

ONOMASTIC NOTES: THE ORIGIN OF THE SURNAME WATERER

I am grateful to Mr D. Waterer of Holford, Somerset, for permission to publish the following data, which he collected and sent to me for interpretation. The material is of value, not only because it provides a firm basis for the etymology of the surname Waterer, but also because it underlines the need for comparative data when explaining potentially ambiguous names. The point of interest is that in a survey and rental of Woking manor in Surrey, dated 1547-50,<sup>1</sup> the surnames Waterer and Atwater are used interchangeably: Joan, wife of Thomas Best, is variously called 'former wife of William Atwater' and 'former wife of William Waterer'; John Atwater is referred to in a marginal note as 'John Waterer'; and there are references to Richard Atwater (copyholder since 1537) and Agnes Waterer (apparently a widow, with an interest in the same property). This Richard may be identical with Richard Atwaterer (sic) of Woking, whose will is dated 1557.<sup>2</sup> The pattern of name variation in the 1547-50 document suggests that Agnes Waterer is likely to be the same person as Agnes At Water, who with her husband, Richard At Water (father of the other Richard?) granted property in Mayford in the parish of Woking in 1496 to Henry At Water, Juliana At Water, and their son Robert At Water,<sup>3</sup> who is probably to be identified with Robert Waterer of Mayford, whose will is dated 1531.<sup>4</sup>

In his Dictionary of British Surnames (2nd edn., London and Boston, Mass., 1976), P. H. Reaney follows B. Thuresson, Middle English Occupational Terms (Lund, 1950), p. 114, in glossing Waterer as 'a derivative of OE wæterian "to water, irrigate, lead (cattle) to water"'. The single exemplification is from Sussex, dated 1443. While an occupational origin should not necessarily be ruled out for some medieval Waterers, the Woking material indicates a topographical meaning of the type discussed by G. Fransson in Middle English Surnames of Occupation (Lund, 1935), pp. 192-202, in which the topographical element followed by -er is identical in sense with names preceded by ME atte 'at the'. The -er type was particularly common in Surrey and Sussex (ibid., p. 193). This suggests that Thuresson's and Reaney's Sussex example may be a topographical surname, too, and that the evidence for an occupational Waterer has yet to be established. The alternation between Atwater and Waterer in the Woking records is notable in showing that affix variation between -er and atte in a single family name was still alive in the mid-sixteenth century.

## DOCUMENTARY REFERENCES

1. Public Record Office, LR2 190, f.160v. An eighteenth-century copy is held in the Surrey County Record Office, 1/1/106.
2. Greater London Record Office, DW/PA/5/1557 (Atwaterer).
3. Surrey County Record Office, 1/1/101.
4. Greater London Record Office, X/DW/PA/7/3 f.179.

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## LANCASHIRE SURNAMES

A review of Richard McKinley, The Surnames of Lancashire, English Surnames Series IV, Leopard's Head Press: London 1981, xi + 501 pp., £12.00. All orders should be posted to: Messrs Gibbings Harrison, Terminus Road, Chichester, W. Sussex, PO19 2UN.

This book, Richard McKinley's latest contribution to the English Surnames Series, will be welcomed by all students of Lancashire local history and anthroponymy. McKinley begins with a survey of the development of hereditary surnames in Lancashire. This is followed by chapters dealing with locative, topographical and occupational surnames; surnames derived from personal names; surnames of relationship; and surnames derived from nicknames. The book is rounded off by an examination of the surnames of the hundred of Salford in south-east Lancashire in the period after 1500. Each chapter is accompanied by a detailed set of footnotes containing a full bibliographical apparatus. McKinley approaches surname research from the points of view of the local historian and the genealogist. This involves comprehensively documented histories of individual surnames. McKinley's presentation of the evidence from a wide variety of sources will prove invaluable for all subsequent investigations of Lancashire surnames.

McKinley demonstrates that Lancashire was conservative in the development of hereditary surnames. The majority of landowning families had hereditary surnames by about 1300, but as late as the 16th century there were still some sections of the Lancashire population without stable hereditary surnames, and, at Hale near Liverpool, there are even cases in the first half of the 17th century in which children at baptism were recorded as having bynames derived from the Christian names of their fathers.

Locative surnames form an extremely high proportion of the total number of surnames in use in Lancashire. As McKinley demonstrates, this is characteristic of the northern counties, where locative surnames tend to form a higher proportion of the total stock of surnames than they do in the southern Midlands or in East Anglia. Many of the Lancashire surnames of this type, for example, BICKERSTAFF, FASACKERLEY, HINDLEY, and PEMBERTON, are derived from the names of minor settlements within the county. McKinley's investigation of Lancashire locative surnames reveals surprisingly little migration into the county until recent times. The majority of locative surnames or bynames found in medieval Lancashire survive, as hereditary surnames, into the 16th century and later, usually concentrated around the place-names from which they originated. The ramification of particular surnames within limited geographical areas, a feature so characteristic of Lancashire, has also been noted in parts of west Yorkshire, but is not typical of the country as a whole.

In Lancashire OE and OScand personal names survived longer than in most parts of the country, but, rather surprisingly, they play a relatively unimportant role in the formation of Lancashire surnames. The majority of the personal names which gave rise to surnames in Lancashire did not come into use until after 1066. Thus, OE Ūhtræd, which occurs in most parts of the country in the 12th and 13th centuries, has not given rise to a surname in Lancashire, and it is interesting to note that the

Scandinavian feminine personal names Gunnhildr and Sigrfōr, both of which are frequent in Lancashire records of the 12th and 13th centuries, do not appear among the personal names given by McKinley as the sources of Lancashire surnames. He shows, however, that ON Ormr and AS cand Wælfþeof from ON Valþjófr have both given rise to surnames in Lancashire. ON Ormr is the most common Scandinavian personal name in medieval Lancashire records, where it is attested until the first half of the 14th century, and it is, therefore, not surprising that it has survived in the form of the surname ORM, a surname found fairly frequently in south Lancashire in the 17th century and still in use today (cf. Stanley Orme, the present M.P. for Salford West). Lancashire examples of AS cand Wælfþeof, usually in the Latinized form Walthe(v)us, occur in 12th and 13th century records, predominantly in the areas to the north of the Ribble. McKinley notes that a surname derivative, WALTHER, occurs in south Lancashire around Wigan and Up Holland from the early 14th century, and was still in use in this region in the 17th century. An examination of William Farrer's edition of the Chartulary of Cockersand Abbey (Chetham Soc., 1898-1909) reveals an ostium Walthevi at Wrightington in a document of 1259-68, and a William son of Walthevus appears as a witness in a document of 1240-60 relating to Orrell. Wrightington and Orrell are parishes bordering on Up Holland, but it is not clear why AS cand Wælfþeof should have persisted as a surname in this area, and not in north Lancashire, where it was more frequent. McKinley plausibly suggests that one factor behind the relatively insignificant role played by OE and OS cand personal names in the formation of surnames in Lancashire is the relatively late date at which the majority of the county's inhabitants acquired hereditary surnames.

The examination of surnames derived from personal names is concluded by an admirable table, which uses 16th and 17th century records to illustrate the relative frequencies of various surnames derived from personal names in different parts of the country. For example, the surnames SEAMAN, THURKELL, and TOLY, which are derived from OE Sæmann, ODan þurkil, and ODan Toli respectively, appear in Norfolk records of 1522-5, but are absent from the Association Oath Rolls of 1696 relating to the Lancashire hundreds of West Derby and Lonsdale. On the other hand, the surname ORM, derived from ON Ormr, occurs several times in the Lancashire record of 1696, but is not found in the Norfolk records of 1522-5. These results correspond closely to the distribution patterns taken by the personal names, from which these surnames are derived, in documents of the 12th and 13th centuries. Thus, OE Sæmann, ODan þurkil, and ODan Toli are well represented in Norfolk records of this period, but are not found in Lancashire documents, while ON Ormr, which, as is pointed out above, is the most common Scandinavian personal name in medieval Lancashire records, is hardly found at all in medieval Norfolk.

McKinley's comments on surnames in -SON are one of the most interesting aspects of the book. He shows that, in Lancashire, surnames or bynames of this type first became numerous in the first half of the 14th century, and that they were initially characteristic of the poorer social groups, such as small free tenants and labourers. No example has been found in Lancashire before 1400 of a landowner of any substance with a surname or byname in -son. In Lancashire ME surnames and bynames in -son are formed from occupational terms, for example, le Clerkson, le Revesone, le Tailorson etc.; from pre-existing bynames, for example, Spynkson, the first element of which belongs to ME spink 'finch'; and, most frequently, from personal names. The majority of ME surnames and bynames in -son formed from

personal names in Lancashire contain personal names which came into use in England after the Norman Conquest, though there are a few which contain OE and OS cand personal names, for example, Huttyngsone, containing OE \*Utting, and Ormeson, the first element of which is ON Ormr. An interesting ME variant in Lancashire is the type in which -son is compounded with an OE feminine personal name, for example, Godithsone, containing OE Godgýð, and Quynyldeyson, containing OE Cwēnhild. The personal names which occur most characteristically in ME surnames and bynames in -son in Lancashire, however, are ME hypocoristic forms, such as ME Dob(b), a hypocoristic form of Robert, in Dob(e)son, and ME Hoggekin, a hypocoristic form of Roger, in Hogkynson. Surnames in -SON of this type, for example, DOBSON, DODGSON, PARKINSON, ROBINSON, WATSON, and WILKINSON, are still frequent in Lancashire. McKinley's investigation supports the view that surnames in -SON are a characteristically northern English phenomenon.

By virtue of his detailed investigations of Lancashire records, McKinley is able, on occasion, to correct Reaney's dictionary. For example, Reaney derives the surname HARDMAN from an OE personal name, \*Heardmann, but McKinley, while conceding that this is probable in some parts of the country, in particular in East Anglia, shows, by means of a close investigation of medieval and post-medieval records, that in Lancashire it belongs to a ME occupational term (ME herde-man, 'a shepherd; a tender of goats, horses, or other livestock').

McKinley's monograph is not without its shortcomings. These lie in its lack of any general consideration of the historical factors influencing name-giving patterns in Lancashire, and in its lack of linguistic analysis. Indeed, one gets the impression that the author does not know the county properly from the inside; there is no sense of familiarity with the strange 'inner contours' of Lancashire.

In his introduction, McKinley, does, it is true, show an appreciation of the necessity of co-ordinating the history of the county's surnames with its social and economic history. He also demonstrates an awareness of the importance of settlement history for the historical study of surnames. However, no attempt is made to follow these points up and to form a synthesized picture of the interaction between anthroponymy on the one side and the evolution of settlement patterns and social and economic patterns on the other. In this context, it is perhaps symptomatic that there is no reference in the work to the late F. T. Wainwright's pioneer studies of forty years ago about the Anglian and Scandinavian settlements in Lancashire. McKinley does not present an adequately comprehensive picture of the cultural complexity of Lancashire. Despite its geographical isolation, the county has been subject to several waves of migration. In addition to the English, Scandinavian, and Anglo-Norman elements, there is also a noticeable Celtic element in the county's anthroponymy. McKinley quite rightly points out the appearance of Welsh personal names in south Lancashire in the 13th and 14th centuries. These names are largely a consequence of the influx of the Welsh followers of Robert Banastre, who, after having been driven out of the lands granted to him by Henry II at Prestatyn in Flintshire by the Welsh prince Owain Gwynedd in 1167, received a grant of land in the district of Makerfield in south Lancashire. It should not be forgotten, however, that Welsh personal names are also found in north Lancashire outside the sphere of influence of the Banastre family. Thus, we find in the Cockersand Chartulary a document of 1250-68, relating to Claughton near Garstang, which contains the clause a terra que

fruit Rogeri filii Ythel, and a document of 1200-50, also relating to Claughton, with the field name Madokiscroft. Ythel corresponds to MWelsh Ithael, while the first element of the field name Madokiscroft corresponds to Welsh Madog, PrWelsh \*Madōg. The variety of cultural influences present in medieval Lancashire is well illustrated by another example from the Cockersand Chartulary, Robertus filius Gilmichael filii Ewardi, the name of a man who granted three acres of land at Bleaze Wood near Whittington in the north Lancashire Hundred of Lonsdale. Robertus is, of course, OFr Robert (corresponding to OHG (H)ruod-, (H)rōdbert etc.), one of the most common of the West Frankish names introduced into England by the Normans, while Gilmichael is the Gaelic Gillemicel, a name characteristic of the Hiberno-Norse settlements in northern England, and Ewardus is OE AEscward.

McKinley emphasizes that OE and OScand personal names survived longer in Lancashire than in most other counties, but fails to discuss the historical implications of this. It is, of course, clear that the survival of OE and OScand personal names in Lancashire reflects the fact that there was less displacement of native landowners in Lancashire after the Norman Conquest than there was elsewhere in England. McKinley has several examples of landowners with OE and OScand personal names in the post-Conquest period - men such as Gamel of Pennington in Furness, who lived in the time of Henry II, or Orme Travers, who held land at Heysham in the late 13th century. The personal names Gamel and Orme belong to ON Gamall and ON Ormr respectively.

McKinley shows that surnames in -SON are characteristically northern English and that the ramification of surnames in limited areas is probably also a typically northern feature. There are also features of the medieval personal nomenclature of Lancashire which can be described as 'typically northern'. Thus, ON Ormr, the most frequently attested Scandinavian personal name in medieval Lancashire, is common in Yorkshire and elsewhere in the north, but is infrequent in Lincolnshire and extremely uncommon in the southern Danelaw. It might also be significant that OE Ūntræd, AS cand Wælþeof from ON Valþjófr, and late OE (Northumbrian) Gospatric from British \*Gwaspatric, all of which were common in medieval Lancashire, were also used by the Northumbrian comital dynasty in the 11th century. Undoubtedly, the study of the regional aspects of English anthroponymy is a field of research which will increase in importance, and here comparisons of medieval personal name evidence with the surname evidence of later periods may well have an important role to play.

It is perhaps unfortunate that, in his survey of the surnames of Salford Hundred in the post-1500 period, McKinley has chosen the parish of Rochdale to illustrate the period after 1800, since this parish does not seem to have been subject to much immigration from outside the county until the present century. It is notable that only a small minority of the surnames contained in a Rochdale directory of 1895 can be identified as having first arrived in the parish during the 19th century. Thus, even as late as the end of the 19th century, very many surnames current in Rochdale had had a long history in Salford Hundred, including some in Rochdale itself. But this is not typical of all towns in Salford Hundred. In Bolton and Manchester, for example, Irish immigration would have already had a considerable modifying effect on the surname pattern by the end of the 19th century, and it is a pity that this major feature of the surname 'landscape' is largely ignored.

An especially regrettable aspect of the book is its neglect of linguistic

considerations. Lancashire is crossed by several important ME dialect isoglosses, and, in view of the wealth of material from the ME period contained in the book, an appreciation of the ME dialect characteristics of the county would not have been amiss. If spellings in the Subsidy Rolls are to be trusted,<sup>1</sup> then, according to Kristensson,<sup>2</sup> Lancashire north of the Ribble is to be regarded as a separate south-western division of the Northern dialects of ME, while the parts of the county south of the Ribble belong to the North-West Midland dialect of ME. On the basis of place-name spellings, Ekwall argued that the important ME boundary between Northern ā and Southern and Midland ō (from OE, ON ā) followed the Ribble from its mouth to a little beyond Ribchester and then forked north to Longridge Fell, along which it ran east to the Hodder, and then turned down the latter to meet the Ribble again.<sup>3</sup> An interesting example of the orthographic overlap of Northern ā and Southern/Midland ō on the lower reaches of the Ribble is provided by the case of an early 14th century landowner mentioned by McKinley, William del Scoles of Penwortham, who also appears as William del Schales. Penwortham lies directly on the south bank of the Ribble, facing Preston, while Scoles, Schales from ON skáli 'a temporary hut or shed' lay in Ribbleton (now a part of Preston), roughly three miles north-east of Penwortham on the northern side of the Ribble. The Ribble has also been generally regarded as the northern boundary in ME of West Midland u from OE y (except in the case of OE y before l, for which ME spellings in u have also been noted in north Lancashire). An interesting example of West Midland u for OE y from the lower Ribble area is contained in Ruddinge (OE \*ryding 'a clearing'), a topographical surname which McKinley notes in the 14th century at Fishwick, which is now a part of Preston and is situated on the northern side of a bend in the course of the Ribble. Another linguistic point which would have merited attention is the Scandinavian influence found in Lancashire bynames and occupational terms of the ME period. For example, Le Noutherde, which McKinley cites from a record of 1324, belongs to ME nōut-herd(e) 'a cowherd', an occupational term containing ME nōut(e) 'an ox, a bull; pl. oxen, cattle', from ON naut, the native equivalent being ME nēt-herde, containing ME nēt (OE nēat). Similarly, Langebayn and Langebaynessone, mentioned by McKinley as occurring at Skerton in 1323, belong to a Scandinavian byname, ON Langabein, OSwed Langabēn, which has also been noted as a personal name in Suffolk Domesday Book and in Norfolk in a record of 1101-7, and as a byname in a Yorkshire record of 1306.

I do not wish to end on a critical note, for Richard McKinley's The Surnames of Lancashire is, despite the shortcomings mentioned above, a good book, which will prove invaluable to future investigators of local history and anthroponymy in Lancashire. The wealth of ME material and the many perceptive observations contained in the work mark important steps forward on the way to establishing a corpus of English surname material in which the regional differences so apparent in the pattern of English surnames are properly elucidated.

#### NOTES

1. The reliability of spellings in county Subsidy Rolls as guides to the patterns of local pronunciation in the county has been questioned by Peter McClure, 'Lay Subsidy Rolls and Dialect Phonology', in Otium et Negotium, Studies in Onomatology and Library Science presented to Olof von Feilitzen, ed. Folke Sandgren, Acta Bibliothecae Regiae Stockholmiensis, 16 (Stockholm, 1973), 188-94, and by G. P. Cubbin, 'Dialect and Scribal Usage in Medieval Lancashire:

- a New Approach to Local Documents', Transactions of the Philological Society 1981, 67-117.
2. Gillis Kristensson, A Survey of Middle English Dialects 1240-1350: the Six Northern Counties and Lincolnshire, Lund Studies in English, 35 (Lund, 1967), 241-43.
  3. Eilert Ekwall, 'The Middle English  $\bar{a}/\bar{o}$ -boundary', English Studies XX (1938), 160-161.

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GERARD TAVERDET (ed.), L'Onomastique, témoin des langues disparues: Actes du Colloque d'Onomastique romane de Dijon (27 - 30 mai 1981), Association bourguignonne de Dialectologie et d'Onomastique: Dijon, 1982, viii + 429 pp., 220 FF post free from the Association [c/o M. Taverdet, 22 rue de la Bresse, F - 21121 - Fontaine-lès-Dijon].

This Conference partly represented a breakaway by Romanists from the International Congress: further meetings are planned, starting at Le Creusot in 1984. Although focussed on France, its Proceedings - in which toponymics predominate over anthroponymics by about six to one (a paper on naming boats after saints being counted among the latter) - touch also on Belgium, Flemish as well as Walloon, and, more briefly, on Italy, Rumania and Greece; an index of the multitudinous name-forms cited would have enhanced the volume's usefulness.

The official theme of linguistic archaeology (does it suggest one for a Conference of our own?) is liberally interpreted; necessarily, topography and social and economic history and geography also play their parts. One paper considers the pre-IE elements, Basque and Iberian, preserved in the place-names of the Eastern Pyrenees, along the Gaulish frontier; another seeks evidence as to Romance pronunciation of Gaulish compounds. Others focus more narrowly: on the minor names of one commune and their affinities, from pre-Celtic to modern dialect; on one semantic complex, such as Celtic terms for 'marsh', Latin tree-names, medieval terms for 'farm' and for 'fallow', Franco-Provençal ones connected with building; on an individual place-name and its relevance to palaeo-dialectology; on the currency and the derivatives of a single element, such as Gaulish (or pre-Gaulish) bel- 'high' and \*kalma 'bare plateau', Latin lucus and \*cumdomus 'estate', Gallo-Roman nauda 'fen'. Others again analyze or edit early records, including a mid-fourteenth-century taxation-list from Bar-sur-Seine. An emphatically personal contribution is that of Pierre Bonnaud, who takes his native Auvergnat, threatened even more by Occitanian purism than by Parisian imperialism, and uses name-material to define its philological and historico-geographical identity.

Fair comparative material is thus here for students of Celtic and of Roman Britain. One paper encroaches more directly on what the Council likes to consider its special domain: Patrice Brasseur's field-name survey of Sark, where an archaic Norman dialect still just survives (cf. his articles in Annales de Normandie XXVIII (1978), 49-64 and 275-306). Field-names ('agronyms', 'microtoponyms') figure prominently here in the intensive studies of narrow areas; of wider application is Jean Germain's discussion of formats for their publication. Christian Camps's survey of current nicknaming in Agde echoes a recent preoccupation of our own pages [NOMINA V, 63-76, 80-1, 83-94, 95-104, and 121-3]; an insistence on social function, and in particular on mocking intent, contrasts most welcomingly with attitudes in some other recent work. With the long-term aim of working towards a new dictionary of French (or Romance) surnames, Dieter Kremer uses eleventh- and twelfth-century Occitanian records to illustrate some principles and problems of personal-name analysis, reminding us what a fine source for medieval colloquial usage might be found in the by-names, occupational as well as characteristic, fossilized as family-names.