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Reviews

Scottish Hill Names: The Origin and Meaning of the Names of Scotland's Hills and Mountains. By PETER DRUMMOND. Pp. 240. Scottish Mountaineering Trust. 2007. £15.00. ISBN: 978 0 907521 95 1

When, in 1991, Peter Drummond published his account of the origin and meaning of the names of Scotland's hills and mountains (*Scottish Hill and Mountain Names*, Scottish Mountaineering Trust), this was justifiably welcomed by both mountaineers and name scholars alike. Indeed, the book proved to be so popular that a reprint became necessary in 1992; the author and the trust could therefore have been forgiven if, when, a few years later, the need for yet another edition arose, they had opted for another reprint of what had apparently become the widely accepted guide to the subject. Instead they chose to revise and expand it completely, taking into account the greater availability of certain important early sources, among them the maps of Timothy Pont and Johan Blaeu, the former dating from the late sixteenth and the latter from the mid-seventeenth century. In addition, they decided to restructure many of the thematic chapters into regional ones, to make them correspond to the Scottish Mountaineering Club's district and hillwalker's guide book series. These innovative changes are clearly to be applauded from a user's point of view, as is the placing of a substantial new chapter (16–63) at the heart of the volume, consisting of an alphabetically arranged, copiously annotated corpus of well over one hundred "Hill Name Generics" of Gaelic, Scots, Norse, and Cumbric provenance in Scottish toponymic usage. A combined examination of these two inventories, one geographically oriented, the other based on linguistic-etymological principles, provides convenient access to the main objective of the publication.

While, in general, the discussions of linguistic origin and geographical scatter complement each other satisfactorily, it would be too simplistic to expect this to be always the case, especially since the mountaineers and hillwalkers with an interest in toponymical matters are not only confronted with secondary strata within primary linguistic layers but also, even more confusingly, with different spelling conventions. Drummond's inspection of the complexities encountered in attempts to understand the variations in the map forms of Gaelic *beinn*, with almost one thousand occurrences by far the most common of all Gaelic oronymic generics and specifics, demonstrates that very helpfully. The spelling *beinn*, following Gaelic orthographic rules, is the most frequently attested and therefore most straightforward, in instances in which the whole compound name is intended to be written in Gaelic, reflecting a Gaelic context, as in *Beinn a' Chaolais* "mountain of the narrows," *Beinn Fhada* "long mountain," *Beinn nan Caorach* "mountain of the sheep," *Beinn Chreagach* "rocky mountain," and *Beinn Mhòr* "big mountain," but also *Glas-bheinn* "grey hill," *Mðr-bheinn* "big mountain", *Garbh-bheinn* "rough mountain," *Corra-bheinn* "pointed mountain," *Creach-bheinn* "boundary mountain," *Croic-bheinn* "antler mountain," *Croit-bheinn* "humped mountain," or *Airgiod Bheinn* "silver hill," in which specifics, mostly adjectives, precede the generics, causing initial mutation of the latter [*bh- = v-*]. This morphological principle with phonological consequences extends also to bilingual names such as *Bla-bheinn*, *Col-bheinn*, and *Rois-bheinn*, the specifics of which are Norse *bla* "blue," *kollr* "summit," and *hross* "horse," respectively; the map form of the first of these, *Blaven*, displays a mixture of a Norse specific and an Anglicized spelling *–ven* of Gaelic *–bheinn*, which sometimes may be regarded as a translation of Norse *fjall* "hill" (cf. *Roiseal* and *Rossal*). As regards Norse *fjall*, the unaware hillwalking map user has to be alerted to the fairly recently implemented Ordnance Survey policy of replacing, in most of the

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Hebrides, the Anglicized names containing this element with Gaelicized ones: *Airneabhal* for *Arneval*, *Easabhal* for *Easaval*, *Healabhal* for *Healaval*, *Huisebhal* for *Husival*, *Maireabhal* for *Marrival*, *Oireabhal* for *Oreval*, *Ruabhal* for *Rueval*, *Sheabhal* for *Heaval*, *Tahabhal* for *Tahaval*, and so on. This practice does, of course, not apply only to hill names or alternative spellings, so that we now find *Steòrnabhagh* for *Stornoway*, *An Tairbert* for *Tarbert*, *Caolas na Hearadh* for the *Sound of Harris*, *Hiort* for *St Kilda*, *Loch Shiphoirt* for *Loch Seaforth*, *Barabhas* for *Barvas*, *Bearnaraigh* for *Berneray, Bàgh a' Chaisteil* for *Castlebay*, or *Rubha Rhobhanais* for the *Butt of Lewis*. There may well be good reasons for these replacements, but not everybody owns the most recent edition of the relevant Ordnance Survey maps, and it is therefore a welcome gesture of Drummond's to provide the two alternatives where appropriate in order to avoid confusion.

Fortunately, this potential source of bewilderment does not exist with regard to the large majority of *beinn*-names in which the generic appears as *Ben-*, an Anglicized spelling approximating the Gaelic pronunciation: *Ben Alder*, *Ben Bowie*, *Ben Cruachan*, *Ben Hope*, *Ben Loyal*, *Ben More*, *Ben Rinnes*, *Ben Vorlich*, and *Ben Wyvis*. Nevertheless, the establishment of reliable etymologies — "the origin and meaning" — of this large toponymic vocabulary presents its own difficulties for the serious enquirer, and the author of the volume under review therefore quite rightly devotes most of his endeavors to this task. As an aside, this reviewer may be allowed to insert at this point the observation that several *Ben*-names, especially the designations of some of the best-known mountains, like *Ben Avon*, *Ben Lawers*, *Ben Lomond*, and *Ben Nevis*, are derived from named features in the neighborhood, sometimes as members of clusters, for example, *Ben Lomond, Loch Lomond*, and the river *Leven*, or *Ben Nevis*, *Glen Nevis*, and the river *Nevis*, a factor that has to be taken into account when determining the specifics of these names. It is also of interest to note that, according to Drummond, nearly thirty percent of the so-called "Munros" (i.e., mountains over 3000 ft or 914 m in height) and nearly fifty per cent of the "Corbetts" (i.e., mountains between 2500 and 3000 ft, or 762 m and 414 m) have *beinn-* or *sgùrr*-names, and that an additional thirty per cent of the former and twenty-five per cent of the latter are designated by another four Gaelic mountain-name generics: *càrn*, which has also been borrowed into Scottish English as *cairn* but does not always apply to elevations with cairn-shaped tops or loose accumulations of stones (*Càrn an Eòin* "bird cairn," *Càrn nam Fiaclach* "tooth-shaped cairn," *Càrn Chuinneag* "water-bucket cairn," *Càrn na Criche* "boundary cairn," *Càrn na Saobhaidhe* "cairn of the foxes' den"); *meall* "heap, mound" (*Meall an Aonaich* "hump of 'a mountain whose summit has the form of a fairly level ridge, generally with steepish sides'," *Meall na h-Iolaire* "eagle mountain" [cf. elsewhere *Benyellary* "*Beinn na h-Iolaire*"], *Meall an t-Suidhe* "hump of the seat"; *creag* (Scots *craig*, Northern English *crag*) "cliff, precipice" *(Creag na Dubh Loch* "craig of the black loch," *Creag na Cailleach* "craig of the old woman," *Creag Pitridh* "Petrie's craig"); and *stob* (in lexical usage in both Gaelic and Scots "stake, upright post," and as a toponymic generic "highest point above a corrie" in the east [*Stob Coire an Lochan*] and "peak" in the west [*Stob Ghabhar* "goat peak"], as in *Stob Coire an t-Saighdeir* "peak of the soldier's corrie," *Stob Garbh* "rough peak" and *Stob Daimh* "stag's peak"). Drummond points out that "nearly two-thirds of the high stobs [. . .] lie in Lochaber, usually with full Munro status, whereas their eastern cousins in the *Cairngorms* are normally mere subsidiary tops of larger mountains" (59). *Sgùrr*-names, on the other hand, are largely limited to the Isle of Skye, where they form nine of the ten Munros in the Cuillin range (*Sgùrr a' Mhadaidh* "peak of the fox," *Sgùrr nam Eag* "peak of the notch," *Sgùrr nan Gillean* "peak of the young men") and to the mainland west of the Great Glen as, for example, the *Five Sisters of Kintail* (*Sgùrr na Mòraichd* "majestic peak," *Sgùrr nan Saighead* "arrows' peak," *Sgùrr na Càrnach* "rocky peak," *Sgùrr na Ciste Duibhe* "peak of the dark chest," and *Sgùrr Fhuaran* "peak of springs"). In contrast to *beinn* (*ben*, *bin*), *gleann* (*glen*) "valley," *càrn* (*cairn*), *creag* (*craig*), as well as *bràigh* (*brae*) "upper part, height above" (*The Braes of Carse*, but also *Braeriach* "speckled height") and *cnoc* "hill" (*Meikle Knock*, but also *Knock More* "big hill"), *sgùrr* has failed to be absorbed into Scots. Perhaps the oldest surviving

generic is *monadh* "mountain," which is, in all probability, pre-Gaelic Celtic in origin and has come down to us as Gaelic *monadh* (*Monadh Liath* "grey mountain"), as well as Scotticized *mounth* (*White Mounth*) and *mond* (*Mormond Hill*) (46). In a sense, the Scots archetypal equivalent of Gaelic *beinn* is *law* (from Old English *hlāw*) "a rounded hill, often of a small conical shape and frequently isolated or conspicuous among others," *Scottish National Dictionary*): *Dundee Law*, *Largo Law*, *Traprain Law*, *North Berwick Law*, *Dollar Law*, *Yetholm Law*, the *Sidlaw Hills*. It is to be found anywhere in southern Scotland, except Dumfriesshire and Galloway, and is notably lacking from areas in which the English loan-word *fell* from Norse *fjall* is common (*Criffel*, *Hart Fell*, *Culter Fell*, and also *Fell Hill*). Other Scots terms occurring among the hill-names of Scotland are *brae* "brow of a hill" (*Whitlaw Brae*), *dod(d)* "a bare, round hill" (*Deuchrie Dod*), *heugh* "cliff" (*Hart Heugh*), *kip* "sharp pointed hill" (*West Kip*), *muir* "moor" (*Allermuir, Cairnsmuir), rig* "ridge" (*Mid Rig*, *Firthhope Rig*), *seat* "seat" (*Arthur's Seat*), *tap/top/tip* "top of a hill" (*Tap o' Noth*, *Meikle Tap*).

As already indicated, Drummond takes care of a detailed account of the spatial distribution of Scottish mountain- and hill-names in the drastically revised version of his book in a series of major chapters devoted to individual regions (94–185), six mainland ones (*North-West Highlands*, *The Cairngorms*, *Central Highlands*, *Southern Highlands*, *Central Lowlands*, *Southern Uplands*) and one particularly extensive one dealing with twenty Hebridean islands (*Arran*, *Barra*, *Benbecula*, *Canna*, *Coll*, *Colonsay*, *Eigg*, etc.) and the Northern Isles (*Fair Isle*, *Foula*, *Hoy*, *Orkney*, and *Shetland*). An overarching toponymic dialect map (11) summarizes that evidence in terms of its linguistic background. This section (64–93) is likely to appeal especially to readers whose climbing activities are concentrated on fairly well defined areas of the country but which will also be found attractive by those who have a general interest in the richness of the Scottish mountain world and its nomenclature.

This reviewer applauds Drummond's decision to include in his systematic presentation a few interludes which will intrigue readers for their own sake. One of these is a short chapter on a miscellany of "Mountain Characters" (186–197) which explores references to "Monks, Maidens and Ogres," "Beauty and the Beast," "Witches and Crones," "Commoners and Kings," "Herdsmen and Shepherds," "Herdgirls and Claimers," "Fairies and Fingalians," "Family Names," and the like, in the names of Scottish hills by drawing attention to both human touches in and supernatural interactions with *ben*, *corrie*, and *craig*. Similarly, a chapter on hill-names dedicated to the natural world — berries, birds, cattle, dairying, deer hunts and dogs, eagles, goats, heather, peat and moor, horses, insects, landscape, sheep, shells, shrubs and flowers, snakes, trees, weather, wild animals, swansong — highlights the fact that "nature has always occupied a core part of Gaelic culture" (198–215). Some of the many examples are *Druim nam Bò* "cattle ridge," *Tom Bealaidh* "broom hill," *Bac nam Canaichean* "bank of bog-myrtle," or *Rowantree Hills*. Perhaps even more intriguing are the brief excursions into some special semantic aspects of the Scottish mountain nomenclature, like "Màm, Hill and Medicine" (74–95) with its inferences to the therapeutic application of hill names containing the term *màm* "a breast"; "Mountains named by Mountaineers" (84–86); "Red Hills distinguished by Gaelic *ruadh* and *dearg*" (96–98); "Grey Hills designated by Gaelic *liath*" (104); "Yellow Hills" (Gaelic *buidhe*) (105); "Dappled Hills" (Gaelic *breac*, *odhar*, *riabhach*) (114–115); "Blue and Green Hills" (Gaelic *glas*, *gorm*) (130–131); "White Hills" (Gaelic *bàn*, *fionn*, *geal*) (114–115); "Dark Hills" (Gaelic *dubh*, *donn*) (156–157); "Man-Made Cairns" (170–171); and "English and Scots Colours" (180–181). The noticeable emphasis on the strong visual characteristics of the mountain- and hill-names of Scotland, with their recurrent allusions to color and shape, is also echoed in the numerous illustrations which accompany the text, among them color photographs, color reproductions of sections of early maps and atlases and, above all, the many delightful line drawings by John Mitchell.

Access to the substance of the book is facilitated by a "Reader's Guide" (8–9), a reader-friendly list of some Gaelic words commonly used in Scottish place names but not examined in the list, some of them with their Anglicizations, like *balloch* for *bealach* "pass in the hills,"

camus and *cambus* for *camas* "bay, bend in the river-bed," and *kyle* for *caol* "narrows" (216–217), a bibliography of relevant publications (218–219), and an extensive index of about 1700 place names and toponymic elements (220–240). Although primarily intended for the serious enquirer, the book is bound to appeal to and to captivate stylistically also those with only a passing or peripheral interest. Drummond does full justice to the dictum with which he opens his Introduction: "Scotland's hill names are more than just names. They are part of our heritage" (10).

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Little Bee. By Chris Cleave. Pp. 271. New York: Simon and Schuster. 2008. ISBN: 978-1-4165-8964-8

Little Bee is not overtly a book about onomastics, but readers with a sensitivity to name choices (and power) can approach the novel from such a perspective. The book, at heart, hinges on the stories of naming, specifically those of Little Bee, a sixteen-year-old girl from Nigeria, and Sarah, a middle-class wife, mother, and magazine editor, from Surrey, England. Their stories converge and diverge across Cleave's own telling of the book and the two characters' adoption of many names. Both have led lives full of name choices and the consequences of those choices.

Little Bee

When the story begins, Little Bee has been in a British detention center for two years. She speaks to us in the second person, calling the Queen's English "your language," even though English is also the official language of Nigeria. Both forms of English ("your language" and her native "fallen English") cannot co-exist for her: "To talk the Queen's English, I had to forget all the best tricks of my mother tongue" (3).

Little Bee is the name by which we know her for most of the novel. Little Bee and her older sister Nkiruka are the only survivors of a massacre in their village by "men" who want to claim the oil reserves on the land. The attackers, real and imagined, are always called "the men" by Little Bee, nothing else. The two sisters flee to a jungle bordering a beach and hide, keeping hope alive by renaming themselves.

Little Bee is identified by several names over the course of the book, depending on what story is being told. Throughout, though, she is in charge of the naming, very aware of the power of each label. Sometimes she calls herself a refugee (without refuge, as she points out); sometimes she acknowledges that she is an illegal alien, without papers. A fellow detainee calls her "Bug" but is quickly corrected. In the final pages, we learn her real name, at a moment when the protection of her pseudonyms no longer matters.

Many people in the novel are aware of the tricks that names can play and how they must control that power. In the detention center, Little Bee befriends three other refugees. One insists, "I do not tell people my name. That way it is safer" (55). Of course she is immediately given the name "the girl with no name," for there is no escape from *no* names, or from stories. Many of the stories we read in the novel are about identity: saving it, casting it aside, grieving for its loss.

In a flashback, we find a young Little Bee and her big sister Nkiruka on the run after their village is attacked. Nkiruka decides that the two girls "must make up new names for themselves. It was not safe to use their true names, which spoke so loudly of their tribe and of their region" (100). Nkiruka becomes Kindness. We now realize that Little Bee is a pseudonym and we are not (yet) privy to her true name.

Toward the end, Nkiruka returns to Little Bee to comfort her by saying, "What is my name? . . . My name means 'the future is bright.' Would our [parents] have given me this name if it was not true?" (213).

Even names of everyday objects in her new life in England hold power. Sometimes Little Bee imagines telling her stories to the girls back home, stories they would not understand without vocabulary lessons, such as being told the English definitions of "coffee table" and "velvet" and "horror." She imagines that the girls back home would call her "Little miss been-to."

Little Bee has had her own translation lessons to learn. As an eight-year-old playing in the jungle outside her village, she discovers a corpse in a burnt-out jeep. Seeing a pair of sunglasses resting on the dead man's head, she assumes that "Ray-Ban must have been his name. . . . I did not yet understand that there could be reasons for wearing a name that was not one's own" (214). In this instance, adopting another's name — even inadvertently — did not save this man from death.

Little Bee is soon arrested — on a beautiful sunny London outing meant to be a treat from Sarah — for not giving her name. Stopped by a policeman, Little Bee "could not give the policeman my real name, because then they would find out what I was. But I did not have a false name to give him either. Jennifer Smith, Alison Jones — none of these names are real when you have no documents to go with them" (243). When she gives the name "Little Bee" to the police, it makes the situation worse: wrong magic for the wrong situation.

Sent back to Nigeria, Little Bee is escorted by a guard who does not even know the name of their destination: "[W]here you people come from" he calls all the nameless destinations he has had to fly to for his job (248).

Sarah

The novel's British title is *The Other Hand*. We learn that Sarah is missing her middle left finger, the one controlling the letters C, D, E on her keyboard; we are not yet told why, but it has to do with Little Bee. Thus, Sarah is hindered from telling her own full story. She lost her birth name Sarah Summers when she married. It still exists professionally, but "personally it is lost" (123). She married Andrew O'Rourke and "took his name so that no one else could have it. [. . .] As Sarah O'Rourke I lost the habit of happiness" (124).

Names are just as important to Sarah ("Little Bee would understand me. As soon as we let go of our real names, she and I, we were lost, [. . .] shedding a finger, or a name" [124]), although she would never admit a belief in magic. However, she uses "ordinary nouns" to calm her son down on the ride back from her husband's funeral, pointing and naming for little Charlie. Later, she needs to know the exact name of the blue in a pair of gloves she gives to Little Bee (taking a stab at the labels *courageous* and *irreverent*) (94). When Andrew finds out about Sarah's affair with another man, he calls her a slut. Sarah's pain is doubled by thinking of her husband "selecting precisely the most appositive noun" (166). She needs to know names, and yet "there was extraordinary pain behind the ordinary nouns" for Sarah (97).

Sarah and Andrews's four-year-old son Charlie insists throughout the book that he is Batman; he will not answer to "Charlie." Batman's world is divided into goodies and baddies. Sarah picks up this language, and we see her wrestling with labeling who is good or bad in her life. This nomenclature is very much like Little Bee's reflection on her baddies — "the men" — who come to begin all refugees' stories, stories with inevitable endings.

The day in London turns tragic for Sarah as well as Little Bee when Charlie goes missing: "At first I called out Charlie's name as a sound for him to home in on, but as my voice began to go I realized that another line had been crossed and I was shouting the name just to hear it, to ensure its continuing existence. I realized that the name was all I had in the world" (238). Charlie's disappearance brings the police, who take away Little Bee just as Charlie is found.

No them: just us

That day in London is the beginning of Little Bee's final story, a merging of Little Bee's perceptions of *them* vs. *us* into one human race: "Mothers were calling out their children's

names — strong names like Sophie and Joshua and Jack — names with protecting magic" (219). "My troubles will find me very easily in this town of stone and iron if I keep my foolish name that I chose at the edge of the jungle" (220). So she listens to what London suggests and decides to call herself London Sunshine: "In that moment I very nearly named myself back to life" (222). But she glimpses Charlie, sees his loneliness, and cannot bring herself to merge with the nameless *thems*: she knows Batman/Charlie's name, and it is a link for her.

In a final watery setting, back on the beach in Nigeria where Kindness and Little Bee were christened, but now with Sarah and Charlie, Little Bee makes good on a promise she made to Charlie on the banks of the Thames, to reveal her real name. He has known her as "Little Bee," her "superhero name." She will let Charlie in on this magical word only if he takes off his Batman costume. He does and is rewarded with: "My name is Udo. [. . .] Udo means peace. [. . .] Peace is a time when people can tell each other their real names" (265).

In spite of her vulnerability, Little Bee is stronger than Sarah; she has more awareness of the magic of names and how to harness it. Little Bee, after all, benefits from Sarah's compliance with terrorists to chop off her own finger and her own theft of Andrew's driving license, a document with an English name.

Sarah needs Little Bee to delete her dead husband's name from her cell phone directory: "[W]e all had identities we were loath to let go of" (22). In the end, Little Bee's acknowledgement of the magical power of names is much more real, much more exercised. The final scene on the beach is heart-breaking and inevitable. And Sarah's early musings echo in this final scene: "Death, of course, is a refuge. It's where you go when a new name, or mask and cape, can no longer hide you from yourself" (22).

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The Last Word: The English Language: Opinions and Prejudices. By Laurence Urdang. Pp. xxi + 281. Appendix, index. Detroit: OmniData. 2008. ISBN: 978-0-9798648-0-3. LCCN 2007043076.

Laurence Urdang (1927–2008) was editor or author of sixty books on language in as many years. As founder of the language quarterly *Verbatim*, managing editor of the first edition of the *Random House Unabridged Dictionary* (1966), and editor of the *Random House College Dictionary* (1968), some, including Frederick G. Ruffner Jr, who wrote the publisher's preface to this volume, believe he belongs in the pantheon of lexicographers beside Samuel Johnson, Noah Webster, James Murray, and Peter Mark Roget.

Urdang calls himself a "traditionally educated old fogey" and addresses those readers who, alienated by the ultra-technical nature of academic linguistics, wish to learn about language in "a casual, dilettante fashion." He also wishes to document some of his language-related activities during the last six decades, when there was a huge amount of work in linguistics being done both within and outside of major universities with a focus on automatic translation, for which the advent of the computer seemed to hold such great promise. But linguistics programs in academia, Urdang notes, are now in decline, and in recent decades linguistics faculties have downsized or disappeared altogether.

The fourteen chapters of his book cover the areas of language change, etymology, meaning, words and expressions (with many delightful examples of "word chaos"), pronunciation, dictionaries, computers, spelling reform, and names. Most chapters include ample and entertaining gleanings from *Verbatim*, from this journal *Names*, and from British periodicals such as *Notes and Queries*, from the February 2 1901 issue of which the untitled poem whose first line is "Pray, what did T. Buchanan Read?" is quoted in its entirety.

His chapter on names is necessarily brief and comprehensive, and surnames in particular he candidly characterizes as merely one stage in the inevitable progression of ever-improving means to identify individuals. Surnames were instituted to distinguish one John from another

only recently in human history, and they have already been superseded by numbers, which are being superseded by fingerprinting, which will be superseded by DNA profiling.

His single-paragraph list of occupationally derived surnames includes some lesser known ones (e.g., *Blomer* "metal worker," *Brasiator* "brewer," *Pinder* "official who rounds up stray animals"), and for further research on these and other types of surnames he refers his readers to the work of Patrick Hanks and Flavia Hodges. He offers two poems ("Sweet Maiden of Passamaquoddy" and "The American Traveller to Lake Aghmoogenegamook") by nineteenth-century writers who found Native American placenames amusing enough to lampoon. Another significant contribution of this chapter is Urdang's anecdotal information, for example, that Edmund White believed Truman Capote was never popular in France because *capote* in slang means "condom," and that Mussolini studiously mispronounced the name of Franklin *Del-ano* Roosevelt to make it sound obscene in Italian.

He is indignant at the inappropriateness of *Tupper* as a girl's given name and as the source of the plastic product Tupperware, since *tup* is a well-established English verb for the ram's act of mounting the ewe. Yet *Tupper* as a surname probably indicates a herdsman of rams and ewes, or possibly a maker of tubs, in which case *Tupperware* could be considered a normal derivation. Nonetheless, Urdang's warning that people check foreign languages to make sure that they have not named their new toothpaste or detergent after some obscene act should be taken seriously.

Within onomastics, Urdang, who edited *Twentieth-Century American Nicknames* (1979), is drawn to nicknames and unofficial names of people, as well as to nicknames of places and things, which he compiled into a book *Names & Nicknames* (in Britain), released as *Names & Nicknames of Places & Things* in the US in 1987. Among his other pet interests are expressions that involve numbers, and in 1986 he published *Three-Toed Sloths & Seven-League Boots: A Dictionary of Numerical Expressions*, which includes terms both directly numerical (e.g., *St. Petersburg Five*) and implicitly so (e.g., *filioque*, *gamma*). At the time of his death he was at work on a dictionary of nautical and maritime terms.

In his chapter on dictionaries, which reflects his life's work creating them, Urdang recalls how in the mid-1960s the California Department of Education banned the purchase of Flexner and Wentworth's *Dictionary of American Slang* (1960) because among its entries were found at least 150 "dirty passages." He also annihilates the myth of the "unabridged" dictionary by citing the upwards of 50,000 different species of insects and the mind-numbing profusion of chemicals listed on food products that scarcely appear in an unabridged chemist's dictionary.

Many things are baffling to Laurence Urdang — the irresponsible promulgation in periodicals and newspapers of outlandish and unsubstantiated etymologies by writers untrained in historical linguistics; why what is sold in Europe as *Oil of Ulay* was modified to *Oil of Olay* in this country; why dictionaries qualify the word *Jewess* as "offensive," when in his experience it is not; and why at computer conferences in the 1960s his recommendations went unheeded for a simple keyboard that would reproduce characters on the screen of a monitor while recording codes for the characters on a magnetic tape.

And with the computer's insistence on keyboard accuracy when searching for information, it surprises him that information-purveyors in the media continue to be so careless about accuracy. He especially rebukes the History Channel for errors of geography and for pronouncing the name of Lord Elgin, known for having all his marbles, as El-jin like the name of the American watch company instead of the proper way, El-gin, with the hard /g/ of *begin*. Most of all, Urdang is baffled by how seldom people read, or consult, the dictionaries that they so willingly purchase and display in their homes and offices.

In the second chapter devoted to word origins, he discusses the widespread incidence of false etymologies, such as attributing the origin of *poltroon* to Latin *pollice truncus* "maimed or mutilated in the thumb," when apparently, according to Urdang, it derives from an earlier Latin or Italian word for "bed," and is suggestive of someone loath to be roused from sleep. (Another example of an erroneous etymology, attributing the Tower of London's *Beefeater* to French *buffetier* "one who serves himself, or others, from a sideboard," hinges on Urdang's

assertion that the French word does not exist, nor ever has existed, when in fact it does appear in three French dictionaries that I consulted.) Nonetheless, false etymologies are a huge scholarly problem, and many such etymological hoaxes are brought together, along with their "true" etymologies, in Urdang's book *Picturesque Expressions* (1998).

According to Urdang, rigorous scholarship in etymology dates back only to Professor Walter Skeat (1835–1912), who had no tolerance for the etymological speculation of people who ignore "the commonest principles of language and refuse to admit any phonetic laws or take any trouble to discover the historical sequence of forms." Their misguided notion of etymology, Skeat continues, "is a question of assumption and assertion, founded on guesswork and proclaimed by reiteration and bluster" (*Notes & Queries*, July 18 1896).

Urdang refers several times to Skeat's crabbiness and intolerance of the work of others, which for this reviewer is a mirror of Urdang's own prickly temperament. As a self-styled "fogey," Urdang subscribes to a Gresham's Law of Language — that bad English drives good English out of circulation — and complains regularly about the cluelessness of language-users. But in the case of this book, I concede that a little bit of contentiousness in what can be a very stuffy discipline actually adds to the fun and value of this lively miscellany.

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Luzerner Namenbuch 2: Rigi. Die Orts- und Flurnamen der Luzerner Rigigemeinden (The Lucerne Name Book 2: Rigi. The Place- and Field-Names of Lucerne). By ERIKA WASER, ALEX BAUMGARTNER, and PETER MULLE. Pp. 662, maps, illustrations, indices. Altdorf: Gamma Druck + Verlag. ISBN: 978 3 606200 26 2

It is always very encouraging when a promising major project, the initial stages of which were brought to the notice of the readers of *Names* more than a decade ago, has taken another step forward. In 1997 (*Names* 45, 123–125), I had the pleasure of reviewing a detailed two-part account of the place- and field-names in the Entlebuch district of the Swiss canton Luzern (Lucerne). That publication was remarkable for a number of reasons: the comprehensiveness of its name inventory, the fullness of its documentation, the well-informed nature of its commentaries and the fact that it was a "one-woman effort" (*Einfrauenprojekt*), the editor-in-chief's own term. Thirteen years later, that first venture was followed by a sequel, concentrating on the three subalpine parishes of Wiggis, Vitznau, and Greppen in the region dominated by the Rigi-mountain, as part of what is ultimately conceived as a complete multi-volume coverage of the toponymy of the whole canton. While the basic format and general organization of the Entlebuch survey have happily been maintained, the project has also benefited from important developments in the collection and processing of the corpus of relevant material. These changes for the better have been largely achieved as a result of a modernizing leap from an archive consisting of slips of paper to an electronic database and also, in conjunction with the technological advances, because of the addition of a historian (Alex Baumgartner) and a Germanist (Peter Mulle), as well as three other assistants, to the editorial team. Erika Waser, the founder of the project and a stalwart of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences, continues in the position of team-leader of the undertaking, which, as a private research project, has, over the years, enjoyed the financial support of several foundations and trusts and of other donors.

For those readers who, after all these years, cannot recall my earlier review in this journal or do not have access to it, a brief summary of the contents of this volume may be welcome. Apart from two maps of the relevant area of Switzerland, the Introduction (11–40) contains a geographical and geological outline of the Rigi-parishes, including a description of their climate and vegetation, a historical overview, a sketch of the regional dialect, an extensive presentation of the early name spellings from the twelfth century onwards, as well as of their sources and of the methods by which they have been culled; similarly, an indication of the fieldwork

conducted in the course of collecting current names from oral tradition and of their interpretation (with a sample archival registration sheet), a concise guide to the transcription of dialect pronunciations and to the architectonics of the volume, accompanied by a sample entry and an explanatory commentary on its concept and format. This is followed by the central alphabetical listing of the place names inventory (41–547), a section of black-and-white photographs by Armin Wey (549–593), and several indices (598–662) of abbreviations, technical terminology, grammatical terms, printed and unprinted sources, maps, relevant literature, separate alphabetical lists of places in the parishes of Greppen, Vitznau, and Weggli, and one for the whole volume.

The arrangement in which the entries in the central corpus of names is presented is the traditional alphabetical one — from *Äbli* to *Zwei Stei* — but with a difference, for, contrary to expectations and to the patterns followed by most compendia of this kind, the place names are interspersed with appropriate topographic elements from the vocabulary, especially of Swiss German; morphologically these are to be found in both compounded and uncompounded names and are presented with copious cross-references, thus blending the lexical with the onomastic. For instance, the Swiss-German term *bode(n)*, which in the Rigi-dialect area means something like "flattened alpine grazing land on a steep slope," is listed as an independent headword or lexical item with its usage as a specific (*Bodeberg*, *Bodenbergflui*), with cross-references to its role as a generic (thirty examples, such as *Dornboden*, *Langbode*, *Schwärtbogen*, and so on). *Dorn* "thorn, prickle, thornbush," in its turn, is illustrated by *Dornbode* and *Dorneggi*, both of them designating where brambles or rosehips grow. The adjective *Lang* "long," also in reference to the length of a piece of land, occurs not only in *Langebode* but also in *Langenacher*, *Langberg*, *Langfäsch*, *Langiflue*, etc. *Schwärt* "a sword" is found as an alternative single name to *Schwärtboden* but also in the combination *Schwärtbach*, *Schwärtflue*, *Schwärthütte*, *Schwärtwald*, and *Schwärtweg*. The noun *matte* "an alpine meadow" exists in single names (*Matt*) but also as a specific in *Mattberg* and *Mattzingel* and as a generic in numerous names, such as *Elmimatten*, *Fendmatten*, *Frematt*, *Grossmatte*. The critical comment may be made that these additional, often multiple, inclusions (intrusions?) unnecessarily blur the border between toponymicon and lexicon, but this reviewer welcomes the editors' decision since, if the space is available, it increases the awareness of the interdependence of word and name without confusing their distinctive or even contrastive functions.

The area covered by the three Rigi-parishes is less than ten square miles, and the density of the 1600 names discussed in its sub-alpine micro-toponymy is therefore considerable, and the variety of features named both typical and astonishing. It is impossible to do full justice to these phenomena, but here is a random selection of locations referred to, many of them from the first four pages of the book: alpine meadow, common land, alpine pasture, arable land, land under the plough, estate, upper, middle, and lower parts of a village, street, lane, chapel, wayside shrine, small burn, forest, edge of a field, lake, sawmill, slope, hotel complex, path through grassland, single tree, land close to water, borderland, single rock, mountain ridge, valley, bathing room, rock cave, small strip of arable land, individual houses, uncultivated land with broken rocks, clearing, farm, spring, rock gate, hut, road, landing place on a river or lake, and many more.

Even such an abbreviated listing provides a valuable impression of how the toponymic landscape reflects the natural and cultural ones and how we gain access through the former to the latter. The recognition of this relationship is enhanced visually by the many pages of black-and-white photographs through their informed choices of iconic aspects of the world of these three parishes in Switzerland. They also emphasize the often neglected notion of place name aesthetics, reinforcing the artistic dimension of naming and names and of writing about either or both, consequently, together with their appearance on the page, turning many of the individual entries into attractive little prose vignettes, thus saving the second of the Lucerne name books from being no more than another place name dictionary.

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