NAMES, Vol. 57 No. 3, September, 2009, 180–186

Book Reviews

A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names. By DIANE WHALEY. Pp. ix + 423. English Place-Name Society, Regional Series, Vol. 1. Nottingham: English Place-Name Society. 2006. Maps, illustrations. Hardcover. ISBN: 0 904 889 726

"The idea of the Dictionary [was] born very early one morning on the quiet north-western shores of Windermere [. . .]." There cannot be many authors of toponymic publications who, in the opening sentence of their Preface, can lay claim to the birth — or is it the conception? — of their book in such precisely remembered, intriguing detail (xi). What is more, the birth place of this "guide to the place-names of the English Lake District from the earliest times to the twentieth century" lies in the very heart of the region through which readers are promised to be conducted — a beautiful area in the English northwest, beloved of the Romantic poets and painters and still visited by thousands of tourists every year. Such is the pull of the Lake District that those who have fallen in love with it return to it frequently, some of them year after year. The Whaley family — parents Diane and Ian, sons Robin and Matthew — belongs to that category of regular visitors. As Diane Whaley's academic scholarship at the University of Newcastle prominently incorporates the study of place names, their family's fascination with their favorite holiday destination is not limited to the richly varied landscapes but also includes the names which designate the features, creating an awareness of "the need for a comprehensive survey of Lake District place-names" (vi).

The combined interests of the holiday-maker and the name scholar have provided a fruitful symbiosis leading to a satisfactory filling of that need which, in practical terms, has as its main aim the recording and explanation, "as far as possible, of the place names shown on the Ordnance Survey One Inch map of the Lake District (1994 printing) and falling within the boundaries of the Lake District National Park" (xi). As is to be expected of a scholar familiar with the critical importance of placename evidence for historical linguistics, the explanatory facets of her undertaking go beyond the etymologizing of individual names by seeking to associate these names with linguistic strata and establishing chronological sequences. As a consequence of the almost total lack of early documentary sources, this has been no easy task because one often has to rely on Middle English or on even later descendants of earlier names or name elements. Nevertheless, it has been possible to trace pre-Celtic "Old European" (one name), Brittonic and Gaelic Celtic, Latin, North and Midlands varieties of Anglian (from the seventh century) and Old Norse (from the tenth century, having arrived via Scotland, the Hebrides, Ireland and the Isle of Man) before the Norman Conquest, and of French, Middle and Modern English, in the post-Norman Conquest period.

Her findings in that respect are, of course, of considerable value for establishing a settlement stratification of linguistic people in the Lake District, and linguistic historians will gratefully accept them. Of at least equal importance, however, is the diversity of the toponymic vocabulary which not only discloses the Lake District as the product of a long interaction between humans and nature, but also demonstrates the ways in which placenames reflect the unique landscapes of the district. Whaley singles out reference to geology, woodland lakes and tarns, waste and cultivated land, wild and domestic animals, industrial activities, communications and buildings, as well as landscape and leisure (xxvii–xxxiii). All these matters are handled confidently and with the degree of expertise one would expect from one of the foremost name scholars in the country.

 DOI 10.1179/175622709X462487

The guide's particular strength, however, lies in the empathetic treatment of the thirty-five place names for which excellent color photographs, mostly taken by Ian Whaley, are included. Most of these form a separate section in the center of the book, a placing which ensures that readers do not regard them just as a pictorial appendix to the text. It appears to be appropriate to concentrate in this review vicariously on some of these, as well as the cover photograph (both front and back) which, combining three named features, shows "Great Gable from Innominate Tarn, Haystacks." *Great Gable* (2949 ft, 899 m), which is also depicted in a rather striking view on plate 27, is a massive, angle-shaped mountain the name of which combines English *great* and Old Norse *gafl* "gable" (139); an earlier name is *Mykelgavel* 1338 in which the first element was replaced, perhaps even "translated" by *great*. It surely reflects authorial irony that the water feature in the same cover photo, one of the pools on the summit of Haystacks, is called *Innominate Tarn*, a "name" first on record in the early twentieth century, having seemingly replaced an earlier "name" *Loaf Tarn* (188). *Haystacks* (159), *Hay-rick* in 1780, is, like *Great Gable*, a compound of an English specific and a Norse generic; the latter is Old Norse *stakkr* "stack," while the former is derived from Old English *hēg* "hay." It is of interest that all these generics — *gafl*, *stakkr*, and *tjorn* — are ultimately of Norse origin, although they were later involved in different kinds of English "naturalizations." So much only for the cover, and one could have said more.

Another photo which brings together three different names is plate 13 "River Derwent, Grange and Greenup (the small hollow above the village)," names of a water course, a settlement and a small valley. The river-name, which is recorded early as *Deruventionis fluvii* in the eighth century and is supposed to be the only pre-Celtic "Old European" name in the Lake District, means "(River) with oak trees" and has given its name also to one of the lakes, *Derwentwater* (pl.15). If its antiquity is correct, the name is likely to be about 2000 years old, in contrast to *Grange* (135–136), the "outlying farm" or "granary" of the Borrowdale estate; recorded at the end of the fourteenth century, it is in the photo depicted at the bridging point over the Derwent, while *Greenup* "the green (blind) valley" (Old English *grēne* plus *hop*) bears an Anglian name, rare in the Lake District (144). Another old name, *Trusmadoor*, is confirmed by plate 1 as aptly meaning "the pass called *Trusma*, the doorlike place" (348–349), a compound of Cumbric *trus* "doorway, pass, gap in mountains" (= Welsh *drws*) and Brittonic *–ma* "place," with the element *door* being added at a later stage. This is a prime example of a Celtic name first being recorded as late as 1867 on the Ordnance Survey map. There is also a *Truss Gap* (349).

Lake Windermere (pl. 31), "on the quiet north-western shores" of which the idea of this *Dictionary* was happily conceived, is probably the best known of all the expanses of water in the Lake District (374). On record first as *Winendermer* in 1154–1189 and *Winandremer(e)* in 1157–1169, the name means "Winand's or Vinand"s lake," the second element being Old English *mere* "lake, pool." If, as has been proposed, *Winand* is a continental Germanic personal name to which the Old Norse genitive *–ar* has been added, this "would suggest that Old Norse still survived as a living language at that time" (370). Another famous lake name is *Grasmere* (136), on the banks of which Wordsworth's Cottage is still a tourist attraction. Although first recorded as *Grysemere* in 1374 and *Grissemere* in 1375, the first element is probably Old English/Old Norse *gres* "grass." There is no photograph of it in the guide.

This reviewer's first and lasting memory of the Lake District is the mountain *Helvellyn* (3116 ft, 949 m), *Helvillon* 1577 (162–163), and especially its spectacular *Striding Edge* (*Striden-edge* 1805), which probably combines Old English *striden* and English *edge*, although it has been suggested that *striding* is a secondary replacement for an earlier specific (329). The pictorial section has a view of its neighboring feature *Swirral Edge* (pl. 20) perhaps "the precipitous, giddy-making ridge" (334).

Of the several other photographs, plate 18 stands out, and it is not of a natural feature but of a three-dimensional signpost pointing to places with Celtic, Anglian, and Scandinavian

names in northeast Lakeland: Askham, Lowther, and Penrith are in one direction, Whale and Knipe in another, and Helton, Bampton, and Haweswater in the third. Of these, *Lowther* and *Penrith* are Brittonic; *Askham*, *Whale*, and *Knipe* are Old Norse; *Askham* (*Ascum* 1232) is Old Norse "at the ash trees," with *–ham* a later English replacement of the Old Norse dative plural ending; *Haweswater* is Old English but containing a Norse personal name; and *Helton* and *Bampton* are (Old) English. Thus, the wayfarer not only has a choice of different locations but also of various aspects of the linguistic history of the Lake District.

These names are only a small sample of the well over two thousand placenames (main entries and satellite names) which form the corpus of the volume under review, supported by a felicitous layout, a list of common elements and an extensive bibliography. It is tempting to describe the *Dictionary* as an ideal example of "onomastic tourism" as long as this is not misunderstood as contrasting popular appeal with rigorous scholarship, for Diane Whaley's book is both "popular" and "scholarly," a successful symbiosis on which she is to be congratulated. The English Place-Name Society was wise to make it the first volume in its recently established "Regional Series" which straddles its usual county-based approach; the series could not have had a better start. *The Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names* also proves that the visual element so effectively introduced by Margaret Gelling in her *Place-Names in the Landscape* (1984) is here to stay as an essential ingredient in the presentation of toponymic materials.

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Pynchon Character Names: A Dictionary. By Patrick Hurley. Pp. vii + 195. Acknowledgements, a note on citation, abbreviations, preface, introduction, bibliography. Jefferson, NC: McFarland. 2008. ISBN: 978-0-7864-3458-9

Thomas Pynchon scholars and more general readers of his novels will find much to value in Patrick Hurley's expansive dictionary. Containing over 2000 character names, the volume is a companion to Pynchon's thirteen novels beginning with *V*. (1963) and continuing through *Against the Day* (2006). Additionally, the dictionary includes character names from Pynchon's short fiction. While Hurley builds upon the work of other scholars, including J. Kerry Grant's respected guides to *V*. and *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965) and cites standard onomastic references like *The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, many of his best entries are those that draw upon his own expertise as a reader and scholar of Pynchon.

This dictionary will be a useful tool for many Pynchon scholars and of particular interest to those currently working on the American novelist's most recent publication, *Against the Day*. Because little onomastic research on this particular novel exists, Hurley is the de facto interpreter of its characters' names. As evidenced in the following entry on the Kieselguhr Kid, a nickname in *Against the Day*, Hurley can be an astute and concise analyst.

> The name is explained in the passage: "'Kieselguhr' being a kind of fine clay, used to soak up nitroglycerine and stabilize it into dynamite" (171). The nickname for this dynamiting outlaw (Webb Traverse and later applied to Frank Traverse in Mexico) joins one component of dynamite to a common outlaw nickname (Billy the Kid *et al.*). The *k* alliteration also echoes that enigmatic character in GR [*Gravity's Rainbow*], the Kenosha Kid. Perhaps there is also a pop culture reference to Jimmie "J. J." Walker, the dynamite kid, actor popular in the 1970s.

Hurley's convincing connections between the name and its scientific, historical, linguistic, literary, and pop cultural references are representative of the most effective entries in this volume.

The introduction to the dictionary provides an overview of literary naming practices and explores Pynchon's particular use of names within this broader context. Hurley presents general categories for the placement of names, those that are descriptive of a character's

qualities or personality and others emblematic of a character's broader social roles. Hurley considers Pynchon's predilection for bestowing characters with humorous names, like Cesár Flebótomo or Krinkles Porcino, and places him in a line that stretches back to Rabelais and his predecessors. These comic names, frequently puns or grotesqueries, are discussed by Hurley as forces that disrupt the divide between the upper and lower classes, which the author identifies as a common theme in Pynchon novels. Hurley notes that Pynchon character names often serve a dual purpose: to describe a character and to disturb the social order simultaneously. In addition to comic names, Hurley looks at historical names featured in many of Pynchon's novels, in particular, *Mason & Dixon* (1997) and *Against the Day*. Additionally, Hurley employs literary theories, ranging from Mikhail Bakhtin's carnival to Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, in his discussion of naming practices to reveal the playfulness and elusiveness of Pynchon's onomastic choices.

The dictionary itself showcases the range of Pynchon character names from the exotic (Gino Profane and Oedipa Maas) to the mundane (Fiona and Frank) and from the historical (James Boswell and James the Second) to the pop cultural (Galactica and Cherrycoke). The comic qualities inherent in many of the names extend across such categories. There is no need to be engaged in serious Pynchon scholarship to enjoy this dictionary. The range and inventiveness of Pynchon's character names are most evident to a reader when perusing a single column in the volume selected at random. In his most useful entries, Hurley provides etymological sources, identifies various historical references and/or religious allusions, and allows multiple and plausible meanings to emerge. What results is a fuller appreciation of the character's name and of Thomas Pynchon as a creator of names. Less useful entries offer mere identification or origin.

Yet the work is often at cross purposes. Hurley resists the very taxonomy he creates — an alphabetically arranged list of Pynchon character names replete with meanings and etymologies — because, as he observes, it strikes him as anti-Pynchonian to attempt such a schema. In the heart of his introduction, Hurley interprets Pynchon's acts of literary naming as the antithesis of naming (if naming is to be construed as a powerful and empowering act) and emphasizes, in a post-structuralist sense, the impossibility of names' meaning anything tangible. In light of such a perspective, this reviewer finds the close of the book's introduction to read like an apologia:

> I do not expect the reader to accept all or even most of the glosses I have quoted and provided. I have tried to provide a *range* of possibilities for the meanings of names wherever possible [. . .]. The purpose of this dictionary is to provide possibilities and outline trends and groupings, not to insist on a preferred reading or to clearly define a poetics of naming in Pynchon. It is meant to be a helpful resource. Of course, some names might not mean anything at all [. . .].

This authorial admission is at odds with the text on the book's back cover that promises an examination of "Pynchon's character names as a part of his greater literary strategy, establishing a set of categories through which most of the names may be understood."

Hurley's emphasis on the meaninglessness, in his estimation, of certain Pynchon names and the futility, again in his estimation, of assigning stable meanings to others, is evident throughout his dictionary. Because Hurley lists in excess of 2000 Pynchon character names, a significant portion of the entries are given names or surnames, like Claire and Gilmore, for which Hurley provides no gloss beyond "common name." A reader who consults this reference for more information on the name Maria in *V*. and finds "common name" will likely experience disappointment. (Maria in *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973) fares somewhat better; in this entry Hurley provides a brief discussion of religious allusion.) In contrast to such dismissive glosses, entries for Pynchon's major characters, however droll or extreme their names, and for minor characters with extraordinary names, are appropriately meaningful, however anti-Pynchonian that might sound.

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A Corpus of Latin Inscriptions of the Roman Empire containing Celtic Personal Names. By Marilynne E. Raybould and Patrick Sims-Williams. Pp. x + 284. Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications. 2007. Hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-9527478-7-1

The Geography of Celtic Personal Names in the Latin Inscriptions of the Roman Empire. By Marilynne E. Raybould and Patrick Sims-Williams. Pp. vi + 210. Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications. 2007. Paper cover. ISBN: 978-0-9527478-6-4

These two books, *Corpus* and *Geography*, present the fruits of one research program, carried out by the authors at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, with the aid of a grant from the British Academy. The books are so interdependent — indeed, each is of limited use without the other — that the only real way to review them is together. It is not quite clear why they were not published as one book.

The scope of the project undertaken by the authors is as follows. First, they have collected all clearly Celtic compound (di- or tri-thematic) names from in the main indices of *Onomasticon Provinciarum Europae Latinarum* (*OPEL*), the four-volume Hungarian/Austrian production listing personal names from the Latin inscriptions of the provinces of the European western empire, including Cisalpine Gaul (but not, rather crucially, the rest of Italy). Secondly, they reprint (in the *Corpus*) all the inscriptions in which these names appear, together with their own translations, brief notes on the form of each stone and where it was found (taken from the epigraphic publication where it first appeared), and the occasional editorial annotation. Each inscription is given a code number. Thirdly, in the *Geography*, all the name-instances are tabulated, grouped together as variants of standard forms which are listed alphabetically together with the code of the inscription as it appears in the *Corpus*, other publication reference, findspot and brief supplementary information. They are then retabulated according to secondary and tertiary themes. Finally, they are tabulated once more according to findspot (by latitude and longitude). The *Geography* also includes some maps and a discussion of the geographical distribution of the names, and lists all themes accepted as constitutive of a "Celtic compound name" along with a selection of names that were considered for inclusion but ultimately rejected. In this they have taken guidance from an impressive range of recent scholarship, in which Dafydd Ellis Evans' *Gaulish Personal Names* (1967) occupies a prominent place, but they have also exercised their own critical skills, and almost always with full statement of their reasons.

To give an example of how it all works in practice, we can take a name of middling incidence, *Senocondus*. It appears in that form in two inscriptions: a large but very fragmentary dedication, probably municipal, from Mainz-Kastell in Germany (BEG 118 in the *Corpus*) and a short family tomb inscription from Narbonese Gaul (NAR 054). There are also three instances of the derived form *Senocondius*, with the distinctive *-ius* ending appropriate to use as a Latin *nomen gentile*: one of these is Senocondius Secundus, the son of Senocondus in NAR 054, an inscription he dedicated, while a separate inscription (NAR 053) found in the same commune, was dedicated to a Senocondius Serapio by his grandson (or nephew), again called Senecondius Secundus. The same man? The authors seem to have decided against it, and there are reasons for so doing, but the case is a clear instance of the risk of double-counting. It also indicates the problem of precision in name-endings; the father in NAR 054 is named in the genitive case (*Senecondi*) and it is editorial judgment that makes him Senecondus rather than Senecondius. The five separate instances of the two names are listed together in the first two tables in the *Geography*, first in straightforward alphabetical order, with other names beginning with *seno-*, and then together with those containing the subsidiary theme *cond-*. They are then listed again according to their respective findspots in table 3.

The quantity of material covered by the project is reasonably large: 814 inscriptions (drawn from about 45,000 in *OPEL*), yielding a somewhat larger number of names. (Astonishingly the authors do not seem to state clearly how many names form the basis of their study. As the maps and tables on pp. 22–25 of the *Geography* make clear, they are much more interested in

the incidence of the inscriptions, and all statements relating to incidence of names need to be read accordingly.) The work will be of great use for easily discovering, for instance, what compounds take *-gnato* or *-nerto* as secondary themes, and where they are used; you can then easily see whether the usage pattern fits with the overall survival of compound names of Celtic origin. All in all, few subsidiary themes seem to have been widely productive and many had very restricted use; *-nerto* seems basically to have been used in *Esunertus* and *Counertus/Cobnertus*; *-namo* and *-namant* survive only with *ad-* as *Adnam(i)us* and *Adnamat(i)us*. This is interesting and useful to know.

There are, however, many odd and confusing aspects to this project and the way its results have been published. There are practical issues for the reader to contend with. The *Corpus*, for instance, has no indices of any sort other than a concordance to the main epigraphic corpora. So to find a name that interests you in the *Corpus* you need to look it up in the *Geography* and use the code number given there. (I know of one museum department where this will not be possible because they did not invest in the *Geography*, not having realized that it was necessary.) Rapid use of the *Geography*, however, is not something that comes easily. The three main tables all look the same at first glance, though two of them give a rather disconcerting initial impression since they are ordered not by their leading column but by entries in subsidiary ones. Many names and name-elements (including those of *Senocondus*) are decorated with asterisks to indicate that they do or do not appear in the lists of themes given at the start of the volume; these asterisks mean different things for primary and subsidiary themes and are rather confusing.

There are also, inevitably, scientific doubts one could raise over many decisions made by the authors in the interpretation of the inscriptions and the names in them, leading to oddities of what names to group together and what name-elements can be treated as recurrent themes. This is to be expected, and the authors' decisions are generally quite understandable; if they err when assessing relationships between names or name-elements, it tends to be on the side of caution (though see below for the significance of this to the project as a whole).

Then there are questions regarding the scope of the project itself. The material derives almost entirely from inscriptions on stone. This is defensible in a study that aims at relating name forms to locations, though it means that many interesting and undoubtedly relevant names from coins, gems and other small artefacts are overlooked. Where small, portable objects happen to be found, it is reasonably argued, will not be of great significance. But coins, while not having significant findspots as individual items, do have highly significant centers of gravity when viewed *en masse*. It is a shame that the authors have not noted the appearance on British issues of names such as *Aðđedomaros* and *Tincomarus*, which do appear in their material, or *Cunobelinus*, *Esuprastus* and *Dumnocoveros* which do not. The decision to use *OPEL* as the epigraphic source also means that inscriptions in Greek and for that matter in Gaulish are ruled out; indeed the authors have eliminated a few relevant inscriptions that *were* in *OPEL* on the grounds that they are now regarded as being in a Celtic language rather than Latin. Geographically, *OPEL* leaves out not only most of Italy and all of North Africa (the latter probably insignificant in this connection) but the eastern, Greek-speaking half of the empire. This means that the incidence of Celic di- and tri-themes in Asia Minor, with its population of supposedly Celtic Galatians, is not registered at all.

More importantly, however, questions must be raised over the statistical usefulness of a study based not upon all Celtic names, but only upon compound ones. The authors are aware of this issue (and call it "a real difficulty" [*Geography* 1–2]) and they do not, it seems, labor under the old view that compound names are any more genuinely representative of Celtic onomastics, the simple forms being merely hypocoristics or derivations formed from compounds. Nonetheless, having admitted the drawbacks of their approach, they dismiss them rather too airily for this reader's ease of mind. As the authors confess, the ratio of compound names to simple forms as recorded in Latin epigraphy may well be far from constant throughout the empire. Scholars of names will be able to think of many plausible reasons why this might

be so, and I feel the authors really ought to have argued better if they want readers to accept that it is not the case. Secondly, the greater security with which the authors believe compound names can be identified as Celtic may be precarious. It was undoubtedly easier to collect the more prominent and arguably more transparently Celtic compound forms (though there are also difficulties in how to define a compound name) but I really do not see how a selection that is limited in this way can tell us about Celtic onomastics in general.

Underlying this question, of course, is the much larger one of what constitutes a Celtic name. Celticity has lost most of its utility as an ethnic and cultural category in ancient world studies since the beginning of the 1990s — and with reason. It remains a highly important linguistic category, as the term for a branch of Indo-European tongues apparently closely related to Italic. For many languages of ancient Europe the evidence for relationships is largely onomastic, so a risk of circularity always dogs the study of ancient world Celtic names. Sensible scholars are aware of this, but the fact remains that even including onomastic material the linguistic evidence in some parts is so sparse that it fades away into surrounding areas the closer you look. Marilynne Raybould and Patrick Sims-Williams, being sensible scholars, have therefore drawn the boundary cautiously and conservatively. But that very caution — imposed by a project that invokes a category we cannot fully recognize and distinguish — means that much that might be relevant or instructive is left out.

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