Pittenweem

![Figure 3](image-url)
Anstruther-St Monans road passing through the centre of Pittenweem, along Marygate and the High Street. The modern road (A917) skirts the north side of the town via James Street as far as Tollcross, where it connects with the turnpike road to St Monans, opened in 1775.

In what follows we will look first at place-names within the town and then at those located in the surrounding lands. Manuscript page or folio references will be preceded by the date of the first attestation of the toponyms discussed.

4. Place-names within the burgh of Pittenweem

Pittenweem’s topography is dominated by the steep slopes and cliffs of the raised beach which follow the 15 m contour line (see Fig. 5) along the coast to the west and through the burgh itself. The charters refer frequently to the ‘heughs’ (Scots heuch ‘precipice, crag or cliff; a steep hill’) which occur along this line.

At the west end of the burgh, an area defined by the steep banks around the West Shore was known simply as the Heuch (1536, Pitt. Reg. I, p.9, 207, 222, 287 etc.). At the east end, the burgh’s most conspicuous natural feature was ‘St Fillan’s Cave’ situated in the ‘cave crag’ or Coifcrag/Coifcraig (1540, Pitt. Reg. I, p.34, 103 etc., Pitt. Reg. II, f.250v) (PNF 3, 392). The forms Coiffrig (1592, RMS v no. 2138) and Croftcraig (1592, RMS v no. 2144) were coined, in all likelihood, by later Edinburgh-based scribes unfamiliar with the local terrain. An eastward prolongation of ‘cave cliff’ was Corsheuch, the ‘steep slope of the cross’ (1541, Pitt. Reg. I, p.53, 225, 283, RMS v no. 2324, RMS vi no. 957). Since this place was
situated just below the monastic wall which overlooked the harbour, we may suppose that the prior had erected a stone cross in the section of the enclosure overlooking the cliff (Simon Taylor, pers. comm.). Just 50 m to the east of Corsheuch was Kilheuch ‘a steep hill, cliff associated with a kiln or kilns’ (PNF 3, 398), no doubt for smoking fish (1549, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 220, 265, Pitt. Reg. II, ff. 293, 293v, RMS v no. 2144, 2305, RMS vi no. 748). The element heuch re-appears at the town’s eastern boundary with Anstruther Wester denoting an area at the top of a cliff known as Heuchheid (1535–36, Pitt. Reg. II, f. 230, 1540, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 38, 53, 106, Pitt. Reg. II, f. 214v, RMS v no. 2144, 2167, 2317). This area is now known as Braehead (RMS v no. 2144). Confusingly, an area on the west side of the town known as West Braes is also referred to in the sixteenth century as Heuchheid (1592, RMS v no. 2167), and in our own day it too is occasionally called Braehead (Martin 2002, 38).

Within the vill of Pittenweem (G pett + G an + G uaimh ‘settlement of the cave’) (PNF 3, 400), a fishing settlement has probably existed along the shore from the Cave since time immemorial. In c. 1143, David I granted trading privileges which enabled the prior to establish a new town with quasi-burghal status on the raised beach above the shore, the object being to attract merchants and craftsmen who would boost the priory’s revenue. The street plan is typical of the new towns which developed in twelfth-century Scotland for purposes of

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*Fig. 5 Presumed Layout of the New Town and Manorial Enclosure*

![Map drawn by Douglas Speirs](image-url)
trade. Like a backbone, the axial main street, usually dignified as the High Street (*vicus principalis*), stretched from the tolbooth and/or church at one end to the burgh enclosure at the other. The medieval administration divided the town into the lower town ‘below the cliff’ (literally ‘below the rocks’) (*subtus rupes*) and the upper town or *superior pars* ‘above the cliff’ (*supra rupes*, occasionally *supra ripam* ‘above the shore’). Fifty charters in *Pitt. Reg. I* relate to the former and eighty to the latter.

The most ancient connection between the lower and upper towns was probably *Cove Wynd*, running from the East Shore past St Fillan’s Cave to the monastic chapel at the head of the High Street. Its earliest attested name is *Coifgait* (1538, *Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 18), with *Coiffwynd* appearing at the end of the century (1599, *RMS* vi no. 957). The charters refer frequently to the famous cave, with a sacred well in its innermost recess (*PNF* 3, 392). However, they consistently call it the *Fontem Sancte Marie Magdalene* (1541, *Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 60, 108, 212 etc.) and nowhere mention St Fillan. A local tradition situates this well in what is now a garden at 10–11 Cove Wynd (OS 25-inch (2nd edn revised c. 1893), Sheet 022.15, NO549025). Canmore (the National Monuments Record of Scotland) preserves the record of a watching brief at this property (ID 88925), which revealed in 1994 a passageway on the north elevation of the house that ran below an extension to the side of the steps in the wynd. Its investigation concluded that the original purpose of the passageway was simply for drainage around the house and down the wynd. The historical connection between St Fillan and Pittenweem has been carefully examined (Taylor 2001), but the saint’s association with the cave appears to be largely an invention of nineteenth-century antiquarians (Cook 1869).


Activity in the lower town (*subtus rupes*) focussed upon its three harbours, which Robert Sibbald described thus:

The nether part [of Pittenweem] towards the sea lyeth along from ye East to ye West Havens. There is another Haven called the Pan-Haven on the West part of ye Burgh.

(Sibbald 1682, 261)
These appear to correspond to the modern East Shore, Mid Shore and West Shore. The development of an artificial harbour in the ‘East Haven’ (modern East Shore) was first authorised by the royal charter of 1541 (Pitt. Reg I, p. 216) (Graham, 1968–9, 263). The new bulwark ‘of our harbour of Pittenweem’ (nostri portus de Petynwem) made it the most suitable for commercial traffic:

The east haven is the largest, and fit for ships of burden; having at no time below eight foot of water.

(Sibbald 1710/1803, 337)

It quickly gained a high reputation among seafarers (Hamilton Papers, t. II, p. 714). The modern Mid Shore is referred to in the later charters as portus occidentalis (1592, RMS v no. 2167, 1598, RMS vi no. 748) and Westhevin (1593, RMS v no. 2304). This area was associated with various ‘fish-houses’ used for the preservation/pickling/salting/barrelling of fish and for the storage of nets (Pitt. Reg. I, pp. 9 and 86). The modern West Shore, which Sibbald called Pan-Haven, he described as being ‘convenient for Boats, where they may be furnished with good Coal and Salt’ (Sibbald 1682, p. 264). A Pan Haven was also to be found at Crail (PNF 3, 222). The West Shore is dominated, as we have seen, by the Heuch, a term which could designate an opencast coal-working, as well as a crag or cliff. Six charters (Pitt. Reg. I, pp. 26, 39, 132, 137, 140, 203) refer to its harbour as the Quarrell Havin (‘quarry haven’), a borrowing from Anglo-Norman quarre/ quarrie (‘quarry, open-cast coal working’), which was semantically identical to certain uses of Sc heuch.

The prior had long controlled the local coal reserves and in several feu charters he retained rights to the ‘under-ground’ (NRS, GD62/2). Nine charters refer to the carbonario nostro de Petynweme, located in the Heuch close to the West Shore (Pitt. Reg. I, pp. 22, 24, 26, 39, 51, 137, 203, 277, 311). On the 1947 OS 1-inch map, this was still the site of the town’s coal-based gas-works. Adjacent to the coal-workings were salt pans belonging to Peter Strang (Pitt. Reg. I, pp. 22, 24, 39, 136, 311) and to the prior himself:

salinam, domum et granarium, vulgaliter [sic] our salt-pan-sett et houss-and-gyrnell; necnon unam cameram jacentem contigue cum lie girnell prope dictam salinam et lie Quarrell Havin ad austram et communem viam publicam ad boream infra dominio nostro de Pettinweme.


3. ‘our salt-pan set and house and store; also a room contiguous with the store near the said salt-pan, with Quarrel Haven to the south and the public road to the north within our domain of Pittenweem.’
PNF 3, 395 places Quarry Haven near the headland known as White Caple – Quhytcapul (Pitt. Reg. I, 1540, p. 104), Quhytecapill (Pitt. Reg. I, 1551, p. 286), Quhitecapill (Pitt. Reg. I, 1551, p. 307). Paula Martin places it close to ‘a bucket pot cut in the rocks beside the old swimming pool below the West Braes, and structural evidence of buildings on the cliff above’ (Martin 1999, 28). It is certain that there were salt pans on the White Caple side of the West Braes. Fields on this promontory bear the name Panshod (Sea Box map 3 and no. 29 below). However, the coastline here offers a less convenient and less sheltered place for a harbour than the West Shore (Pan-Haven/Quarrell-Havin).

Pittenweem was oriented both commercially and ecclesiastically more towards the east and the two Anstruther than towards the west and St Monans. The eastern entrance to the upper town (supra rupes) was situated at the east end of Marygate at the convergence of routes from Anstruther, Milton and the harbour. The East Port (portam orientalem, 1550, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 237) was a grandiose structure, consisting of ‘a fortified Tower, and an Arch, with steps to the top, across the street’ (Gordon 1875, 3, 123). The entrance to the town from the west was a more modest affair, situated at the end of a road known as Lydgait (1532, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 5, 18, 19 etc., 1554, Pitt. Reg. II, f. 215v). This name was no doubt lost (replaced by West Braes) after the construction of a new turnpike road to St Monans in 1775, but it survives in Haddington (East Lothian). It was attested in sixteenth-century Peebles (Scottish Borders) (Books of Assumption, p. 254), where later street plans have the variant form Ludgate (now Young Street) (Wood, 1823). Ludgate is widespread in England, most famously in London, but in Scotland it is found in Alloa (Clackmannanshire). Thoroughfares bearing the name Lydgait/Ludgate all seem to lie just outside the historical core of the town.

Etymologically, Lydgait/Ludgate is cognate with liggat/-et (OE hlid-geat, ‘swing-gate’), widely attested in English dialects (EPNS 36, 205) and in the Scottish dialects of Dumfries and Galloway (DOST). However, by the time of the Pittenweem charters, Lydgait had evidently undergone semantic reanalysis, for it designated primarily, not a gate, but a public road: communem viam regiam vocatam Lydgait (Pitt. Reg. I, p. 111). Here, the second element -gait seems to have its usual meaning of ‘a way or road’ (cf. Marygate), with any residual idea of a ‘gate’ being carried solely by the first element Lyd- (OE hlid ‘covering, opening, gate’). Perhaps we should gloss Pittenweem’s Lydgait as ‘Gate Street’ or ‘Gate Road’.

The route out of town to the north, towards the monastic farm at Grangemuir and to Carnbee, was via the Lon, also situated at the west end of the High Street. A loan was ‘a green cattle-track or grassy by-road, commonly diked in, as a passage for animals through arable land, park or orchard land or the like’ (DOST). The built-up section of this road, corresponding to the modern South
Loan, was known as Lonraw (1540, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 31). A raw was ‘a row of houses’ (PNF 5, 478). Further north, but still within the limits of the burgh, it became Northlon (1550, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 237, 239, RMS v no. 2144).

The general plan of the upper town (supra rupes) was dominated by the High Street running east-west from the monastic precinct to the modern Market Place. The tenements on the south side consisted mainly of orchards and gardens descending steeply to the lower town. The north side of the street was occupied by eight tenements each comprising a house and garden. Some of these have no corresponding feu charter, which may mean that by the 1530s they were already in freehold. The High Street tenements extended back to Rattoun Raw (var. Raton Raw, Rottoun Raw), a name found in numerous townships across Scotland denoting cheap or slummy streets, signifying more specifically ‘a rat-infested row of houses’ (PNF 3, 280, 285, and 482). The high walls along the south side of Routine Row are the ‘heid dykes’ that historically formed the town’s perimeter, beyond which people felt free to discard rubbish. The modern form Routine Row springs, presumably, from a desire to dignify the insalubrious origins of the name.

Along the north side of Routine Row was a line of houses known as Nort Raw, (var. Nor Raw, North Raw) (1540, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 29), one of which had a killogie (‘kiln-pot’) / kyll and cobill (‘kiln and vat’) for malting (Pitt. Reg. I, p. 198, 285). Its east end opened on to Maregait (var. Mariegaitt, Mariegait, Mariegait) (1541, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 93), which had eight or nine tenements with gardens to the rear and looked south towards the priory enclosure and its ‘great north gate’ (magna borealis janua nostri monasterii) (Pitt. Reg. I, p. 323). The charters refer frequently to the walls of the monastery and to the cemetery but say nothing of the buildings within the precinct before the priory’s dissolution in 1588, presumably because the feuing of these buildings was forbidden. At the junction of Nort Raw and Maregait, was the Wynd (1546–47, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 183) or Lady Wynd (1593, RMS v no. 2305), which led north to two of the town’s suburban crofts. An open space at this junction, known as the Commountie (1558–59, Pitt. Reg. II, f. 199), was probably the site of the town’s medieval market place. The market cross (crucem foralem) authorised by the charter of 1541 (Pitt. Reg. I, p. 331) originally stood in this area, to be subsequently moved to its present position outside the parish kirk. It is not known for sure whether Marygate and Lady Wynd commemorated Mary the Virgin or Mary Magdalene. We note, however, that one of the town’s two annual markets was held on the feast of St Mary Magdalene (July 22) and that she was culted in the holy well in the Cave.

4. Lady in Scottish place-names usually refers to Mary the Virgin (Hough 2009).
5. Place-names outwith the burgh

The priory lands covered the whole area between the Dreel Burn and the sea, from the Abercrombie/St Monans boundary in the west to Anstruther Wester in the east. Pittenweem’s western boundary was situated, at its south end, on the Forth coast close to Coal Farm, west of St Monan’s Well. Traces of the well are still visible above ground, though the name has been replaced, rather implausibly, by Shepherd’s Well (PNF 3, 280 and 5, 482). Its eastern boundary was marked by a stone cross – *Summam Crucem* (1540, *Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 34 etc.), *Hie Croce* (1592, *RMS* v no. 2138), *Crucem Lapideam* (1554, *Pitt. Reg. II*, f. 214v, 1592, *RMS* v no. 2144) – located to the east of Braehead. No trace of it survives today.

Ground at the outer edges of the town’s jurisdiction was largely uncultivated and used for common grazing (*Coal-pit muir, Bally muir; Milton muir*). Ground closer to the town (a form of outfield) was given over to arable and tenanted by rich individuals. Ground situated on the northern outskirts of the town (a form of infield) was occupied by the burgh lands, large arable fields, divided into a complex patchwork of narrow rectangular plots or ‘rigs’, most of less than two acres (Dodgshon 1981, 158). During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries many of the burgh lands were acquired by the Pittenweem Sea Box Society. Sections of these were cultivated in the ‘rinrig’ system (*terras per rynrig divisas, RMS* v no. 2169). This was ‘a system of land tenure in which a piece of arable land was divided into rigs or strips, running parallel to each other and from one end to the other of the ‘town’, and allocated to tenants each year by lot and rotation, adjacent rigs being allocated to different tenants’ (*DOSt*).

The following is a list of places, predominantly field names, situated *extra muros*. The toponyms are arranged alphabetically each with a number to indicate its position on the map printed at the end.

1. *Banle Muir*
(Sc ‘boundary’? + Sc ‘muir’)
Variant: *Banlie Mure* (1593, *RMS* v no. 2305)

The name is conserved in Sea Box maps 1, 2 and 3 with the spelling *Bally Muir*. The muir in question was situated close to the Dreel Burn which formed the boundary between the vill of Pittenweem and that of Grangemuir (Sc *grange* ‘monastic farm’ + Sc *muir*). The etymology of *banle/banlie* is mysterious. As pure conjecture, one might suppose that, like the sb. *grange*, it represents a borrowing into Scots from Anglo-Norman. The precise form *banlie* is not attested in Anglo-Norman, but is a perfectly possible variant of *banlieue*
(‘boundary’) which is attested (\textit{AND2}, Vol. 1, 285b).\(^5\) For an analogous phonetic development of Anglo-Norman \textit{-lieu-}, compare \textit{beau lieu} (< \textit{bellum locum}) > \textit{Beaulieu} (Inverness-shire), \textit{Bewdley} (Worcestershire). The presence of Anglo-Norman words in texts of this sort does not imply the presence in Fife of a substantial body of French speakers. It merely illustrates the assimilation into medieval English/Scots of large numbers of Anglo-Norman legal/administrative terms.

2. \textit{Blakfaldis}  
(Sc ‘black’ + Sc ‘outfield enclosure’)  
1599, \textit{RMS} vi no. 957  
The name is a hapax and now obsolete. The situation of the place next to ‘Coalpitmuir’ (modern ‘Coal Farm’) may explain the blackness of the soil.

3. \textit{The Brooms}  
(Sc ‘piece of land covered in broom’)  
The form \textit{Brum(e)} occurs, in the charters, only in compounds:  
\textit{Broumehoill} (Sc ‘broom’ + Sc ‘hole’)  
\textit{Brumlanddis} (Sc ‘broom’ + Sc ‘agricultural lands’)  
\textit{Brumeside} (Sc ‘broom’ + Sc ‘side’)  
1593, \textit{RMS} v no. 2306  
Sea Box map 1 situates the Brooms along the southern bank of the Dreel Burn between the Carnbee Road and Milton.

4. \textit{Claypottis}  
(Sc ‘clay’ + Sc ‘pits’)  
1599, \textit{RMS} vi no. 957  
The name is conserved in Sea Box map 3. It refers to clay-pits situated close to Path Head at the west end of the \textit{Pans}.

5. \textit{Corklecht} (\textit{PNF} 3, 399)  
(Sc ? + Sc \textit{laiche} ‘a mire, patch of bog’)  

The Feu Charters of Pittenweem Priory, 1532–1567

Corkloch (Pitt. Reg. II, f. 283), Cortloch (1593, RMS v no. 2305), Kirklatche (1603, RMS vi no. 1472).

This place is situated 100 m to the east of the burgh’s East Port, in low-lying land on the south side of the Anstruther road. One charter refers to it as foveam seu lacum, prompting an interpretation of the second element (lache / laiche) as Sc ‘a mire, patch of bog’ (PNF 5, 420). The first element remains as opaque to us as it was to the seventeenth-century scribe who reinterpreted the toponym as Kirklatch, despite the absence of a special ecclesiastical connection.

6. Coupottmuyr
(Sc ‘coal’ + Sc ‘pit’ + Sc ‘tract of unenclosed uncultivated ground’)
Variants: Coupotmure (1592, RMS v no. 2167), Colepotemure (1599, RMS vi no. 957, Coilputmure (1609, RMS vii no. 11).

The name is obsolete and refers to the stretch of land dotted with small coal-pits, situated close to the boundary with St Monans now occupied by Coal Farm (PNF 3, 397, Martin 2002, 38).

7. Croft/Crofta/Croftis
(Sc ‘smallholding (of land), piece of enclosed land’)

The name is preserved in Pittenweem Sea Box maps 1, 2 and 3, referring to an area of land situated to the north of Northraw and Maregait, now occupied by the primary school’s playing field. The frequent use of the plural form Croftis points to the existence of two separate crofts – Eist/Est Croft (1547, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 208, ASV, Reg. Supp. 20183, no. 172, Pitt. Reg. II, f. 237, RMS v no. 2306) and West Croft (1543, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 175, 1593 RMS v no. 2306). Although these crofts may have started life as autonomous smallholdings on the outskirts of town (cf. the Croft of Crail), the fact that plots of land within them were feued separately suggests that, by the sixteenth century, Croft/Croftis was simply the name of an area within the burgh lands.

8. Dammes
(Sc ‘dams’)
1543, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 175

The name is conserved in Sea Box Map 3 as Holland Dams, situated close to
Broumehoill and Northflat, between the mill lade and the Dreel. It relates to
dams placed in the Dreel Burn diverting water into a lade running parallel to
the south bank to Milton Mill. The modern name Holland Dams may recall
Flemish hydraulic expertise used to construct them (Fleming and Mason
2019, 60).

9. Danflat
(Sc ‘dam’ + Sc ‘level piece of ground’)
1543, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 175

The name is a hapax and now obsolete. The piece of land in question seems to
be close to the Dammes. A meadow (pratum nostrum) was situated between

10. (riga) Dive Virginis
(Lat ‘Blessed Virgin’)

Variants: (riga) Virginis Marie (Pitt.Reg. I, 208), (riga) Domine Nostre Marie

This name is obsolete. It designated a rig situated in Langlands, close to the
A917 road (Pittenweem to Anstruther).

11. Elwaddfald (PNF 3, 57–58)
(Sc ‘eln-measure’ + Sc ‘outfield enclosure for cattle’)
1547, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 212

1396), Elwadfold (1591, RMS v no. 1983), Eldwaldisfauld (1606, RMS vi no. 1819).

Sea Box maps 2 and 3 give the name to a small field on the east side of
Milton Road, but in the charters it designates a much larger area, the ‘north
moor’, situated close to Langlands and stretching as far east as Milton. It
therefore straddled the boundary between the territories of Pittenweem and
Anstruther Wester. It is described on one occasion as a caula ‘a cattle fold’

12. Gaitakyr
(Sc ‘road’ + Sc ‘acre’)

Variant: Gaitacir (Pitt. Reg. II, f. 283)

The name is obsolete. It designates a field next to the A917 road (Pittenweem
– Anstruther). The charters situate it on the south side of the road to the
south-west of Kirk latch, pairing it with a field named *Soutakyr* (see No. 33, below).

13. **Greyndykkis** *(PNF 3, 397)*  
(Sc ‘green’ + Sc ‘ditches or walls’)  
Variants: **Grenedykis/Grenedykis** *(1599, RMS vi no. 957)*

Greendykes Farm (now demolished) was situated at the north-west corner of the parish, where a dyke and ditch (*dyke et fowsay*) marked the boundary with Abercrombie. It has been proposed that the name *Greendykes* was provided by recently revealed ploughed-out prehistoric earthworks, when upstanding *(PNF 5, 618).* This may be the case, but we should bear in mind that Greendykes is widely found in place-names across Scotland. Indeed, we find another *Grenedykis* in Pittenweem parish itself where there are no signs of prehistoric activity. See below under No. 28, *Parkdykis.*

14. **Greynlawis**  
(Sc ‘green’ + Sc ‘hillocks’)  
Variant: **Grenelaw** *(1599, RMS vi no. 957)*

The name is obsolete and referred to a hillock south of the A917 road (Pittenweem-St Monans) close to Tothill/Croft Hill.

15. **Heuchheid** *(PNF 3, 393)*  
(Sc ‘steep slope’ + Sc ‘head’)  
1535–6, *Pitt. Reg. II*, f. 230

The name is obsolete. The *heuch* is the local generic name for the steep slopes both to the east and to the west of Pittenweem. *Heuchheid* is nowadays called *West Braes.*

16. **Hewes**  
(Sc ‘coal-pits’ or a variant of Sc *heuchs* ‘steep slopes’)  
Variant: **Hewis** *(Reg. II, f. 259, 260v).*

The name is obsolete but may refer to an outcrop of coal accessible from the seashore between the boundary with Abercrombie/St Monans and St Monans Well:

*Lie Hewes subter rupes, habentes ad occidentem limites Sancti Monani*
usque ad lie fontem eiusdem Sancti Monani ad orientem.  

However, *hews* is also a plural form of *heuch* ‘steep bank’ (SND).

17. *Hungreflatt*
(Sc ‘hungry’ + Sc ‘piece of level ground’)

The name is preserved in Sea Box maps 1, 2 and 3 and relates to a tract of arable land NW of Langlands. The element ‘hungry’ refers no doubt to the poverty of the soil (*PNF* 5, 407).

18. *Langakeris*
(Sc ‘long’ + Sc ‘fields’)

This name is now obsolete. It designated a field situated on the south side of the A917 road (Pittenweem – Anstruther), close to Langlands and Kirklatch.

19. *Langlanddis*
(Sc ‘long’ + Sc ‘lands’)
1540, *Pitt. Reg. I*, 21, 94, 149, 208, 246

The name is conserved in Sea Box maps 1, 2 and 3, designating a large field situated between Milton Road and the A917 road (Pittenweem to Anstruther). The maps show the field divided into long strips. See Figure 1.

20. *Laverockisland* (*PNF* 3, 399)
(family name ‘Laverock’ + Sc. ‘land’)
1540, *Pitt. Reg. I*, 34
Variants: *Laverokisland* (1592, RMS v no. 2138), *Laverokislandis* (1592, RMS v

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6. ‘The *Hewes* beneath the cliff, having to the west the boundary of St Monans as far as the well of the same St Monans to the east.’

*The Journal of Scottish Name Studies* 13, 2019, 55–82
This name, now obsolete, designated a field on the south side of Hungryflat. It might be connected with Sc **laverock** ‘lark’, but the family name Laverock occurs frequently in the charters (e.g. *Pitt. Reg. I*, pp. 82, 147, 160).

21. **Londyk**  
(Sc ‘grassy track for livestock’ + Sc ‘ditch, wall’)  

The name is hapax and now obsolete. Located close to North Flat, **Londyk** referred to a section of the Carnbee road, normally referred to simply as the **Lon. Lons** were commonly diked in, as a passage for animals through arable land, park or orchard land or the like. The charter considers it to be ‘a common ditch’ (*communem fossam*), suggesting that it served drainage purposes as well. **Londyk** may have always been descriptive without ever achieving toponymic status, for it is used also in Anstruther Wester (*Pitt. Reg. II*, f. 246v).

22. **Maltdub**/**Malcdub**  
(‘Sc **maw** ’gull’ + Sc **dub** ‘a small and stagnant pool of water’)  

In the mid-nineteenth century, the **Malt Dubs** was a wide area of common land situated to the west of the Pittenweem-Carnbee road:

> The inhabitants of the town had right to a cow’s grass on the common, which was very extensive, comprising the Green Loan [= the Carnbee road?], the Malt Dubs, all the Mires, part of Greendykes farm, part of the Coalfarm and part of Waterless farm.

(Cook 1867, 27)

Sea Box map 3 records the name **Maw Dubs**, referring now to a much reduced plot of land on the west side of the Carnbee road, abutting Ninian’s Fields, immediately south-west of the railway bridge.

The medieval spellings of the name are secure, but its etymology is uncertain. The second element probably represents Sc **dub** ‘a small and stagnant pool of water’ (*PNF* 5, 359). *ASV*, *Reg. Supp.* 172 (30 July 1535) refers to **Makdub** as a ‘loch’ (see Waitaker, below). Land close to this stretch of the Dreel Burn was extremely boggy. Adjacent fields to the west are referred to as ‘the common mire’ (*communem mariscum*) (*Pitt. Reg. II*, f. 280v) and are still
known as the Mires (Sea Box map 3). A neighbouring farm has the name Inch (G innis ‘piece of low-lying meadow-land usually beside a river’, PNF 5, 412). The first element Malc-/Malt- is problematic. Perhaps we are dealing with Sc maw ‘gull, mew’ (DOST), for seabirds regularly alight on land in this area in search of sustenance. However, this sits uneasily with the medieval spellings Maltdub and Makdub.

23. Maxesonisakyr
(family name ‘Maxeson’ + Sc ‘acre’)
1544, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 152

The field-name is a hapax and obsolete. It occurs twice in Pitt. Reg. I, on successive lines, with identical spellings, specifying a piece of arable land (-akyr) situated on the south side of Lydgate close to Toft Hill/Croft Hill. The first element Maxesonis- is evidently a personal name (cf. 30. Peresonismyir). Indeed, a Henricum Maxisoun/Maxesoun appears in two charters (Pitt. Reg. I, 1544–45, p. 68, 146) occupying a tenement on the south side of the High Street. This patronym, which is no longer extant, may correspond to the modern form Maxton. The alternation -soun ~ -stoun occurs several times in the Pittenweem charters in the surname Wanderstoun.

24. Northflat
(Sc ‘north’ + Sc ‘piece of level ground’)
1540, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 63


The name is conserved in Sea Box maps 2 and 3 labelling a narrow strip of land in the middle of the Brooms, with its northern end at the Dreel Burn. Pitt. Reg. II, f. 283 extends this area westwards as far as the Lone (Carnbee road).

25. Patricklaris
(L Patrick + Sc lair ‘mud, mire’)

The name is conserved in Sea Box map 2 as Patrick Lairs. It denotes a sizeable stretch of waterlogged land (foveam seu lacum) to the south of the Drell Burn and to the west of the Lon (the Carnbee road), now occupied by the municipal recycling centre. The second element is no doubt a form of Sc lair ‘mud, mire; a muddy or miry place, a mire’ (DOST).
26. **Park**  
(Sc ‘piece of enclosed land’)  

The name is conserved in Sea Box map 3 as ‘West Park or Meadows’ and ‘East Park’ situated between Hungryflat and the Crofts. It is still used locally to denote playing fields situated north of the primary school. The charters refer to it as *commune morum* and *common park*.

27. **Parckloucht**  
(Sc ‘a piece of enclosed land’ + Sc ‘large pool or pond’)  

The name is obsolete and designated a piece of land on the south side of Hungryflat. There is no longer a body of water in this area, but it is quite possible that, in the sixteenth century, this land had not been completely drained (cf. *Parkdykis*). Inland lochs ‘vary in size from extensive lakes to large pools or ponds’ (*DOST*).

28. **Parkdykis**  
(Sc ‘enclosure’ + Sc ‘ditches or walls’)  
1591, *RMS v* no. 1983, VI no. 1819  
Variant: *Parkdijkis* (1591, *RMS v* no. 2306)

The name is obsolete and designated a waterlogged piece of land on the west side of *Eldwaldisfauld* (1591, *RMS v* no. 1983), quite close to East Croft (1591, *RMS v* no. 2306). In the early seventeenth century *Parkdykis* acquired an alias, *Grenedykis*:

```
terras paludosas pro jardinis et stagnis fodiendis aptas vulgo Parkdykis  
alias Grenedykis appellatas, ex parte occidentali de Eldwaldisfauld  
jacentes’  
(1606, *RMS vi* no. 1819)
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We must assume that *Grenedykis* is not the same place as no. 13 above, located at the extreme western end of the parish.

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7. ‘boggy land suitable for gardens and for digging ponds, called, in the vernacular, Parkdykis alias Grenedykis, lying on the western side of Eldwaldisfauld.’
29. *Panshod*  
(Sc ‘salt-­pans’ + Sc ‘a piece of land’)  
The name does not appear in the charters but is conserved in Sea Box Maps 1 and 3.  
A number of salt pans were located along the coastal strip, measuring approximately 10 acres, situated between the West Braes promontory (sometimes called *Braeheid*) and Path Head. Old Scots *shod* or *sched* designated ‘a unitary portion of (chiefly arable) land; a piece of land; a large field’ (*DOST*).

30. *Peresonismyir*  
(family name + Sc ‘tract of unenclosed uncultivated ground’)  
The name is now obsolete. The family name Pearson is frequently attested in the charters (e.g. *Pitt. Reg. I*, pp. 37, 79, 86). The muir was situated close to Hungryflat.

31. *Sanct Monanis Slop*  
(saint’s name St Monans + Sc ‘A gap, breach or hole (in a wall etc.)’)  
The name is obsolete. Located close to the West Braes, *Sanct Monans Slope* may be a gap or a breach in the field dyke where the coastal track from Pittenweem to St Monans descends towards the shore and St Monans Well (*Fontem Sancti Monani* (1540, *Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 31 etc.)). It could be an earlier name for *Path Head* first attested in 1775 (*PNF* 3, 399).

32. *Scroggiefald*  
(Sc ‘brushwood or scrub’ + Sc ‘outfield enclosure’)  
Variant: *Scroggyfauld* (1593, *RMS* v no. 2305, 2306).  
This name is conserved in Sea Box map 2, which locates it to the east of Hungryflat and Milton road. The large stretch of land had evidently earlier been brushwood, adjoining the water-­logged areas of *Skroggiefald louch* (1541, *Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 94) and *Parckloucht* (1550, *Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 261).

33. *Soutakyr*  
(Sc ‘south’ + Sc ‘acre’)  

The name designated a plot of ground situated south of the Pittenweem-Anstruther road (A917) and south-west of Gaitakyr in an area now known as Glebe Park. In the same general area there was a croft situated beest the abbey wall (1541, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 57).

34. Standandstane
(Sc ‘standing + Sc ‘stone’) 1535–36, Pitt. Reg. II f. 230; Pitt. Reg. I, p. 155; 1592, RMS v no. 2167; RMS vi no. 957

The name Standing Stone is preserved in Sea Box maps 2 and 3 referring to a field situated north of the A917 (Pittenweem-St Monans) to the east of Toft Hill/Croft Hill. DOST records the noun as ‘a menhir or monolith’. It is nowhere to be seen today. The fact that the name appears twice in what appears to be a jocular form Standandstay might mean that any such stone had been removed before the charters were issued.

35. Tofthill (PNF 3, 397)

Tofthill (marked on Sea Box map 3) corresponds to the ‘Croft Hill’ marked on all post-1854 OS maps, straddling the A917, Pittenweem-St Monans road, to the east of Blakfaldis and Coupottmuyr. The noun toft usually relates to the site of a dwelling house, while croft refers specifically to the adjoining land (PNF 5, 513). The change from Tofthill to Croft Hill may have been prompted by the fact that there are no upstanding buildings in Tofthill/Croft Hill. In the sixteenth century (1599, RMS vi no. 921) it acquired the nick-name of Brerybuttis (Sc ‘briar’ + Sc ‘ridge or strip of ploughed land’ (DOST).

36. Villecruik
(Sc ‘willow’? + Sc ‘bend, crook’) (1535, Pitt. Reg. I, p. 9)

The name is obsolete. The place appears to have been situated south of ‘the common moor’, badly drained land between Tofthill and Patricklaris. A
charter places a shared orchard (*commune viriderium*) in this general area (*Pitt. Reg. I*, p. 5).

37. *Waitakyr*  
(Sc ‘wet ground’ + Sc ‘acre’)  

This name is obsolete. Dr MacQuarrie translated the relevant section of *ASV, Reg. Supp. 2018*, no. 172 (30 July 1535) as

> one acre called *Weitacre*, lying between the lands owned by the late Thomas Lauerok to the north and the lands called *Estercroft* to the south and the lands called *Per...* (?) to the east and the loch (?) called *Makdub* to the west.

38. *Yonfald*  
(Sc ‘distant’ + Sc ‘outfield enclosure’)  
1541, *Pitt. Reg I*, p. 94  
This name is a hapax, now obsolete. It designated an outfield adjacent to Milton Muir.

The approximate location of each of the field names is shown in Fig. 6.

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8. Illegible. The word appears to have been corrected, with heavy inking. Perhaps *Peresonismyr* as in 30.

9. The word looks like *lacum*, but there is now no loch in Pittenweem. It may have been drained. Alternatively, the word *locus* is frequently used in this and similar charters.
6. CONCLUSION

The feuing of the kirklands was one of the biggest changes affecting Scottish rural society in the sixteenth century, turning as it did hundreds of tenants into proprietors great and small (Sanderson 1982, 64). The prime source for this
process is the rich collection of charters published in the *Registers of the Great Seal* (*RMS*). However, most of these charters are post-Reformation confirmations of lost originals, substantially abridged, and, for most monasteries, they provide a less-than-complete picture of what happened to their endowment. The particular value of the Pittenweem charters is that they relate to what appears to be the full state of the priory’s medieval holdings and supply precise details about what became of them in the decades before 1560. The microtoponyms present in the charters are especially interesting for the light they shed on the urban topography of Pittenweem and on the farming history of the burgh’s immediate hinterland. While the town names Pittenweem and Anstruther are Gaelic in origin, the field names – like the personal names – are almost without exception Scots. It could be that in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Scots-speaking immigrants (or their offspring) gradually replaced, more or less completely, a pre-existing system of Gaelic field names. This would be in line with Gilbert Márkus’s findings in thirteenth-century Crail (*Márkus* 2007), where a new language (Scots) was adopted first in the urban centre and subsequently diffused into the town’s hinterland at the expense of the indigenous Gaelic. However, to judge by the meanings of many of the Pittenweem field names (e.g. *Brooms*, *Corklecht*, *Malt Dubs*, *Patricklairs*, *Parckloucht*, *Scroggiefald*, *Waitakyr*), it is more likely that the incomers and their descendants were the first to clear and drain this land and to give names to the fields.

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Street Names and National Identities:  
An exploratory study between  
Montblanc, France, and Dumfries, Scotland  

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As a regular visitor to France, I have become fascinated by the way in which French street names celebrate national figures and events. There is invariably a rue Victor Hugo or a Place de la Révolution or a rue de la République, often all three, and there are also streets celebrating important national events such as the Fall of the Bastille and Victory in Europe. There does not seem to be the same emphasis on national figures and events in the UK, where one has the impression that most of the streets are named after topographic features or after local worthies.

In Dumfries, my one-time home in the UK, my regular journey to work took me along Edinburgh Street, Buccleuch Street (named after a local landowner), along the Whitesands to Bankend Road.

These names contrast markedly with those encountered on a regular walk in Montblanc, my home in France, where I go along Avenue de Stalingrad, rue Victor Hugo, rue de la République, to rue de Verdun.

Of course, there are Dumfries streets named after national figures and Montblanc streets named after local worthies but, overall, Montblanc street
names convey a socio-historic impression that is very different to the impression conveyed by Dumfries street names.

Before exploring this difference, I should acknowledge that I am less interested in street names in themselves than in what they tell us about the society which selected them. For the historian and the sociologist, they are rather like what barium meal is for the radiographer – a way of revealing the otherwise invisible.

Imagine two towns. In Town A most of the streets are named after topographical features (e.g. river, hill, bridge), saints and royal personages. In Town B most streets are named after individuals who have achieved local or national prominence in their own lives. On the basis of their street names, Town A reflects continuity and order; Town B reflects individualism and change. Imagine further, two Type B towns. In B1 most of the individuals commemorated in street names are soldiers and politicians; in B2 most are writers and artists. The former reflects and honours the world of action, the latter reflects and honours the world of ideas.

Of course, it is rarely as clear-cut as this. Street names in most towns reflect a mixture but the balance between the two provides clues to the social and political realities.

Viewed in this way, street names, along with other public monuments, are symbolic representations of a society and its collective memory. They can be read as texts of the ways in which a community remembers its past and projects its image in the present.

In the UK, the study of street names is a sub-branch of the study of names (onomastics) and examples, trends and themes can be found in Bertie Neethling’s chapter in the *Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming* (Neethling 2016). In France, the study of street names is a sub-branch of cultural history and is best exemplified in the work of Pierre Nora and his interdisciplinary colleagues at the Sorbonne (1986). The central concept in their work is the ‘memory place’ (*lieu de mémoire*), by which they mean ‘any significant entity, whether material or non-material, which by dint of human will or the work of time, has become a significant element in the heritage of the community’ (Nora 1986 I/II/III, 16).

Most street-name studies are restricted to single villages, towns or cities. The

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1. Within onomastics, the study of street names is called odonymics (also odonymy), from Greek ὀδός (‘hodós’) ‘a road, path, way’.
present study is one of a few based on the comparison of street names between two locations.

Azaryahu’s pioneering 1992 study compared street names in two very different locations – East Berlin and Haifa. Through this comparison, he was able to show that in both cities, street names reflected and legitimated the prevailing political regimes. He also documented the renaming of streets following regime change, specifically the purging of streets named after Bismark in Berlin and Saladin in Haifa (Azaryahu 1992). The same author later extended his approach by comparing street names in the cities of Paris and Berlin, and East Berlin and West Berlin (1996).

Kooloos’s study of street names in Noord-Brabant and Holland provides yet a further example of the comparative approach taken in the present study. He shows differences in the distributions of street names by broad themes (urban/rural, regional/national, historical/contemporary) between the two provinces and relates them to historical developments over the period 1858–1939 (Kooloos 2010).

This being an exploratory study, my modus operandi can best be described as opportunistic and pragmatic. The choice of the two locations stemmed from the fact that I had houses in both and regularly moved between them. Montblanc (in south central France) and Dumfries (in south-west Scotland), although different in size, are similar in historical development. Both grew from early ecclesiastical establishments, both remained small until they expanded in the nineteenth century and both experienced a further expansion following the Second World War.

Compiling a list of all streets in both locations was simple in the case of Dumfries. The Royal Geographical Society (7) provided a comprehensive and up-to-date listing of all streets, including those in the former suburb of Heathhall.² No equivalent listing existed for Montblanc, but its small size and clear boundaries made it possible to conduct a pedestrian survey.

Having compiled comprehensive listings of the 421 streets in Dumfries and the 98 streets in Montblanc, the second task was to distinguish between topographical and commemorative street names; and, within the former, to distinguish between those relating to the natural and the built landscapes. Commemorative street names were subclassified by the occupational background of the individual commemorated and by the geographical extent of their reputation. This was straightforward for prominent individuals but for those less well known it was necessary to consult local historical studies for both Dumfries (Urquhart 1981 and Dobson 2015) and Montblanc (Carayon 2015) and occasionally to ask local informants. Establishing reputational status inevitably

² List of Dumfries streets: <https://geographic.org>.
involved a subjective judgement (e.g. Leonardo da Vinci and Shakespeare were deemed to have international significance, whereas George Brassens and J. M. Barrie were deemed to have national significance).

Table 1 compares the distribution of street names in both towns between three broad groupings: streets named after people/‘worthies’; streets named after topographical features of the natural and built landscapes; and streets named after historical events.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dumfries</th>
<th>Montblanc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People/‘Worthies’</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topographical features</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical events</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (unknown/unclassifiable)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is immediately apparent that, while the majority of streets in Dumfries are named after topographical features (74%), the majority of those in Montblanc are named after people/‘worthies’ (65%). While this difference is relative rather than absolute, it is sufficiently great as to warrant further analysis.

Table 2 focuses on those streets named after topographical features and distinguishes between those relating to the natural landscape (e.g. hill, field, river, wood, oak tree) and those relating to the built environment (e.g. castle, bridge, well, school, market).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dumfries</th>
<th>Montblanc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relating to natural landscape</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating to the built landscape</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, there is a clear difference between the street names of the two towns. In Montblanc, the majority of topographic-named streets are named for features of the built environment, e.g. Place de Rampe, Place du Château Vieux and rue de la Fontaine Vieille. In Dumfries, street names like Lochfield Road, Mosspark Crescent, Poplar Court and Rosevale Street exemplify the rural influence and overall, 47 streets contained the generics field/land/park. Further evidence of this is provided in the 42 streets in Dumfries named after trees (19 different
species). Thematic naming in the newer residential areas accounts for some of this popularity and there are clusters of adjacent streets with Birch, Rowan and Thorn in their names. But overall, these thematic clusters account for only around 25% of all tree-named streets.

From a historical perspective, the strong rural element in Dumfries street names probably derives from the way in which the town has expanded and engulfed numerous small hamlets. By contrast, Montblanc has remained a compact urban unit surrounded by vineyards. Instead of living in the midst of the fields, the owners have traditionally lived in the town and travelled to work in their vineyards.

Table 3 focuses on those streets named after people/worthies’ and subclassifies them by their occupational background.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Montblanc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politicians/Rulers/Military Leaders</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers/Artists</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service/ Business</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The differences between the two towns are again substantial. In Montblanc, there are twice as many streets named after those from a military/political background (e.g. rue Jules Jaurès, Avenue Eduard Herriot, rue de Maréchal Foch) than in Dumfries. Similarly, in Montblanc there are twice as many streets named after writers and artists (e.g. rue Saint-Exupéry, rue Jean-Jaques Rousseau, rue Georges Brassens) than in Dumfries. In Montblanc, there are also streets named after scientists (e.g. rue Nicolas Copernicus, rue Leonard de Vinci) where in Dumfries, not a single street is named after a scientist.

Overall, the difference is relative rather than absolute. In Dumfries, streets like Barrie Avenue, Burns Street and Shakespeare Street celebrate British writers just as streets like Victoria Avenue and Victoria Crescent and George Street and Gladstone Road celebrate British rulers and leaders. But collectively, these constitute a small proportion of the person-named streets. In Dumfries, such streets are much more likely to be named after local public officials, landowners and businessmen. Streets like Steel Avenue, Sharpe Crescent, Robertson

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3. This latter could also of course be classified as an artist.
Avenue, Makbrar Crescent and Martin Avenue celebrate former town provosts and councilors. Streets like Johnstone Park, Goldie Crescent, Grant Court are named after local builders, landowners and entrepreneurs.

There is one further difference relating to person-named streets. In Montblanc, they invariably include the given name (e.g. rue Pierre-Paul Riquet, Plan Anatole France). In Dumfries, the person celebrated in the street name is identified only by the family name (e.g. Burns Street, Bruce Street). As a consequence, Montblanc street names have greater length and formality – an extreme case being Place Général De Lattre De Tassigny, Maréchal de France.

Dumfries and Montblanc are alike in one respect only: few of the streets (less than 4% in both places) are named after women. In Dumfries, the women celebrated in street names include Queen Victoria, Queen Elizabeth and Jean Armour (wife of poet and writer Robert Burns). In Montblanc, the women celebrated in street names include Saint Catherine, the writer Georg Sand and Marguerite of Navarre.

The impression that Montblanc streets celebrate national heroes while Dumfries streets celebrate local heroes is examined in Table 4. It subclassifies the people celebrated in street names by their local, regional, national or international significance/reputation.

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local significance only</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional significance</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National significance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International significance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
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The difference between Montblanc and Dumfries is again substantial. In Dumfries three quarters (78%) of the people-named streets are named after figures with only local or regional significance. A few national figures are celebrated in some Dumfries streets (e.g. Queen Victoria, William Shakespeare) and there is even one street (Carnegie Street) named after an international
philanthropist, but these are vastly outnumbered by streets named after people whose names are unlikely to be known outside the town of Dumfries and south-west Scotland.

In Montblanc, the considerable majority of people-named streets (82%) celebrate figures of national and international significance (e.g. Louis Pasteur, Victor Hugo, Leonardo da Vinci, Nicolas Copernicus). This pan-European scope is also illustrated in the name of the main roundabout – Carrefour de l’Europe.

To summarise, in Dumfries street names are predominantly topographical in origin and they reflect the natural rather than the built landscape. Those streets that are named after people typically celebrate figures with local or regional significance, mainly from a background in business and public service. In Montblanc, street names predominately celebrate people. Most of these figures have achieved national and even international reputations in politics, warfare, the arts and science. Those street names that are topographical in origin reflect the built rather than the natural landscape.

It is tempting to extrapolate these findings and to suggest that Montblanc and Dumfries are microcosms of France and Scotland. France, having experienced more political turbulence than the UK, has a greater propensity to commemorate the republican nation-state and those military leaders and politicians who have fashioned and defended it over the years. French writers and thinkers have been more engaged with the national project than their counterparts in the UK and they have enjoyed greater prominence and celebrity. Britain, having avoided revolutionary upheavals (especially those of 1789 and 1848) commemorates its landowners and royal personages, and, having led the way in the industrial revolution and the development of the welfare state, has a greater propensity to celebrate its entrepreneurs and public servants.

But we should be cautious about such speculation on the basis of an exploratory comparison of street names in Montblanc and Dumfries. Montblanc may not be representative of France, just as Dumfries may not be representative of the UK. However, recent studies by Daniel Milo in France (1998) and Daniel Oto-Peralias in Scotland (2017), suggest that the differences reported for Montblanc and Dumfries are consistent with nationwide differences. In his study of 96 communes throughout France, Milo shows that the most common street name (by some considerable margin) commemorates the République and that the streets so named are in the most prominent locations (1998). The individuals most often commemorated are, in descending order, Victor Hugo, Léon Gambetta, Jean Jaurès, Louis Pasteur, Général Leclerc and Clémenceau. In Scotland, in a nation-wide sample, Oto-Peralias has shown that the most common street name is Main Street, followed by Station Road, High Street and Church Street. The individuals most often commemorated are, in descending
order, King (unspecified), George (unspecified), Queen (unspecified). In Britain, individual kings and queens may change but the institution of the monarchy remains. Street names reflect continuity. In France, having dispensed with kings and queens, as regimes change, so do the names of individuals associated with them. This fluidity is reflected in the commemorative street names. Street names mirror changes in the body politic.

This ‘mirroring’ occurs contemporaneously when individuals and events are commemorated in their own lifetimes or at the time of the event, but it also occurs retrospectively, and sometimes much later. This is particularly true of France, where many of the street names relating to the Revolution and the First Republic (1792–1804) actually date from the years of the Third Republic (1870–1940). This and similar time-lags can only be fully explored if the date of street baptism is known. Unfortunately, this information was not routinely available in the present study. Future studies should remedy this shortcoming.

More generally, it is hoped that the present study, albeit small-scale and exploratory, illustrates the potential of a comparative approach to street names.

References
Carayon, G., 2015, Montblanc, 1900–2000, Mairie Conseil compte rendu (Montblanc).
Mo-Choe Ahoy! Saintly Sightings at the Water’s Edge?

John Garth Wilkinson
Torphin Old Mill

Two place-names are investigated here: Dalmahoy and Lymphoy, both formerly in Midlothian (earlier Edinburghshire), but now subsumed into the City of Edinburgh at its most western stretch. Each is in a parish which marches with West Lothian: Dalmahoy is in Ratho parish, which abuts Kirkliston parish to the north and north-west, heir to the local patrimony of the Knights Templar that formerly straddled the West Lothian/Midlothian boundary defined here by the River Almond. Corstorphine parish forms its eastern boundary, Currie its south-eastern and Kirknewton its south-western (see Map 1). Dalmahoy sits beside Ratho’s only major watercourse, the Gogar Burn, which rises on the northern slopes of Corston Hill (Kirknewton parish) to wind its flat way to meet the Almond near the Cat Stane, now on Edinburgh (Turnhouse) Airport land. Lymphoy is in Currie parish beside the Water of Leith, a river inherited from The Calders to the west (West Calder parish via Midcalder and Kirknewton, each tracing its southern boundary along the Pentlands watershed to Currie’s). They lie about 3 km from each other and were formerly in the barony of Kirkliston. Both names may be united by a British saint hiding under his Goidelic hypocorism.

Dalmahoy and St Mungo

Dalmahoy MLO, a large estate now a western part of the City of Edinburgh, has at its centre a former country house with gardens (Canmore ID 50319) transformed into a hotel and country club, with two courses famous for its golfing associations, less well-known for its exclusive polo. From the late thirteenth century, the estate belonged to the Dalmahoys of that ilk, when Henry de Dalmehoy was forced to submit to Edward I of England in 1296. Since 1750, it has been the property of the Douglases and home of Lord Morton, whose eldest son bears the hereditary title of Lord Aberdour (FIF).

In his *The Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (henceforth *CPNS*), the influential Scottish name scholar W. J. Watson considered the name Dalmahoy to be *Dail mo Thuae* ‘my Tua’s meadow’, i.e. ScG *dail* ‘riverside meadow, haugh’, dedicated to St Tua ‘the silent one’.[1] To his eyes, St Tua was an early saint commemorated for instance in Balmaha (Buchanan, by Loch Lomond DNB), Kilmaha (by Loch Awe ARG) and Loch Mahaick/Loch Mo-Thathaig (Callander PER and Glengairn

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ABD, formerly Cill Mo-Thatha) (CPNS, 152–53, 297–98, 324, with a discussion of dol, dail etc. 414–18). Yet this saint is not only ‘silent’ but evidently otherwise invisible and unremembered in the south-east of Scotland.

_Dal-_ is not unusual in tandem with a saint’s name and likely had some special significance now lost; Dalserf LAN with adjacent Dalpatrick, both beside the Clyde, are the nearest to the west, right across the river from Cambusnethan, where another saint may be remembered.² ScG _dail_, a borrowing from NBr *dāl (BLITON, döl, s. v.: ModW dôl) ‘meadow, haugh’ (or from its Pictish cognate), when combined with a saint’s name can indicate ‘an old church site or land gifted to the church’ (CPNS, 418), possibly from the eighth or ninth century (Gilbert Márkus, pers. comm.). The eponymous haugh (_dail_) of Dalmahoy will undoubtedly be one on the sinuous Gogar Burn which flows a short distance north of Dalmahoy House.

The spellings of Dalmahoy from its first record in 1296 (Dalmahoy) are remarkably consistent (see Appendix). Its local pronunciation is /dalmaˈhoɪ/ or /dalməˈhoɪ/, but at times /ˈdalməhoɪ/; these merit comparison with that of Balmaha /ˈbalməhoɪ/ (Márkus 2008, 82). These forms with further minor variations are to be found in Norman Dixon’s _The Place-Names of Midlothian_ (henceforth _PNML_), where he tells us Tua was ‘a saint in the early Celtic Church’ (_PNML_, 275), following Watson, as does Harris in _The Place-Names of Edinburgh_ (henceforth _PNE_), who is moreover wrong when he says that ‘Celtic kirk dedication usually meant that the saint worked there’ (_PNE_, 207–08).

In any case, Gilbert Márkus points out that Watson was ‘led astray’ by names such as Balmaha STL and Kilmaha ARG, arguing that the former was a dedication to the nun Kentigerna, while others were likely to be to St Kentigern, otherwise known as Mungo (2008, 69–70). Watson’s error had previously been pointed out by Colm Ó Baoill (1993, 7–10), at least as regards Mo-Thatha of Glengairn ABD, whom he considered to have been Kentigern himself, the patron of the local kirk, which was a focus of his cult, though considered an apparent ‘secondary derivation’ by Watson (CPNS, 324). From this it appears that Watson was similarly beguiled by Dalmahoy, with Dixon and Harris in his wake, and that the name may well preserve a dedication to St Mungo under his ScG byname _Mochoë_ (with variants such as _Mo Cha_) interpreted as Latin _carus meus_ ‘my dear one’ (Macquarrie 1986, 5; MacQueen 1956, 112). Compare Kirkmahoe DMF (_Kirkemogho_ 1319, _Kirkmocho_ 1430) in the next valley to Hoddom DMF where Kentigern is said to have built a church, which demonstrates the Gaelic

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². [https://saintsplaces.gla.ac.uk/] – accessed 26/09/19, where there seems to be some doubt surrounding a saint’s name in the last example, though Watson saw Neithon ‘a Welsh saint’ (CPNS, 202).
Mo-Choe Ahoy! Saintly Sightings at the Water’s Edge?

hypocorism Mochoe, the equivalent of the Britonic Mungo, though the ‘late appearance’ of such dedications is problematic to John Reuben Davies’s survey (2009).

As St Mungo, Kentigern is of course the patron saint of Glasgow, where his cathedral and tomb stand to this day, though it is important to remember that Govan was the earlier local ecclesiastical centre and that archaeology has shown that ‘prior to the twelfth century, Glasgow was a place of limited consequence’ (Davies 2009, 76). Davies considers that most dedications to the saint, who was perhaps seen as a ‘national saint’ by the ‘Cumbric-speaking inhabitants of Cumbria and Lothian’, stem from the twelfth century in Strathclyde along with ‘the rise of Glasgow as a powerful ecclesiastical see’, but that ‘[t]he Lothian connection in Jocelin’s Life was probably designed to encourage and justify pre-existing dedications to Kentigern in that area’ (ibid., 88).

As for the Glaswegian cult, Watson himself in fact noted a *homo nativus* called ‘Gillemachoi of Conglud’ with his children and his whole following granted to the church of St Kentigern in Glasgow in 1164 by King William. Watson rendered the personal name ‘Mo-Choe’s lad’ but again failed to link the not uncommon saint’s name to Mungo’s cult in a rare oversight (CPNS, 162; cf. MacQueen 2002, 75, also Taylor 2007, 5–6). This mid-12th century form *Gillemachoi* resembles the earliest, as well as the more modern, spellings of Dalmahoy and such a dedication here would match those in the neighbouring parishes of Currie MLO, Penicuik MLO, West Linton PEB, Carnwath LAN and probably originally Midcalder MLO/WLO, which has a central St Mungo’s Well on the banks of the Almond (McCall 1894, 196 *addendum*; Sommers 1838, 11).

3. Note that Davies (2009, 80) mistakenly reverses the linguistic attributions of the two forms, while Watson (CPNS, 161–62) links the name to another saint Mo-Choe or Mo-Chua.

4. For the etymology of Kentigern and Mungo see Jackson 1958, 302; *LHEB*, 491–93, §100; for Welsh dedications to him see *DPNW*, 264, for his appearance in the Welsh Triads see *TYP*, 319–21, and for a link to Arthurian literature see for example Tolstoy 1983/1984, *passim*; for a discussion of his problematic identity, see Gough-Cooper 2003 and Davies 2009; and for Kentigern’s mentor St Serf of Culross, see Macquarrie 1993.

5. A perhaps empty tomb; local rumours from around 1990 report that during renovations the prentice of a heating contractor asked his boss (who had faced great delays and was anxious to finish and be paid) what he should do about the old bones found in the vicinity of the saint’s tomb. ‘What banes?’ he replied as he shovelled them into a black plastic bag and threw them in the skip. Thanks to Ken Waldron for this then first-hand tale.

6. *RRS* ii no. 217, where Conglud is identified as ‘Kinclaith or Glasgow Green’; see also Taylor 2007, 16.

7. Cf. the outdated map of dedications in Morris 1973, 371. See also Barrow 1996, 2–5, for further dedications within the see of Glasgow or ‘Scottish Cumbria’, noting that ‘the kingdom or province was never called Strathclyde in the twelfth century’. Both Sommers and McCall were ministers at Midcalder. The latter’s handwritten addendum reads, ‘There
This possible Kentigern dedication would apply also to West Calder, which in the medieval period formed with Midcalder one parish known as Calder Comitis (Earl's Calder) (Cowan 1967, 25, under Calder-Comitis). Mungo’s Hag (c. 1830, c. 1850) refers to an upper vein of West Calder parish’s Har Burn, beside which is a long cist cemetery with Annetscross (Annotiscroce 1559) within a mile – see WLQR (forthcoming, 2), s. n. However, Mungo Lockhart of Harwood (by West Calder) is recorded in the early seventeenth century, perhaps its eponym with turbary rights – his son Quintigern Lockhart was also named for the saint. The family had interests in Broadshaw (Braidschaw) beside Annetscross in Midcalder parish (MC, 152; Ret i 735, 1350) and their post-Reformation forenames are very suggestive, though it may of course be that they were incomers: Sir Mungo Quintigern Lockhart (1521–82) was 5th Baron of Cleghorn LAN, twelve miles or so down the road.  

LYMPHOY  
(i) The Name  
In the light of these Kentigern associations north of the Pentlands (above all the proposed analysis of the name Dalmahoy in Ratho parish), the odd-looking name Lymphoy in the neighbouring parish of Currie should be re-examined, bearing well in mind the hazards of any attempt to identify a saint’s eponym within a toponym (see Jankulak 2003, 92). Nowadays it names Lymphoy House, a country house of no fixed age (Canmore ID 144794), east of Balerno on the southern undeveloped and still pastoral bank of the Water of Leith across from Currie. Rendered Lymphoy in PNML, 176–77, it first appears relatively late in the record, in 1513, as Lumphoy, and by the 1520s at the latest it was divided into Easter and Wester (see Appendix for full details).

is no record as to what Saint the church of Calder might have been dedicated. But as the name of Saint Mungo is associated with the well at Combfoot, it may perhaps be conjectured that this was the Patron Saint of the Parish.’ Combfoot is beside the Almond below Midcalder Kirk (now dedicated to St John) at NT072675. A debt of gratitude is owed to James O’Hagan for granting me access to the author’s own copy, now in his possession, and for allowing me to transcribe McCall’s addenda as a Word document, of which a hard copy rests in West Lothian Libraries HQ, Linlithgow.

8. The Har Burn (sic, c.1830), eponym of Harburn estate and village, is now mapped as the Bents Burn at NT0562, where it flows past the farm known locally as The Bents (The Bentis 1586). Mungo’s Hag (sic, c.1830, not extant, only found on maps of Harburn Estate) is or was c. NT035600, Harburnhead long cist cemetery (Canmore ID 49110) at NT03604, Annetscross Bridge (sic, OS 1956) at NT044624, and Broadshaw (Braidschaw 1492) at NT049624.

On modern OS maps it is Lymphoy (OS 1st edn), naming an evidently old site, on which the ruins of Lennox Tower (Lenox Castle 1773) are still visible, ‘now popularly called by the uncouth name of Lymphoy ... formerly the property of the Lennox family and a place of great strength’ (NSA, 546). It consists of a fifteenth-century tower house on a promontory above the Water of Leith, surrounded by a barmkin. No earlier archaeology is apparent (Canmore ID 50270), yet the ‘barmkin’ looks suspiciously circular on the map, like many an early Celtic church enclosure – see Map 6. John Baldwin and Peter Drummond (2011, 36) observe that Blaeu’s Lumphoy of 1654 refers to the tower house of Keldeleth (now Kinleith), which Adair in 1682 maps as Lymphoy C[astle], with a small sketch (Map 2).

According to Tweedie and Jones (1975, 36), the Lennox tower was formerly called ‘the fortalice of Kinleith (Killeith)’, the present name only dating from 1593, when James VI granted Ludovic Duke of Lennox, amongst many other lands and lordships, the lordship and barony of Kirkliston including the lands of Kinleith (Kylleith) in the county of Edinburgh (RMS v no. 2273, col. 3). ‘Historically “Kinleith”, originally “Kyldeleithe”, was the name of the whole area on the south side of the Water of Leith’ (Tweedie and Jones 1975, 26). As a parish name Kinleith was replaced by that of Currie.

Dixon’s phonetic rendering of the pronunciation of Lymphoy as /lɪmfoi/ does not indicate stress. Today /ˈlɪmfɔɪ/ is most commonly heard locally, but it was formerly pronounced /lʌm fɔɪ/ or /lʌmˈfɔɪ/. ‘Difficult!’ say Baldwin and Drummond of the name, more or less following Dixon, who suggests ScG lom ‘bare’ for the first element, noting ModW llym (actually ‘sharp’, leg. ModW llwm ‘bare, poor’), with ScG faich ‘green, plain, meadow’ as the second.

Baldwin and Drummond decide that Lymphoy is “[p]robably Gaelic for “bare grass meadow”, and possibly taken over from earlier British.” This may be after Harris (PNE, 379–80), who also takes Blaeu’s Lumphoy 1654 as ‘evidently

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10. Thanks to Anne Douglas of Warriston, Kate Wilkinson of Warriston Cottages, and an inhabitant of Lymphoy (who wishes to remain anonymous) for this, 28 August 2018. The last says that all the inhabitants of house and steadings use this pronunciation and that ‘wide open space’ is one of the explanations of the meaning of it. Many thanks also to him for directing us very accurately towards the ‘ancient burials’ (below).

11. As in Dalmahoy; thanks to Peter Tait, of 1940s Currie born and bred, for these, in a chance meeting, 23 August 2018. Thanks also to Mark Bray of Warriston Cottages for confirming this pronunciation, mid-August 2018.

12. Thanks to Robin Miller of Ormiston Mains, Kirknewton, also brought up in 1940s Currie, for this and for much other local information.

13. Dwelly offers us ScG faiche as ‘field; ... plain, meadow, green’ (DGED, s. v.).

14. ‘... but may be Gaelic longphort, “a tent, shieling hut” (or a hunting bothy/lodge)?’: this is even less likely.
standing for the tower of Keldeleth ... it is Celtic, probably from British lom, bare, and -fa (the softened form of ma) a place.' Yet the lenited form of -ma would be pronounced -va /va/ (see BLITON, -μa, s.v.), though this should not preclude such a derivation; cf. Ogilface WLO, whose second element may be ModW maes ‘field’ > faes /vais/ (see PNWL, 97; BLITON, mayes, s.v.). Names such as Brechfa CRM (Carmarthenshire) ‘speckled place’ are not uncommon in Wales (see DPNW, lv and passim) and stressed on the first element, but very much rarer in Scotland. However, the fact that almost every early form ends in -oy in effect rules out this suggestion.

This option apart, the order of elements makes these bare places an unlikely derivation, unless ScG lom is used nominally as ‘bare surface, bare plain, field’ (DGED, s.v.) as perhaps in Lumbennie and Lumquhat FIF, though interestingly ‘both these may rather contain G lann “enclosure, field”’ (PNF5, 430; see also Watson 1995, 97–98), an idea to be investigated below.

In addition to the two Fife names, it may bear comparison with the likes of Lumphanan ABD and Lumphinnans FIF. The first (Lufanan, Lunfunen, Lunphanan, Lunfanin (all from Skene 1867), Lunfannan 1357, Lynphanan 1480, Lumpquhanann 1487 (RMS) is not interpreted by W. J. Watson as ScG lann: ‘The old forms are against this’, though ‘the term lann was used freely in Ireland in connection with churches, and in Scotland it is common in certain districts in the sense “enclosure, field”, e.g. Lainn Chat, Lynchat in Badenoch, “wildcats’ field”. Lumphinnans in Ballingry parish, Fife, may therefore be “St Finan’s field” (CPNS, 286). This derivation of Lumphinnans FIF (Lumfilan 1242, Lumpheneene 1393) is more or less confirmed by Simon Taylor, whose definition of ScG lann though is extended here to an ecclesiastical one (see PNF5, 419–20), but he is forced to swither between two saints, Finan or Fillan, and ‘church of St Finan or St Fillan’ (PNF1, 150–51).

In his introduction to the parish (ibid., 133), Taylor observes that the name ‘bears witness to early Christian activity, and seems to have ceased to be recognised as a religious site by the time of the establishment of the parish system in the twelfth century’, defining ScG lann as ‘enclosure, field, church’ with ‘little doubt that lann is used here in its ecclesiastical meaning since the specific element is a saint’s name.’

Taylor had earlier identified and listed ‘eight medieval parishes [which] contain lann as their first or generic element’, though only one other appeared to contain the name of a saint: Lungyrg (now obsolete) KCD, whose eponym is Giric, as in Ecclesgreig/St Cyrus KCD on the same coast (Taylor 1998, 8–10, 16–20).

If we compare Lymphoy with Dalmahoy, it begins to look possible that the same may obtain here. If the source of Lymphoy were a ScG lann + Mocho(h)e, 15.

15. For the semantic growth of the term in the Brittonic, see BLITON, lann, s.v.
the -mn would have been easily absorbed into the -m to give *Lamchoe, i.e. /lam(ə)χɔɪ/ or the like. Taylor also notes ‘the tendency for the final n of lann etc. to change to m when immediately followed by a labial consonant, especially f’ (1998, 17). The eventual transmutation of ScG -ch- /χ/ into Scots -p/ ph- /f/ if not universal is widespread and relatively well attested, as in Auchinleck ANG > Affleck and Urquhart Strathmiglo FIF Orphit 1775 Ainslie/Fife, still pronounced locally /ˈʌrfət/. As Watson tells us, ‘the change of Gaelic initial ch into f in Scots is common, e.g. Uachdar-chlò in the Black Isle into Auchterflow’ (CPNS, 412, 485–86).17

An original syllable-final stress explains the vowel variation in the first syllable, appearing as Lam-, Lim-, Lom-, Lum-, Lun- and Lym-. Yet Taylor also suggests of his list of lann-names that ‘the frequent occurrence of u in the early forms [of] names with this element is best explained as representing an oblique form of lann’, i.e. *luinn and *lunn (by analogy with o-stem nouns such as crann ‘tree’, gen. sing. cruinn, dat. sing. crunn), as well as the expected loinn of ā-stem feminine nouns (cf. clann, cloinn) and the attested laind, lainne (1998, 16–17).18
This might explain why the earliest extant spellings of Lymphoy do indeed show Lum-.

However, such an identification would need further careful consideration as it would be so far the only lann-name besouth the Forth and has the potential (as we shall see) to cause a re-evaluation of the spread of the Pictish or Gaelic church, perhaps as part of the southward expansion of the diocese of St Andrews and its influence on its British sibling in Lothian. It is in any event odd and might also spur on a reconsideration of the significance of the final element of Pentland19 by Hillend, a medieval parish five miles east over the hills which take its name.20

16. Thanks to Simon Taylor and Ken Waldron for this. I have opted to follow Angus Macdonald’s use of the older symbol /χ/ (PNWL, xxxvii) for the unvoiced velar fricative nowadays represented confusingly by IPA /x/.
17. Compare also English trough /trɔf/ and rough /rʌf/ as against Scots troch /troχ/ or /trɔχ/ and rouch /ɹχ/.
18. It is both masculine and feminine in Old Gaelic (see DIL under lann 2).
19. Pentland 1165 × 1174 RRS ii no. 204 [original document].
20. See Simon Taylor’s map (1998, 22) of the eleven lann-names he tentatively identified, the nearest being the three Fife examples. Pencaitland ELO is another llan/lan-name, though more likely a variant of W coedlan (coetlann, 6th century) ‘grove’ (GPC, s.v.). Its perhaps archaic treatment of coed < EClt *caito- (BLITON, cę:d, s.v.) harmonises with Bathgate and Gatemuir WLO (see WLQR) though not Dalkeith, which may then feature another term, perhaps even a saint’s name.
(ii) The History

The southern banks of the Water of Leith here rise fairly steeply towards the Pentlands as wheatfields, woodland and pasture, offering a surprisingly long view beyond Currie over the Forth bridges to the Lomonds of Fife and the Ochils further west. The old road from Currie to Malleny in Balerno via Lymphoy, now a well-maintained track, passes between hedges and open fields, heading south of west from the upper gate of Currie Kirk, across the Kirkgate from Lymphoy Lodge at the entrance to the Lymphoy estate. The track reaches Lennox Tower in five-eighths of a mile, shortly after crossing a deep gorge (Lymphoy Glen 1895 OS 2nd edn) cut by a nameless burn spanned by ‘the “Deil’s Brig”’ (Tweedie and Jones 1975, 42) also known as ‘Devil’s Bridge’, a tall perhaps late eighteenth-century sandstone dam-like bridge with a small arch and a lost tale of supernatural feats.

Currie Kirk, itself a fine eighteenth-century church on a southern slope above the Water of Leith, was built over earlier foundations and has traces of ‘Norman’ stonework. Unprotected in the graveyard and forming a rough, modern retaining wall are remnants of what appear to be sword-inscribed Templar gravestones, about which the Canmore database is singularly uninformative.21

Both Statistical Accounts suggest an ecclesiastical link with the collegiate church of Corstorphine and the cult of St John the Baptist (OSA V, 316). However, the medieval records indicate that the church of Currie ‘originally known as Kinleith’, was annexed to the archdeaconry of Lothian (Cowan 1967, 42), while the lands of Easter and Wester Lymphoy belonged to the collegiate church of the Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, founded in the mid-fifteenth century (for details, see the early forms in the Appendix, below). St Mungo’s Well, at the river’s edge below Currie Kirk, which supplied the parish’s needs, might suggest that the church was dedicated to St Kentigern, and it is certainly now considered as such, but the earliest reference to a Kentigern connection with Currie relates only to the erection of an altar endowed there in 1493 by Master Archibald Whitelaw (Qhuitelaw) ‘to the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Kentigern’ (S. Kentigerno) because Kentigern was Whitelaw’s patron saint (patrono suo) (RMS ii no. 2154). This altar is mentioned again in the 1560s: ‘the rentale lyand to Sanct Mungois altare in Currie’ (Assumption 139). The erection and endowment of an altar to Kentigern within a church does not necessarily mean that he was patron of that church itself, but may indicate a much older Kentigern connection.22

21. Canmore ID 235499 – accessed 24/08/18. Alan Reid (1905–06, 225–26) records the ‘Templar Stone’ alone, though it appears that others were being dug up at the time. The Deil’s Brig, Lymphoy, Currie is also missing from the database and is extremely elusive online.

22. Davies (2013, 79–80 fn71) records the earliest reference to a Kentigern dedication at Currie as 1296, but has been misled by Reid’s ambiguous text (1905–06, 217). The modern
There is no archaeology apparent at Lymphoy in the Canmore records, yet ‘ancient burials’ are one of the local attractions of the place. On the roadside halfway between Currie Kirk and Lennox Tower and less than half a mile from each is a small enclosure planted with yew and holly, now part of a strip of woodland straddling the road and running down to the water of Leith, called Duncan’s Belt (OS Explorer). A modern gravestone stands here, the replica of an older now recumbent one, its inscription merely noted by Alan Reid (1905–06, 229) and only as ‘another memorial of a character surely unique’. It reads:

IN THIS SMALL ENCLOSURE are a number of Stone Coffins of various dimensions. They were discovered in December 1820 and this Stone is erected by the proprietor Lieut.-General Thomas Scott of Malleny in order to point out the spot and facilitate the researches of the curious into such interesting relics of antiquity.

Underneath this on the modern stone copy is ‘RENEWED BY DISTRICT COUNCIL 1971’.

The proprietor’s urgings seem to have been ignored by later archaeology and the site has apparently never been excavated. Nevertheless, it was recorded by the Ordnance Survey Name Books, under Lymphoy as follows:

On the north side of the road leading from Currie to Lennox Tower and Malleny were five large stones set perpendicularly in the ground which along with a cairn a little to the South of this spot tradition [sic] says were erected to commemorate some battle fought here. On removing the stones about 30 years ago a number of stone coffins were discovered and which are still to be seen. They were discovered in 1820 and the proprietor Lieut. General Scott of Malleny erected a stone with a suitable inscription in order to point out the spot and to facilitate [sic] the researches of the curious into the nature of such interesting Relics of Antiquity.

It was duly inscribed on the first OS Six-inch map as Cairn and as Stone Site

Scottish Episcopal church at Balerno goes by the name of St Mungo, Balerno and Currie, with an address at Ladycroft, Balerno.

23. 600 m from Lennox Tower, 500 m from Currie Kirk.

24. OSNB Midlothian Vol. 13/OS1/11/13/19/ – 28/08/18. This report makes sense of the Rev. Thomas Barclay’s account in the New Statistical Account (Vol. 1, 547), which links these five stones and ‘the many stone-coffins’ to the massive cairn at Harlaw farm just over a mile uphill and due south, from which ‘2000 or 3000 cart-loads’ of stone were removed. Barclay’s vague linkage to Harlaw seems to have obscured the location and thrown many later researchers off the track. It was ‘about a quarter of a mile to the south of the large cairn’, which reversed should also help to locate the gone cairn, perhaps visible on Google Earth.
of Cairn on the first OS 25-inch equivalent at NT179673. While this sounds like a Bronze Age endeavour, it is also a potential early Christian long cist cemetery of the mid-first millennium AD beside such an ancient setting of cairn and stones.

In this it would be similar to the Cat Stane just five miles north beside the Almond in the same barony of Kirkliston, thought to have been a Bronze Age standing stone surrounded by a barrow before being used two millennia later as the focus of a large long cist cemetery and perhaps much more. Something of this nature is implied by Tweedie and Jones (1975, 33) who note that on the Lymphoy Road ‘[a]n excavation was recently carried out, and most of the area around appears to have been used as a burial ground about 500 AD.’ This would add interest and intrigue to any later dedication to St Mungo, especially in view of the burials near Mungo’s Hag noted above. There is a similar cemetery at Bridgend by Midcalder, not far downstream of its own Mungo’s Well beside the Almond, while north of the Forth a correlation between long cist cemeteries and early church names (in that instance *eglēs) has been noted (Taylor 1998, 4). But until any excavation, such potential circumstantial evidence here has

25. Edinburghshire, Sheet 5 of 1853 and Edinburghshire VI.11 (Currie, Ratho) of 1894, respectively.
26. For a recent account of long cist cemeteries in southern Scotland see Harding 2017, 268–70, where Hoddom DMF and another Kentigern connection are mentioned in association with its eighth-century church and sculptures.
27. Canmore ID 50719. It was inscribed in the fifth or sixth centuries with ‘debased Latin capital letters’. This may well have been linked to the putative pre-Anglian ‘court’ or power centre based around the Bronze Age barrow and stones at Huly Hill, Newbridge, and remembered in the second syllable of Kirkliston WLO, ModW llys ‘court’ (see BLITON, *liː:s[s], s.v.), enhanced by Scots kirk and Scots toun or Old English tūn, an enlightening example of what archaeology used in tandem with toponymics may achieve. Such continuity or at least a renewed interest in sites of antiquity has been noted in many places, not least in seventh-century Anglian territory: see Blair 2018, passim. This also seems a characteristic of later Knights Templar properties, of which the barony of Kirkliston was one.
28. Canmore is silent on the matter, and nothing can be traced online, but John Tweedie was known as ‘the Currie historian’ and it is unlikely that he would have fabricated such a story with such a plausible date on which he fails to expand, suggesting he was unaware of its potential significance.
29. At the foot of Powie’s Path (Powispath 1725), an obscure name but suggestive of ModW powys-fa ‘resting-place; ?shrine’ in the light of the cemetery, though there are other more likely options: see Wilkinson, forthcoming (1), s.n.
30. A term dated by Taylor (after Barrow) from the fifth century, still productive in the eighth century, it features as *eclēs in BLITON (eagleːs, s.v.), with a full discussion: cf. the long cist cemetery found in 1901 near Ecclesmachan WLO at Potknowe on Wyndford Farm beside the Niddry Burn, just inside modern Uphall parish (Canmore ID 49294).
to remain pure speculation and any link with St Mungo will remain so even afterwards, barring some amazing discovery. Nonetheless, it again suggests that Lymphoy had some kind of numen or sanctity long before written records are apparent.

There is no archaeology apparent at Lymphoy itself to suggest that we are inspecting the site of an ancient church or enclosed cell, and the extant recordings of its name are relatively late (early sixteenth century). Yet, if we extend Jackson’s assertion that ‘all Celtic speech must have died out there [in West Lothian] at least by the thirteenth century’ (1942, 537) into neighbouring Midlothian, while noting the likelihood of the earlier introduction of Older Scots closer to Edinburgh, then the name cannot have been coined later than about 1100 at the very latest, by which time Lumphinnans FIF (for example) had lost all sanctity. Might the same have happened here? In the light of the apparent dedication of an ecclesiastical haugh to St Mungo at nearby Dalmahoy in the neighbouring parish of Ratho and the potential dedication of a parish kirk to him just downriver in Currie, could it be that Lymphoy (as the name would suggest) is another early dedication, this time of an enclosed field at very least, if not an ancient lost church or cell, to the same patron saint?

Conclusions

Kentigern’s saintly presence in this western corner of Midlothian has long been invisible, silent and almost forgotten. Yet enough evidence has been produced here to indicate that at one time his presence was strong enough to have spawned two place-names containing a Goidelic hypocoristic form of his name, (Dalmahoy and Lymphoy), in addition to a well (St Mungo’s Well), which lay near Currie Kirk (formerly Kinleith) and which itself may have been dedicated to him.

When and how the cult of Kentigern was introduced and took root here is not known. The hypocoristic forms could have been generated by bilingual Goidelic speakers when they encountered a Brittonic name in a still-thriving cult. The fact that both the proposed generic elements (*dail* and *lann*) share close Brittonic cognates might even suggest that in both cases the whole name was gaelicised.

W. F. H. Nicolaisen (*SPN*, 175) saw any Gaelic speaking in Lothian as ‘evidence of a temporary occupation and of the presence of a landowning Gaelic-speaking aristocracy and their followers for something like 150–200 years’, and such a narrow window has been later confirmed by Thomas Clancy (2010, 352–53). As mentioned above, the spread of Gaelic in this area in an ecclesiastical context may also have been linked to the expansion of the diocese of St Andrews south of the Forth. This would have followed in the wake of the annexation of Lothian

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to the Gaelic-speaking kingdom of Alba in the mid-tenth century, a process which probably began with the taking of Edinburgh by King Ildulb (954–962) (Woolf 2007, 194).

Whatever the context in which Dalmahoy and Lymphoy were coined, they represent some of the earliest evidence for the cult of Kentigern in Scotland and as such make an important contribution to how we understand the nature and spread of that cult.

APPENDIX

Forms of the two principal place-names discussed

DALMAHOY  Ratho parish NT144687

Alisaundre de Dalmahoy 1296 Inst. Pub. (Ragman Roll), 133 ['Alexander of Dalmahoy' of the county of Edinburgh]
Henry de Dalmahoy 1296 Inst. Pub. (Ragman Roll), 146
S<igillum> Alexandri de Dalmihoi 1296 CDS ii 809, 185 [Seal]
(Alexander of) Dalmhoy c.1330 Newbattle Reg. no. 206 [sic]
terram meam de Dalmhoy c.1330 Newbattle Reg. no. 206 ['my land of Dalmahoy']

Dalmehoy 1336 CDS [reference from PNML, 275]
Dalmohoy 1357 Register House Charter [reference from PNML, 275]
decimas garbales vill<e> de Dalmahoy 1444 Midl. Chrs (Corstorphine) no. 8 (p. 302) ['the garbal teinds of the vill of Dalmahoy']
(Alexander) Dalmayhoy 1488 ADA, 129 baronia de Dalmahoy 1527 RMS iii no. 434 [to Alexander of Dalmahoy, the lands of Fauldhill in ‘the barony of Dalmahoy’]

Dalmahay 1654 Blaeu

LYMPHOY  Currie parish NT173670

Note that PNML has Limphoy (unsourced) as a headform.

Lumphoy 1513 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 151 ['from the fermes (land
rents) of the lands of Lymphoy and Balerno’ (de firmis terrarum de
Lumphoie et Ballerno)]
Wester Lumphoy 1526 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 21 [rubric]
the westir half of our landis of Lumphoy 1526 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh)
no. 21 [(our = Holy Trinity) ‘lyand within the barony of Ballerno and
schirefdome of Edinburgh’]
Ester Lumphoy 1526 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 22 [rubric]
the estir half of the landis of Lumphoy 1526 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh)
no. 22
barrouny off Lumpho 1530 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 29 [‘my landis
off the Hill ... lyand within the barrouny off Lumpho’]
receptoris firmarum terrarum de Lumphoie 1530 RDS (Holy Trinity,
Edinburgh) no. 171 [the account of Dom William Temple (Tempill)
‘receiver of the land-rents of the lands of Lymphoy’]
Lumphoe 1530 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 171 [‘for the land-rents of
the lands of Lymphoy called Balerno and the Hill’ (pro firmis terrarum de
Lumphoe vocatarum Ballerno et le Hill)]
Lymphoy 1544 RSS [reference from PNML, 176–77]
Lymphoe 1551 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 173
pro duobus Lymphoy Estir et Vester 1551 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 173
[‘for the two Lymphoy(s), Easter and Wester’]
de duobus Lymphoyis 1552 RDS (Holy Trinity, Edinburgh) no. 175 [‘from the
two Lymphoys’]
Lumphoy 1591 RPC [reference from PNML, 176–77]
Lumphoy 1654 Blaeu
lymphoy C[astle] 1682 Adair [with Castle icon]
W. lymphoy 1682 Adair
Limphoy 1753 Roy
E. Lumphoy 1773 Armstrongs
W. Lumphoy 1773 Armstrongs [but Moleaney 1753 Roy, later Malleny (Map 5)]
Lamphoy 1817 Kirkwood map [beside Lennox Castle]
Lomphoy Castle (in ruins) 1850s OSNB
Lymphoy 1850s Ordnance Survey 6 inch 1st edn [a farm beside ‘Lennox Tower
(ruins of)’]
Acknowledgements
I should like to offer thanks to Dr Simon Taylor for reading earlier drafts and making many helpful suggestions (especially as regards the final version) and to the anonymous reader for making two or three more, all of them followed in some way. A field trip in August 2018 with the late Dr Steve Sweeney-Turner proved extremely fruitful; thanks too to him and the several informants listed in the text. Iain Bower Gillespie and Allan Lyon Maclaughlan also deserve thanks for logistical help. None of the above is responsible for any of my errors.

Parish Abbreviations (see Map 1)31

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<tr>
<td>COR</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Cramond</td>
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<td>Dalmahoy</td>
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<td>Glencorse</td>
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<td>Kirkliston</td>
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<td>Colinton</td>
</tr>
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<td>Currie</td>
</tr>
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<td>Edinburgh St Cuthbert</td>
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<td>Kirknewton</td>
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<td>LAS</td>
<td>Lasswade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCK</td>
<td>Penicuik</td>
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<tr>
<td>WLN</td>
<td>West Linton</td>
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Map 1
J. Anderson and W. Hunter, *Plan of the Environs of Edinburgh* (1834), showing the westernmost parishes of Midlothian as far as Kirknewton, the easternmost of the three Calders parishes (Midcalder and West Calder being further west, unmapped), which were in Midlothian until the mid-1970s. Note that before 1891 both Cramond and Kirkliston parishes straddled the Almond, while the latter had a detached portion in the Pentlands around Listonshiels (wrongly attributed to Kirknewton on this map). See Parish Abbreviations above. With acknowledgement and thanks for use: each map is accessible on the National Library of Scotland website: <http://maps.nls.uk/view/>. 
Map 2
Timothy Pont/Hendrik Hondius 1630, *A New Description of the Shyres Lothian and Linlitquo*, focussing on the same general area and the relationship of the major names discussed in the text.
Map 3
John Adair, 1682, *Map of Midlothian: The Water of Leith from Bearna (Balerno) to Killith (Kinleith).*
Map 4
John Adair, 1735, *A map of Mid-Lothian, survey'd by Mr Adair*: showing the more southerly area covered in the article, from the *Gogar Burn* south. *Kinleith Burn* is to the right, as also below.
Map 5
John Thomson, 1821, *Edinburgh Shire* (part of his 1832 *Atlas of Scotland*): it shows later divisions of the smaller area. Note that Wester Lymphoy (a seventeenth-century Country House) is by now called Malleny (*Malleny House* nowadays: Canmore ID 50278): its proprietor erected the stone by the cairn (Map 6).
Map 6
OS Six-inch, 1st edn, 1853, Edinburghshire, Sheet 5, showing the relationship of Lymphoy and Lennox Tower to Cairn and Currie Kirk, c.1300m/1421 yards from the Ruins of the tower. St Mungo's Well goes unmarked, but is beside the Water of Leith, roughly between Currie and Bridge [NT184677].
### Maps Cited in the Text

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Description</th>
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<td>Joan Blaeu</td>
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<td>John Adair</td>
<td><em>A map of Mid-Lothian, survey’d by Mr Adair</em> (printed)</td>
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<td>Thos. Winter</td>
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<td>1763</td>
<td>John Laurie</td>
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<td>John Laurie</td>
<td><em>A plan of Edinburgh &amp; the country adjacent</em></td>
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<td>James Knox</td>
<td><em>Map of the shire of Edinburgh</em> [dated 1812 in the NLS maps shire listing]</td>
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<td>John Thomson</td>
<td><em>Edinburgh Shire</em> (part of his 1832 <em>Atlas of Scotland</em>)</td>
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<td>Anon.</td>
<td><em>Plan of the Estate of Harburn</em>&lt;sup&gt;32&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>J. Anderson &amp; W. Hunter</td>
<td><em>Plan of the Environs of Edinburgh</em></td>
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<td>c.1850</td>
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<td>Ordnance Survey 6-in 2nd edn</td>
<td><em>Edinburghshire, VI.NE (Currie, Ratho)</em></td>
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32. Many thanks to Lindsey and Dougie Fleming for providing me access to this estate plan.

33. Many thanks to Claire and George Duncan of The Bents for letting me inspect this estate plan, which, put together for the proposed sale of the estate, differs interestingly from the one twenty or so years earlier.
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PNML: Dixon, Norman, The Place-Names of Midlothian, unpublished PhD thesis

34. ‘Interleaved copy with many original observations, corrections, amplifications, etc. in the author’s hand’: many thanks to James O’Hagan for allowing me access to this unique text whose addenda include much genealogy of interest to any archivist of the Sandilands as well as snippets of local history, etc.
(University of Edinburgh, 1947), now online at <http://www.spns.org.uk>, and published unironically without a location by the Scottish Place-Name Society, 2011. Note that Dixon's original pagination has been adhered to throughout.


**RDS**: *Registrum domus de Soltre etc.* (Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1861): online.


**RSS**: *Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum* ed. M. Livingstone and others (Edinburgh 1908–) [abbreviation omitted from PNML, 349].


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Reviews


The publication of the collected works of Rev. Charles M. Robertson, edited by Dr Jacob King, makes a hitherto largely overlooked resource accessible to scholars with an interest in Scotland’s place-names at a very reasonable price. Most of the material contained in the book can be found in its original form in the National Library of Scotland (NLS) (p. xxiii), but compiling Robertson’s work in a published volume is an important step towards acknowledging the impact of his fieldwork on early Scottish toponymy. The first part of the book consists of a selection of ten essays, the majority of which remained unpublished in Robertson’s lifetime. They include a wide range of topics which do not only address Gaelic place-names. A brief selection follows here: in the ‘Topography and Traditions of Eigg’ Robertson has collected traditions associated with ecclesiastical and other sites from a range of sources, both published and unpublished. In the essay on ‘Biblical Place-names of Scotland’ (which in fact mainly consists of Scots place-names rather than Gaelic ones), a selection of Scottish place-names which he has labelled ‘Scripture names’ are presented. Finally, in ‘Studies in Place-names’ as King states in the introduction, ‘The published article as it stands is really on three topics’ (p. 67), beginning with Names of Peoples, moving on to a discussion on the elements Aber- and Pit- and concluding with a discussion on Proper names of Streams and Valleys. The second part of the book, which is arguably where its true value lies, is comprised of regional place-name surveys of varying scope. The most detailed surveys cover Jura, Highland Perthshire and Wester Ross, with other surveys covering Islay, Mid Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, Argyll and the Southern Hebrides’ (p. xxxii). The lack of coverage in the Western and Northern Isles reflects an emphasis on collecting first-hand material in areas where Robertson himself lived. The surveys typically consist of place-name entries given in the Ordnance Survey form, accompanied by the Gaelic pronunciation and other information deemed relevant (p. xxxii).

King’s careful handling of the collections and an editorial policy which aims to present the source material as intact as possible, while maintaining the toponymic focus of the book and removing ‘unnecessary text’ (p. xxxvi), means that the reader has a solid basis from which to use Robertson’s work. Any changes to the original source material and the reasoning behind it are clearly explained in the introduction. For example, as far as possible, overlapping material in Robertson’s notebooks has been merged and this is explained in the introductory notes to each survey (p. xxxv). Both the introduction and notes preceding each essay and
area survey contain helpful detective work which will be a great aid to scholars seeking to make use of the original sources in the NLS. Several of the issues outlined below are addressed by King in the introduction. Additionally, in a source which is so intrinsically linked to the author’s own experiences, the account of Robertson’s life is helpful (pp. xiii–xxiv). It is difficult to criticise any aspect of the editing. However, whilst recognising the vast amount of work required to provide grid references for each entry, the addition of spatial information, at least for important place-names in the surveys, would be highly beneficial, particularly in a book which is explicitly aimed towards toponymists. It is worth highlighting that the title *Scottish Gaelic Place-names* may lead readers to believe that this is a comprehensive, authoritative work on Scotland’s Gaelic place-names; this is not the case. This is a work which, to be used efficiently, requires readers to have (as Dr Simon Taylor puts it on the back cover) ‘a serious interest in Scottish place-names’. In consideration of this, the subtitle, *The Collected Works of Charles M. Robertson*, may have been more appropriately used as the title of the book. Otherwise, there is little to remark on, except for a misplaced footnote on p. 402.

The wealth of place-names collected by someone who knew and lived in the areas surveyed presents the reader with a wonderful resource. Despite this, the significance of these collections has generally been overlooked in toponymic circles and Robertson himself remains relatively unacknowledged compared to other Gaelic scholars of his time. This becomes particularly obvious when considering that, ‘If published today, [W. J. Watson’s 1904] *Place Names of Ross and Cromarty* would certainly be considered a co-authored work. Much material covering the West of Ross-shire is lifted largely verbatim from Robertson’s notebook’ (p. xix). We may conclude that some if not a significant amount of Watson’s information here originally derived from Robertson or was at least influenced by him. Torridon (Applecross) may provide an example of this. In 1902, Robertson objected to ‘Mr Watson’s Norse derivation of it’, instead proposing a Gaelic one, partially based on the local pronunciation (p. 148). In *The Place Names of Ross and Cromarty* (p. 210), published two years later, there is no trace of a Norse interpretation for this place-name. In light of this, these collections are not only an important source for individual place-name forms. They can also allow us to trace the development of traditions that have become embedded in our understanding of Gaelic Scotland from the early twentieth century. As remarked by Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart (p. ix), the place-name surveys provide a wealth of local Gaelic pronunciations, which will be of great assistance to scholars compiling future surveys in the areas covered. They also contain otherwise unrecorded name-forms and, in some instances, place-names that do not appear on any of the OS maps, the importance of which is obvious. Despite its title, the book is not only of value for scholars studying Gaelic place-names. A large number of the place-names collected by
Robertson contain formations that are ultimately of Norse origin and many of the name forms are useful to anyone with an interest in Scandinavian Scotland. The name which appears on the OS maps (modern and first edition six inch) as Leac Earnadail NR445665, containing a Norse coining with ON dalr ‘dale, valley’, will suffice to demonstrate this. Robertson provides the form Leac Earradail (p. 397) which may indicate that the specific element in the original Norse place-name may be of a rather different derivation than the OS map forms suggest. Finally, much can be made of the value of the folklore present in Robertson’s work, which can improve our understanding of the history and development of micro-toponyms. The merit of using folklore as a tool in place-name studies is becoming increasingly acknowledged and there is no doubt that this work will provide an excellent resource for name scholars. The stories also provide intriguing and sometimes humorous reading. An example of this is the story of the cave named Uamh na Corpaich (Jura) where coffins were kept overnight by funeral parties from Colonsay:

On one occasion whilst the party was passing the night in the cave the coffin was seen to move [...] one of the party on this occasion stretched out his hand, took up a loaded gun and aimed and fired at the coffin. He knew well what he was about, however, for when they gathered about the coffin to see the effects of the shot they found an otter béist dubh killed by the shot. The animal had been pulling at the coffin and so caused the movements observed by the watchers. (p. 389)

The collections presented as a whole suffer from the wide range of areas and topics covered. This is a reflection of the original source material, especially the area surveys, which are transcribed from Robertson’s original notebooks. In some cases, these appear to have remained a work in progress for much of his lifetime (see for example his survey of Perthshire, p. 253). The surveys also differ widely depending on Robertson’s own familiarity and experience of each area. For instance, despite living on Islay for over ten years (p. 399), the survey here is very brief and he provides almost no etymologies for the place-names. It is crucial to remember that in some respects Robertson’s scholarship is dated and, unsurprisingly, it is necessary to approach it as a work of its time. Our understanding of several of the topics and place-names discussed has progressed significantly. Notably, in the case of Grulin (p. 19) Dr Alasdair Whyte’s recent work (‘Gruline, Mull, and Other Inner Hebridean Things’, JSNS 8 (2014), 117, 147), in which he argues that Grulin(e) place-names denote a compound with ON grjót ‘(rough) stone(s)’ and ON þing ‘assembly-place’, has provided a substantial contribution to our understanding of these place-names. In the essays, the methodology and presentation of place-name analysis at times require a fresh methodological
Cuthbertson

perspective. For instance, in the essay on Biblical place-names, names as varied as Mount Pisgah (Stonehouse Parish), Jacob’s Well (Uddingston) and Hell’s Glen (Argyll) (pp. 49–51) are discussed under the label ‘Scripture names’. Although the re-analysis of Celtic and Norse names which originally had nothing to do with the Bible is addressed (p. 52), a modern name scholar would undoubtedly analyse the very different contexts in which such names were coined and include a discussion on the validity of labelling place-names such as the Deil’s Beef Tub (p. 50) a ‘Scripture name’. In some of the areas, particularly the Isle of Skye, Robertson has frequently provided his interpretation of place-names of Norse origin with varying efficiency. Here he followed contemporary scholars such as Watson in often simply providing his translation of the name with no further explanation of its etymology and analysis. This is especially problematic considering the often complex nature of Old Norse place-names in Western Scotland. They generally only survive through a lens of Gaelic, often requiring careful and lengthy analysis. However, alternative explanations are occasionally provided when he found the etymology to be especially uncertain, as in Eilean Trodday: “E[ilean] Throdaidh’ [Norse] Thrond’s Isle (or pasture trödh isle)’ (p. 197).

There can be no doubt of the profound value of this book as a resource for scholars in several fields, including toponomastics, oral culture and linguistics. King’s acknowledgement that ‘many of the forms from [Robertson’s] notebooks have dictated Gaelic place-name forms of bilingual road and train station signs across Scotland’ (p. xi) speaks for itself. The careful editing makes an important resource more accessible to scholars. Although the source material cannot be approached as a work following the standards of current onomastic scholarship, particularly with regards to etymological analysis and methodology, this publication undoubtedly provides an excellent resource for Gaelic pronunciations and folklore. It will ensure the appropriate recognition of Robertson’s work in the years to come.

Sofia Evemalm, University of Glasgow

Guy Puzey and Laura Kostanski (eds.), Names and Naming: People, places, perceptions and power (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2016), 258 pp. ISBN 9781783094905

In its introduction, Names and Naming: People, Places, Perceptions and Power states that the volume ‘seeks to contribute to the growing field of critical onomastic theory’ and highlights the drive towards critically analysing names in a social and political context. The edited volume is split into three sections dedicated to issues of identity, attachment and power relations, respectively. Each section contains five chapters dealing with a mixture of personal and place-names.
Part I is entitled ‘The Varied Identities of People and Places’ and focuses on identity formation through naming. The first chapter, by Katarzyna Aleksiejuk, offers a succinct and clear introductory overview to the coining of internet personal names and the research which has thus far been conducted in this field. The second chapter, by Ian D. Clark, examines how Aboriginal toponyms were perceived by nineteenth-century colonialists in Australia by examining the writings of British travellers. He reports that the three most prolific writers on the subject find new English toponyms to be ‘semiotically incongruous’ with the Australian places they name (p. 18). The third chapter, by Michael Walsh, remains in Australia but shifts away from place-names as he explores the changing personal names of Australian Aborigines, both those imposed on and chosen by the community from the first period of continued European contact to the present day. Walsh’s chapter not only covers the social and linguistic aspects of these names through time but also signposts sources for further inquiry into this intriguing topic. In the following chapter, Ellen Bramwell reports on her research conducted on the personal naming practices of a small community on the Western Isles. In examining both official and unofficial names, as well as the motivations behind each, Bramwell’s chapter provides an interesting insight into the interaction between society and naming. In the final chapter of the first section, Peter Mühlhäusler and Joshua Nash report on how the previously stigmatised Norf’k [sic] language is now being used to attract visitors to the tourism dependent Norfolk Island and raise concerns over how genuine this language revitalisation is.

The second section of the book, ‘Attitudes and Attachment’, contains chapters focused on attachment to and attitudes towards names. The first chapter, authored by Laura Kostanski, gives an analysis of attitudes towards reviving indigenous names for the Grampians National Park, Victoria, as well as for areas within it. Through this analysis, Kostanski suggests ways in which authorities may more effectively deal with name restoration. The next chapter moves to Finland as Terhi Ainiala reports on her interviews with Helsinkians into their attitudes towards the street names in their neighbourhood. Ainiala analyses attitudes towards the names and name elements as well as the reasoning behind the attitudes, concluding that street names are judged on their ‘lexical appearance’, descriptiveness and memorability. The third chapter, by Maimu Berezkina, examines the Linguistic Landscape of Oslo and conducts socio-onomastic surveys in order to investigate how the city’s multicultural population use and perceive place-names and commercial names. Berezkina notes the different language choices made in official and unofficial names and the strong correlation between connection to place and toponymic attachment. In the following chapter, Maggie Scott examines the perception of Scots in both the onomasticon and lexicon. Her findings suggest Scots to be more readily accepted in onomastic contexts than in the lexicon. In the
final chapter, Erzsébet Győrffy discusses her survey conducted with students at the University of Debrecen regarding slang toponyms. Her findings reveal the form and motivation for these slang toponyms as well as the contexts in which they are likely to be used, highlighting slang toponyms as an interesting and fruitful avenue for further study.

The final section of the book, ‘Power, Resistance and Control’, turns attention to the power that naming brings and the impact of power inequalities. In the opening chapter, Guy Puzey uses a Gramscian framework to examine the Nynorsk language movement’s impact on place-names within Norway. He also assesses the situation in northern Italy where the promotion of dialectal spellings for toponyms has strengthened the Lega Nord’s cause. Puzey’s work highlights the power of naming to signal belonging and exclusion. In the following chapter, Staffan Nyström gives an overview of the work carried out by the Name Drafting Committee of Stockholm with regards to parks, footpaths and bridges and discusses name planners’ treatment of multiculturalism and social issues. In the third chapter of this section, Justyna B. Walkowiak systematically examines personal naming policies within a language policy and planning framework. Her work encompasses a number of countries and considers policy changes throughout time and provides an excellent insight into naming policies and their impact. In the next chapter, Aud-Kirsti Pedersen reports on the implementation of the Norwegian Place-Name Act and the issues it faced with regards to Sami and Kven place-names as well as farm name spellings. The final chapter by Kaisa Rautio Helander compares the official recognition of Sami place-names in Finland with that in Norway and discusses how effective each legislator has been in promoting these names.

Overall, the book provides a decent range of works addressing issues of identity, attachment attitudes and power within onomastics. The impact of these varied threads, however, might have been aided by the inclusion of an introduction and/or conclusion to each of the three sections, to give a cohesive and more detailed discussion of the major themes of the chapters within as well as to define some of key terms (e.g. attitude in Part 2). Additionally, the book’s chapters focus primarily on a limited number of European countries, namely Norway, Finland and Scotland, with some forays into Hungary and Italy and, outside Europe, in Australia. It would have been more comprehensive and indeed intriguing, had chapters been included that looked at a more diverse range of countries and continents, particularly considering the broad themes explored. Nevertheless, the volume contains a number of politically and socially aware works and offers a solid contribution to the expanding field of critical onomastics.

Katherine Cuthbertson, University of Glasgow
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SCOTTISH NAME STUDIES FOR 2018

SIMON TAYLOR

University of Glasgow

The aim of this bibliography is to present, in a continuous list arranged alphabetically by author, all relevant articles, chapters in edited books, monographs, CDs, e-books and PhDs (most of which are now available on-line) which appeared in 2018. It is then followed by a Reviews section, and finally by a section on new digital resources.

This bibliography does not cover the shorter articles, often illustrated, on a wide range of Scottish toponymic themes, which appear in Scottish Place-Name News (SPNNews), the excellent twice-yearly newsletter of the Scottish Place-Name Society edited by Bill Patterson. This publication also includes summaries of the papers given at the SPNS spring and autumn conferences. It should be noted that all back-issues of this publication, the first issue of which appeared in 1996, are in the process of being uploaded as pdfs onto the SPNS website <https://spns.org.uk/resources>.

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. The material in these Nomina bibliographies is set out thematically and includes relevant reviews which have appeared in the given year.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone who spots any omissions or errors in the following bibliography. I can be contacted via the JSNS website or on <simon.taylor@glasgow.ac.uk>. Also, I would be glad to receive notice of anything published in 2019 for inclusion in JSNS 14.

In order to make it easier for the reader to find their way around, I have put in bold not only authors’ surnames but also some of the key places, persons or elements discussed in the individual entries.

I would like to thank Carole Hough, Alan James and Eila Williamson.


Breeze, Andrew, 2018, ‘Orkadas and Juvenal ii 161’, The Housman Society Journal XLIV, 37–46 [on the name Orkney; this article is flanked by ones on the names
Richborough and the River Severn].


**Finlay**, Alec, 2018, *Gathering* (Zürich: Hauser & Wirth) [a ‘place-aware guide to the Cairngorms inspired by the place-name collections of Adam Watson’].


**Williams**, Fionnuala, ‘What’s in a Name? The underlying narrative behind contemporary names for small businesses in Belfast, and the use of forms common in oral tradition’, *Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society* Part 118,
Vol. 23, 101–16. [Although not Scotland, it is a great article on an understudied aspect of onomastics, with relevance to business names throughout Britain and Ireland].


**NEW DIGITAL RESOURCES**

*The Berwickshire Place-Name Resource:* <https://berwickshire-placenames.glasgow.ac.uk/>.
Dr Nick Aitchison has written about various aspects of the archaeology and history of early Scotland and Ireland. His current interests focus on the Insular Celts, particularly in what is now Scotland, in an attempt to combine onomastic with archaeological, historical and literary evidence to produce new insights or perspectives. Born and brought up in Stirlingshire, he also has an interest in the place-names of central Scotland.

Richard Coates is Professor emeritus of Onomastics at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He is President of the English Place-Name Society (EPNS) and former Honorary Director of the Survey of English Place-Names. He was Principal Investigator for the Family Names of the United Kingdom project (AHRC 2010–16) and has been Secretary and Vice-President of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (2002–08, 2011–17). His most recent books have been contributions to the Your City’s Place-Names series of the EPNS.

Dr Katherine Cuthbertson recently completed her PhD at the University of Glasgow on ‘The use of name evidence in lexicography: comparative analysis of onomastic data for historical and contemporary Scots’ (2018).

Dr Sofia Evemalm recently completed her PhD at the University of Glasgow on ‘Theory and practice in the coining and transmission of place-names: a study of the Norse and Gaelic anthropo-toponyms of Lewis’ (2018).

Professor Anthony Lodge is Emeritus Professor of French Language and Linguistics in the University of St Andrews. His main area of research is in historical sociolinguistics and dialectology. He is the author of works on the relationship between dialect and standard in Gallo-Romance and on the sociolinguistic history of the French of Paris. He has recently completed a four-volume edition of the municipal accounts of Montferrand (Auvergne) (1259–1385), involving a close analysis of the Auvergnat dialect of medieval Occitan. He is about to publish a history of Pittenweem Priory.

Dr Rex Taylor is an Emeritus Professor of the University of Glasgow. Apart from an early study of personal names in the USA (‘John Doe, Jr: A Study of His Distribution in Space, Time and the Social Structure’, Social Forces 53, 1974), all his publications have been in epidemiology and medical sociology. Since retiring he has divided his time between Scotland and France. He has recently completed a
study of French street names in twenty villages, in which he explores variations in commemorative naming between villages (forthcoming, *Onoma*).

Dr Simon Taylor has been working on various aspects of Scottish place-name studies since the early 1990s, including the production of detailed surveys of Fife (5 volumes, 2006–2012), Kinross-shire (1 volume, 2017) and Clackmannanshire (1 volume, forthcoming). He is employed as a reader in Scottish Name Studies at the University of Glasgow. Editor of *JSNS* since its inception in 2007, he is now co-editor with Richard Cox.

John Garth Wilkinson is a retired schoolteacher who studied at the universities of Granada and Birmingham, gaining a BA (Hons) degree in Spanish and French, which he taught after further studies in Sheffield and Edinburgh, where he switched to the primary sector to work full-time for an eighth of a century, eventually teaching Art part-time. He has also worked as translator, photographer, calligrapher, stage designer, illustrator and caricaturist, being occasional resident cartoonist for the *Scottish Place-Name Society Newsletter*, to which he has contributed several articles, others appearing in *Nomina* and elsewhere; he has also published poetry and fiction. Born half-roads between Cymru and Cumberland, he began learning Welsh in the late 1980s in order to grapple with our earliest place-names; the revamping of his 1992 *West Lothian Place-Names* booklet and two other locally based works are perennially forthcoming.
County abbreviations for Scotland, England and Wales (pre-1975)

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