

COUNCIL FOR NAME STUDIES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ESSAY PRIZE

1. A prize of £50 will be awarded annually for the best essay on any topic relating to the place-names and/or personal names of England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Man and the Channel Islands.
2. Submissions are invited from all students and young researchers. The prize will normally be awarded to those who have not hitherto had work in onomastics published.
3. Entries should be about 5000 words in length.
4. Entries should in some way make an original contribution to the subject.
5. One copy of the essay should be submitted to the Secretary of the Council in clear typescript, double-spaced, and should include a bibliography of sources of material used and of books and authors cited.
6. Entries will be judged by a panel appointed by the Chairman of the Council, and may be considered for publication in *NOMINA*, the Journal of Name Studies relating to Great Britain and Ireland.
7. Entries must be submitted by December 31st and, provided an essay of sufficient merit is forthcoming, the winner will be announced at the Annual Name Study Conference in the spring of the following year.

Entries should be sent to:-

The Secretary,
Council for Name Studies in Great Britain & Ireland,
School of Scottish Studies,
27 George Square,
EDINBURGH EH8 9LD.

THE STATUS OF WRITTEN SOURCES IN ENGLISH ONOMASTICS*

The present paper discusses the various ways in which aspects of status define the usefulness of many of the written forms on which the modern study of English place- and personal-names is based. After a brief introduction it will be concerned with three main areas: the general diplomatic status of the sources; the usage of names in particular medieval sources; and the social status of the people and places named in written sources prior to c. A.D. 1300.

* * *

I. Introductory remarks

The written sources in question are those on which the history of the country now called England is founded; narrative, documentary, and inscriptional, being the product of chroniclers, bureaucrats, and craftsmen over the last two thousand years. The number of these sources which have survived is unique in Europe, providing a continuous record linkage for many places and some families from the late eleventh century. On the one hand this depth of coverage allows more to be done in assessing the relative onomastic worth of different classes of record but, on the other hand, it ensures that onomasticians are often too busy collecting and arranging the material to give enough time to criticizing its context.

Although since the beginning of this century, with the pioneering work of W. W. Skeat,¹ it has been a fundamental principle of English place-name study that etymologies ascribed to place-names should be demonstrated by the publication of their recorded historical spellings, reaching as far back as possible, it is only relatively recently that much attention has been given to explaining not only the original coining of the name but also later reformations of it, some of them quite localized and temporary usages.² There is room for more study of the place-names as found in one particular source, or in one interconnected group of sources, rather than as relating to one administrative district such as a county or a hundred. It must be said that in this respect the English Place-Name Society is not a free agent, its logistics being tied to a county-by-county publication schedule. There is nothing however to stop the independent researcher from adopting a more source-based approach to the study of place-name forms, assessing the spellings in situ of source and period rather than as firm links in a chain leading to one modern form.³ Such an approach is already the established one in English personal-name studies, even though this is not always overtly admitted. Olof von Feilitzen's study of The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book (Uppsala, 1937) is obviously of this type, but P. H. Reaney's Dictionary of British Surnames (1958, and 2nd edition corrected by R. M. Wilson 1976) is also covertly so. This dictionary is really two loosely associated bodies of material - etymologies of medieval byname forms (many of them from the lay subsidy rolls), and a select alphabetical list of modern British surnames - and the absolute linkage between the two is rarely proven. Such absolute linkage of medieval to modern form could not be made in many cases, and in others not without the establishment of a full genealogical pedigree of each family known to use any one of the quoted modern name-forms. Although it is unlikely that a definitive dictionary of English, let alone of British, surnames will ever be made, because of the ramifications of individual family-names, this need be no bar to the making of a dictionary of medieval English surnames and bynames, definitive within its temporal context.

Since record linkage is possible to some degree in the majority of cases in regard to English place-names, such linkage must of course be made and must continue to be the main aim of the Survey of English Place-Names. Adequate time and space should also be given by the Survey's Editors, however, to a consideration of the individual context and bias of the written forms used.

Some thought in general ought also to be given by onomasticians as to the real nature of the evidence they use. It must be accepted that, as a medium, written evidence is second best to oral evidence which can be cross-examined, and that the manner in which the record was made moulds our appreciation of what was said. There is often a mistaken equation made between a manuscript (or even a printed edition) and an actual witness, rather than between a manuscript and a mere report, at one or more removes, of the evidence of a witness. We use such written evidence because it has outlived the human witnesses, not because it is a linguistically or factually superior source. We have thus to deal with orthographic rather than phonetic conventions, and sometimes with layer upon layer of varying orthographic conventions.

* *

II. The Diplomatic Status of the sources

Name-forms should not be quoted as mere tokens of an approved method of exposition but, rather, an attempt should be made to appreciate each form within its own diplomatic context. Accuracy needs to be sought not only in the reproduction of written forms but also in their individual dating and pedigree. Very few of the written sources for English onomastics can be thought of as at only the one remove from a living witness with personal knowledge of the place or person named. Most of the sources are at varying distances from that hypothetical living witness and are divorced from him not only by time but also by the intervention of any number of copyists or editors, each with his own purpose.

With regard to any name for which written evidence survives, there will be a relative dislocation between the original spoken form and the written form, the degree of that dislocation bearing a direct relation to the competence and conventions of the writers involved. Something of this hierarchy of recorded written forms may be expressed as follows, in increasing degrees of expected variation from the original spoken form:

- i) A primary record by (a) a local scribe or
(b) a non-local scribe.

Such a record might consist merely of the draft of a document or text, or of a memorandum of proceedings, written at the time and place of transaction. It would have the same linguistic status as an autograph MS. of a literary work and might well be roughly written and contain deletions or additions.

- ii) An accurate or inaccurate or edited contemporary copy of (i), by (a) or (b)

This would constitute the fair copy or contemporary authorised version of an official record, that which is often thought of as an 'original' document, or the fair copy of a narrative source made for the author himself; it may not always be totally accurate as a record of the forms used in (i) however. Besides straight copying errors, there is often also a process of editing and standardizing to an official norm.

- iii) An accurate later copy of either (i) or (ii), by (a) or (b)

This would consist of a later facsimile copy, imitative both of text and script. It is much more likely to occur in relation to (ii), unless (i) were unusually tidy.

- iv) An interpolated later copy of (i), (ii), or (iii), by (a) or (b)

Adding material not originally present in the record.

- v) An edited contemporary copy of (ii), by (a) or (b)

Such as the enrolment of an official document by the donor or his officials, or the contemporary copying of such a document by the beneficiary or his officials (into a cartulary for example). These processes usually allow some alteration or curtailment of the material in the exemplar.

- vi) An edited later copy of (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), or (v), by (a) or (b)

This would include modern editions as well as medieval inspeximuses, and any non-contemporary cartulary copies. Alteration or curtailment of material may be expected.

The above hierarchy presupposes that the event or transaction recorded actually occurred; there are added complications when (i) or (ii) was intended as a deception. Copying errors, as distinct from editorial adjustments, could occur at any stage; these could be visually or aurally-based, stemming from misreadings of letter-forms or from mis-hearing during dictation.

To any of the above degrees of record there might also be added contemporary or non-contemporary marginalia, while endorsements of similar types might be added to documents on single-sheets of parchment, and rubrics to enrolments or to texts in book-form. Such additions should as far as possible be differentiated from the main text.

Some effort should be made to date accurately, with the advice of experts where necessary, not only the hand(s) responsible for writing the main text of a manuscript, but also those in rubrics or endorsements. Failure to do so leads to serious inaccuracies such as that found in DEPN in relation to the spellings Hynyton and Hyneton given for Little Hinton, Wilts.⁴ DEPN here used as source BCS (477 f.), the late nineteenth century printed edition of Anglo-Saxon documents compiled by Walter de Gray Birch from a large number of separate manuscript sources,⁵ and dated both spellings to 854, the apparent date of the transactions recorded. However, the first spelling occurs only as an endorsement on the parchment single-sheet, still in Winchester Cathedral Library, from which BCS 477 was edited,⁶ and although it is in the same hand as the main text of the document, that hand is datable to the first half of the fifteenth century, not to 854;⁷ though it is probable that the main text was copied from an earlier (twelfth-century) exemplar,⁸ the endorsement is an archival note of the fifteenth century.⁹ The second spelling is also an archival endorsement, of the thirteenth century, on the single-sheet now in Edinburgh University Library from which BCS 478 was edited.¹⁰ In both these cases, DEPN misdated by several centuries the spellings quoted, even though they were clearly stated in BCS to have been written much later than the apparent date of the transactions involved. The detection and avoidance of such misdatings are not just pedantic quibbles. Here, and doubtless in many other instances, the correct date is onomastically significant, since without the ascription of the date 854 to these spellings there is no evidence for the name

(Little) Hinton before 1171 (13th) and it is almost certain that the place was earlier known as Wanborough.¹¹

It should be added that DEPN was first published in 1936 and that modern editors have come to realise that, wherever possible, manuscript sources should be used at first hand, and that where this is not practical then printed editions must be used with due appreciation of their editorial conventions.¹²

* *

III. The Usage of Names in particular medieval sources

Each particular written source, or class of written source, lends its own bias to the name-material which it utilizes. Sometimes this is due to the personal preference of one particular scribe, at other times to the existence of a departmental convention as to spelling or presentation. Although there were no generally-accepted spellings of place-names in England before the work of the Ordnance Survey, nor of many family-names before the regular taking of the Census, both having their effect from the first half of the nineteenth century onwards, there have always existed certain bureaucratic linguistic 'registers' in which it has been thought more proper that name-forms should be written. The exact requirements of these 'registers' have varied from time to time and from office to office, sometimes reflecting the relative status enjoyed by each of the three languages of record (Latin, French, and English) up to the mid seventeenth century.¹³ At other times they reflect a local perspective, whether that locality were a centre of royal government at Winchester or Westminster or were a provincial writing-office. Some degree of standardization of name-forms was sometimes imposed for private archival or administrative convenience in respect of a particular estate, its lands, inhabitants, and the legal title of its holder; but such were the intricacies of medieval and early modern legal pleading in the matter of misnomer that it is impossible to know whether or not a name-form favoured by one particular group of officials would be preferred by a court of law to other spellings in use at the time.¹⁴

Brief comments on the usage of names in some of the main classes of medieval written source for English onomastics may be made as follows:

a) Narrative Sources

Narrative sources - whether chronicles, annals, or biographies - often consist of confluents of earlier writings to which a small amount of contemporary information has been added and the whole moulded to a particular theme or viewpoint. Name-forms in such sources are greatly subject to the influence of the most recent compiler, his use of, and access to, reliable sources of information, and his familiarity with or interest in the subject, period, region, or individuals written about. Often the actual surviving MSS. are not autograph and are divided into a number of textual traditions, varying from each other and from the author's original. Sometimes different MSS. receive independent interpolations and supplements of additional material, peculiar to a particular locality. Thus, for example, the surviving MSS. of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle each need to be treated as a separate source not only in relation to annals dated after their distribution to, or association with, various centres besides Winchester after c. 900, but also in respect of annals dated before that time, since in some instances earlier local material was interpolated in particular copies of the Alfredian edition of the Chronicle.¹⁵ The different MSS. are not uniform in content,

orthography, or even in usage.¹⁶ A local usage found only in MS. C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (the Abingdon text) is the reference to Southampton, Hants, s.a. 980 as Suðhamtun instead of Hamtun as on other occasions when the place is named in any of the MSS. The directional affix OE sūð, 'south', was added to distinguish the place from the one other place then called Hamtun (modern Northampton) which had become a shire-town by the middle of the tenth century.¹⁷ This distinction was the more necessary for the mid eleventh-century copyist of the Abingdon text, stationed as he was on an ancient line of road between the two shire-towns each called Hamtun, the one which he distinguished s.a. 980 as (Sout)hampton and the other which a colleague was also the first to distinguish (s.a. 1065) as (Nort)hampton with the form æt Norðhamtune.¹⁸

Another local usage is the reference to Winchester by a scribe of MS. A (writing at Winchester) in the annal for 964 as simply Ceastre, instead of the usual compound forms Uuintanceastre, Uuinceaster, etc., found under other years. This short form was a familiar one, meaningful to a writer and his audience who actually lived in the place concerned.

Since the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle consists of a group of English vernacular texts, the English name-forms recorded by it are a useful series of native Old and early Middle English spellings, but one which requires careful description as to the precise dating and localization of individual forms.

When one turns to Latin chroniclers, there are few as useful as Bede, writing in the early eighth century, who provided many vernacular forms of the names of people and places, sometimes coupled with a Latin explanation of their meaning; for example:

- iv. 16, monasterium in loco qui uocatur Hreutford, id est Vadum harundinis (Redbridge, Hants; 'the ford of the reed, i.e. at the reeds', with OE hrēod as first element);
- iv. 28, in loco qui dicitur Adtuifyrdi (quod significat Ad duplex uadum) (?Alnmouth, Northumberland; 'at the double ford', possibly exhibiting an OE locative form of ford);
- ii. 15, rex Reduald . . . filius Tytili, cuius pater fuit Uuffa, a quo reges Orientalium Anglorum Uuffingas appellant (demonstrating an appreciation of the meaning of OE -ingas in the naming of kinship groups).¹⁹

Bede was here obviously writing for his fellow Englishmen whom he expected to be as interested in the meaning of English names as he himself was. Later on however the chroniclers writing after the time of the Norman invasion of England in 1066 were catering for a somewhat different audience, one of more varied social and linguistic background and one in particular which made full use of Latin as a language which could be understood both by those of English and by those of French background.²⁰ The English origin of many names in these later chronicles was thus often partially disguised by the addition to them of Latin endings which allowed them to blend into the surrounding Latin text but did not render them unrecognizable to the reader. Such forms are not usually of much value as regards etymology, but do represent a distinct convention, also found in post-1066 documents.

b) Documentary Sources

The royal diplomas of the Anglo-Saxon period have been the subject of much debate as

to who exactly was responsible for their production, a royal writing-office or the various ecclesiastical scriptoria functioning during the period.²¹ Whoever wrote them, they are a very important but not altogether straightforward source for the onomastician. There is the problem that most survive only in later copies.²² Even texts which survive as contemporary single-sheet MSS, and which record genuine royal donations should be thought of as at one remove from a primary record. Copying errors sometimes occur in the Latin text of contemporary diplomas,²³ and are possible in the vernacular boundary-clauses therein, although harder for us to detect. For it should be remembered that these contemporary single-sheets are fair copies, and were probably copied from at least three separate memoranda - one for the main Latin text composed by a draftsman skilled in the composition of quite subtle ecclesiastical Latin prose, one for the vernacular estate-boundary, and one containing the list of subscriptions. Several estate-boundaries survive as separate texts and some of these may well represent such memoranda produced for inclusion in a diploma now lost.²⁴ Surviving examples of other types of memoranda for diplomas of the Anglo-Saxon period were the subject of an article by Mary Prescott Parsons in 1939.²⁵ One which she edited consists of a small strip of parchment still attached to the diploma (a grant of land in Kent by King Æthelwulf of Wessex in A.D. 843) for which it acted as the draft of the list of subscriptions.²⁶ Though the division of the list of names into two columns is identical in both draft and fair copy, some editorial changes were made in the course of copying.²⁷ One subscriber was added, as were Latin verbs of subscription. On the other hand, the designations of the social status of five of the signatories given in the draft as minister (that is, 'thegn') and two described by the designation ce were omitted from the fair copy.²⁸ The two archdeacons of the draft were described only as 'deacon' in the fair copy, but one was moved so that he came before, and not after, a subdeacon. Besides this suppression of more precise status-indicators than were usually used in diplomas, some personal-name spellings were also modified. Not only was initial æ- altered always to ae-, but, on single occasions,

-e- was altered to -æ- / -io- / -o-
 -ea- to -a-
 -i- to -e-
 -ð- to -th-
 Alh- to Alah-
 Pealh- to Palah-.

These changes represent both editorial standardization of layout and orthographic preferences on the part of the scribe of the fair copy. Similar orthographic changes may also have occurred during the fair copying of some at least of the vernacular documents which survive in standard late West Saxon spellings. In regard to the texts of the Anglo-Saxon period which survive only in later transcripts, such alterations between draft and fair copy were, however, only the first layer of interference between primary orthography and the record which survives.

The influence of scribal editorial conventions upon the text as first drafted is also relevant to all other documents which are generally described as 'original', but are actually either fair copies or at least the final version of an agreed record. These two categories encompass post-Conquest charters and deeds, many manorial and borough records, and the lay subsidy rolls.²⁹ A few drafts for manorial court rolls and accounts do survive but, unfortunately, their physical appearance is usually so rough in comparison with the greater formality of the final versions that the latter are

often used instead by the collector of name-forms.³⁰ However, if possible, both texts should be used and the differences noted.

The majority of surviving post-Conquest medieval Latin documentary sources are formal not only in script and layout but also in their treatment of English names. In the late eleventh and the twelfth centuries, place-names were usually Latinized by the addition of a first declension feminine singular ending to the full English form, although names ending in -(h)am were often left alone to masquerade as accusative singular endings of the same declension. In later centuries, Latinization was usually only token, by the addition of a suspension-mark above the final syllable of the English form. Throughout the medieval period, however, Latin forms of the names of English cities were used where they existed - such as Exonia for Exeter, Wintonia for Winchester, etc. - and the corresponding adjectival forms Exoniensis, Wintoniensis, etc., were used in certain positions in relation to bishops and their dioceses. Latin forms of common fore-names and of certain bynames were also used. Behind each of these Latin or semi-Latin forms, and perhaps in the draft, existed the true vernacular forms which approximated to those used in everyday speech.

The avoidance of colloquial vernacular forms of fore-names by most medieval Latin documents is fairly uniform, but very occasionally lapses occurred; for example, the fore-names Baldewyne, Badekoc, Gys, and Richard which occur in the 1327 lay subsidy roll for Dorset as isolated vernacular forms among all the Latin ones such as Johannes, Ricardus, Robertus, and Willelmus.³¹ In the few documents of the medieval period which survive in ME or in OFr, such vernacular forms are of course standard, but documents in these languages are the exception.

When one turns to documents whose overt purpose was to re-copy documents already issued, such as cartularies and enrolments like the Cartae Antiquae in the PRO, the cumulative effects of scribal interference are more diverse and complicated. Such copies were often made at a distance, both in time and space, from the scribe of the fair copy let alone of the draft. Additions were often made to cartularies over several centuries by a succession of scribes copying from a multitude of different exemplars. Varying editorial conventions and standards of accuracy can usually be expected within what is catalogued as a single manuscript volume. In some cases, a handful of the cartulary's exemplars still survive and may be compared to the respective cartulary texts but it should be remembered that any editorial practices discerned by this method can often only be related to the work of one particular copyist, and not to that of them all.³² Rubrics were often added to a cartulary and may contain name-forms later than the date of the text they introduce, but in some cases they were copied from contemporary endorsements on the exemplars and so are then of equal status to the main text. Within the text of individual documents, name-forms may be Latinized, modernized, or even omitted by individual cartulary-scribes. Such sources are difficult to use and difficult to date precisely, but are extremely valuable as a medium through which many documents about which we otherwise would not know have come down to us.

Another source which has great value as a medium of much otherwise unsuspected information consists of the group of MSS. associated with the Domesday Inquest of 1086. These give the earliest (although not always the best) spellings of a great number of English place-names as well as providing forms for many OE, ON, OFr, and some CG, Welsh, and Breton personal-names. The name-forms contained in the three surviving contemporary codices which contain most of the record of the Domesday Inquest - G(reat) D(omesday) B(ook), L(ittle) D(omesday) B(ook), and Exon D(omesday)

B(ook) - have been studied in some detail.³³ Peter Sawyer has shown that, while the place-name forms in the two surviving provincial volumes (LDB and ExonDB) show much influence from the orthographic traditions of their several scribes,³⁴ those in GDB, the final text edited at Winchester by a single scribe from about half a dozen such provincial volumes, show a sustained effort on the scribe's part to normalize the place-name forms to an acceptable OE spelling.³⁵

It needs to be remembered that the scribal history of each of the three volumes is quite distinct and that the name-forms extracted from each should be distinguished as to their exact source. This has been observed in relation to ExonDB, still preserved at Exeter Cathedral, but not to the other two MSS. (GDB and LDB) which are in the PRO. Too often the forms from LDB (containing material for Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk) are described simply as from DB, an abbreviation which in most counties stands for GDB. This convention was used in PN Ess, published in 1935, but it would be useful if the EPNS editors of the Norfolk and Suffolk volumes, currently in hand, were to make the distinction clear between LDB and (G)DB, and so take recent Domesday scholarship into account.

As regards personal-name usage, a comparison of GDB to ExonDB and to texts copied from other preliminary drafts shows that bynames, particularly of subtenants, recorded in the Domesday material up to the stage of the provincial volumes were omitted by the scribe of GDB in order to save time and space.³⁶ This practice has made it impossible for us, in many entries, to distinguish from each other individuals with the same fore-name.

It will be seen from the above examples of documentary usages that in many cases the requirements of the document-producer are in conflict with those of the name-student. Editorial standardization, formalization, and omission have robbed us of many of the vernacular forms which were at first written down.

c) Coin evidence

The name-forms found on Anglo-Saxon and medieval coins represent a different type of written evidence to the narrative and documentary sources surviving on parchment and paper.³⁷ They belong to a monumental tradition, similar to that associated with inscriptions on stone, ivory, or wood. Finished products in these media have different requirements as to letter-form and layout and usually require the use of majuscule rather than minuscule scripts; there is often therefore the possibility of error if drafts or models written in minuscules were supplied to the craftsman and he was expected to convert the inscription into majuscules on the coin-die or item to be inscribed. Other erroneous letter-forms occurring on coins probably stemmed from misreadings of majuscule-forms in such drafts however: for example, the letters C/G/E/F/B, particularly in the squared majuscule forms used in the later Anglo-Saxon period.³⁸

Many of the place-name forms on coins are extremely abbreviated when compared to those found in contemporary manuscript sources. Mint-names such as GAN and GRAT occur for Cambridge (that is, Grantanbrycg) [Æthelred II D]; CREC for Cricklade [Æthelred II E]; and HREI for Hereford [Henry I, Stephen].³⁹ These and other variant spellings must however have been acceptable to the king and his officials as well as to the merchants, since the coinage was a royal prerogative and kept under tight control from the reign of Eadgar in the mid tenth century.⁴⁰

There does not seem to have been much of an attempt to make the spellings of mint-names close to those used for the same places in royal documents. Nevertheless, some changes in orthographic use have been noted by Veronica Smart during the issue Æthelred II [C] in relation to Lincoln, London, Winchester, Leicester, Worcester, and York; at the first three mints this change consisted of an abandonment of Latinized forms, while at the latter three there was a change in the spelling of the vernacular form of the name.⁴¹

Occasionally, the mint-name appears to have been seriously out of step with the surviving manuscript sources. These cases might represent conscious archaisms (as has been suggested by John Dodgson in relation to forms for Chester),⁴² but in others it may just be a matter of uneven survival of the manuscript sources. At Southampton, the coins provide us with evidence of the continuation of the use of the compound HAMPIC as an alternative to HAMTVN as late as c.973-1015.⁴³ This compound is found elsewhere only in Continental narrative sources of the eighth and ninth centuries and in the annal 764 in a late twelfth-century MS. of the Historia Regum of Simeon of Durham, a work composed from diverse sources c.1130.⁴⁴

The names of the moneyers give an indication of the types of personal-names held by men of mercantile class and there is still much to be learned from them in relation to the chronology of name-types and dialectal variations.⁴⁵ They are much less abbreviated in form than are the names of the mints. The dialect involved, however, is suspected of having more to do with the places at which dies were cut than with the location of the named mint.⁴⁶

* *

III. The Social Status of the places and people named in the written sources prior to c.1300

Most of the place-name forms in surviving written sources from before c.1300 relate to habitations which served as administrative or fiscal centres. These occur as the subject of donations by diploma or charter; in writs, wills, the Domesday texts, royal enrolments, the narrative sources, and on the coins. Names of lesser social importance, such as field-names or most of those used in estate-boundaries, form a smaller proportion of those in the surviving written material but are important as a balancing factor to remind us of the size and complexity of the total locational name-stock in actual use at any one time. It should be remembered that the division used by the EPNS into 'major' and 'minor' names is in fact a social and political one rather than a linguistic one and relates to the function and status of the place named.

Most of the personal-name forms in these sources relate to individuals of a higher-than-average social standing. They belonged to royalty, royal officials and counsellors, ecclesiastical dignitaries, landholders, and merchants. A few saints, and criminals of indeterminate social background also occur, but in general it is the antecedents or descendants of the estimated 2.5% of the population whose heads of households were listed in the Domesday records as tenants-in-chief or subtenants about whom information is known.⁴⁷ Very few surviving documents give more than crude statistical information about the lower orders of society before the thirteenth century. Two documents which survive from the late Anglo-Saxon period with the names of several boors (geburas) and bond men (þeowan mannan) are therefore very important.

The first of these two documents records the kin of named boors belonging to the estate of Hatfield, Herts. It was added c.1000 to a leaf of a gospel-book from Ely Abbey, which then owned Hatfield.⁴⁸ As Sir Frank Stenton noted in 1924, this genealogical memorandum seems to indicate that the names in use among this peasant-class c.1000 were much more varied than those used at that date by the people of high social status who, as was mentioned above, are those most frequently occurring in the surviving written sources.⁴⁹ These higher orders had, for at least a century, limited the number of different elements used in compound names to only a few which were alternated in different combinations.⁵⁰ Members of the same family underlined their close kinship by using the same prototheme, or an alliterating one, in combination with varying deuterothermes. Although the number of different names used by the Hatfield boors is surprising to someone more used to reading the repetitive lists of subscriptions to royal diplomas made up of names beginning Ælf-, Æthel-, Beorht-, Ead-, Wulf-, it is probably the lack of real variety in the personal-names in most of the surviving written sources which was unrepresentative of the majority of the population in late Anglo-Saxon England. However, a point not commented upon by Stenton, it may be significant that there is evidence of some amount of alternation and alliteration among the Hatfield peasantry c.1000, a trend which, had the Norman invasion not occurred to interrupt the development, would eventually have limited the total number of names used by this class too. Thus, within the following units of very close kin there are these examples:⁵¹

- (1) Deorwynn and Deorswith, the daughters of Dudda; their sister Golde is also an example of secondary alliteration. The brothers Ælfstan and Ealhstan.
- (2) Wærstan the son of Wærlaf.
- (3) The siblings Wærstan, Wærthryth, and Wynburh.
- (4) Deorwynn and Deornað, the children of Dunne.
- (5) Cenweald son of Cynehelm.
- (6) The siblings Cyneric and Cyneburh.
- (7) The siblings Æthelwynn and Æthelgyth; and Ceolhelm and Ceolstan. Manwine and his maternal uncle Tilewine. Buge and her daughter Eadugu.

The second document is the will of Wynflæd, probably made c.950 and surviving in a tenth-century copy, but one that is rather inaccurate.⁵² Included is a bequest of bondmen (peowan mannan) at Chinnock, Somerset, to Wynflæd's granddaughter Eadgifu and to another person, called Eadwold, probably her grandson. The relevant part, in Dorothy Whitelock's edition of Anglo-Saxon Wills, reads as follows:

7 of [pa]m peowan mannan aet Cinnuc hio becwið Eadwolde Ceolstan Etstanes
 sunu 7 Æffan sunu 7 Burhwynne Maertin 7 Hisfig 7 hio becwið Ead[gy]fe
 þæranean Ælfsige þene coc 7 Ælfware Burgan dohtor 7 Herestan 7 his
 wif 7 Ecelm 7 his wif 7 hiora cild 7 Cynestan 7 Wynsige 7 Byrhtrices
 sunu 7 Edwynne 7 Buneles sunu 7 Ælfferer dohtor

The word Hisfig is probably a palaeographical error for his wif (pif), as suggested by J. M. Kemble but not adopted by Whitelock;⁵³ Ælfferer is a palaeographical error for Ælfferes. The text may be translated as follows:⁵⁴

and of the bondmen at Chinnock, she bequeathes to Eadwold: Ceolstan, Eadstan's son, and Æffa's son, and Burhwynn [and] Martin and his wife. And in their place she bequeathes to Eadgifu: Ælfsige the cook and Ælfwaru, Burga's daughter, and Herestan and his wife, and Ecghelm and his wife and their child, and Cynestan and Wynsige and Beorhtric's son and Eadwynn and Bunele's son and Ælfhere's daughter.

Here again there is some variety of naming. There is also a byname (Ælfsige) 'the cook', and an instance of the repetition of the deuterotherme -stān between father and son.

The Hatfield document is unusual in that it has survived; other estate documents of this type must surely have been made, but have since been lost. The naming of bondmen in a will is also unusual in the surviving texts of such type but appears to be connected with the division of a group of unfree estate-workers between two beneficiaries.

* * * * *

The purpose and coverage of the written sources for English onomastics, particularly those from before c.1300, has probably biased somewhat our ideas about the frequency of individual elements and compounds in both time and space. Such discernible naming-patterns are those of the recorded population - often of the upper reaches of society - and of the centres of administration. As regards personal-naming trends, there is likely to be some dislocation of date between their appearance in the record as in use among the upper classes and their adoption by a wider section of the population.

It needs to be remembered that orthographic traditions are not necessarily the same as spoken forms: some frequently-occurring forms in the surviving written records might not be spellings favoured by the persons or community named, although they are still worthy of study in their own right. We should think not so much of scribal 'corruption' as of 'scribally-preferred' spellings. Such preferences may reflect the scribe's own dialect or a more generalized bureaucratic convention, rather than any actual ignorance of indigenous forms.

In general, the written source-material for the study of English onomastics is not only large in volume, it is also very diverse in nature. It cannot be treated in a simplistic fashion as a single quarry from which material is mined. Due care and attention to the individuality of documents and of their scribes is always to be recommended. The bona fides, diplomatic status, and bias of each written source needs to be investigated before undue weight is put upon it; the purpose and audience of each has to be remembered. Nevertheless, although written sources may prove to be as biased and misinformed as many of the living witnesses whose place they take, and may often be more obstructive, it is obvious that their importance cannot be over-estimated if the study of the names used in England in the last two thousand years is to be conducted on a proper scientific basis.

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

* This is a revised version of the paper given on March 31st 1984 at the XVIth Annual Conference of the Council for Name Studies held at the University of Aberdeen.

The following abbreviations have been used:

BL . . . British Library; DEPN . . . E. Ekwall, The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names (Oxford, 1936; 4th ed. 1960); EPNS . . . English Place-Name Society; JEPNS . . . Journal of the English Place-Name Society; PN + County Abbreviation . . . County volumes of the Survey of English Place-Names published by the English Place-Name Society; PRO . . . Public Record Office, London; Sawyer . . . P. H. Sawyer, Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography (Royal Historical Society; London, 1968); Smart . . . V. Smart Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles: 28; Cumulative Index of Volumes 1-20 (British Academy; London, 1981). MSS. are dated in the customary manner, e.g. s.x = tenth century, s.x^{1/2} = first/second half of the tenth century, etc.

1. Skeat was the first to conduct county place-name surveys on modern etymological principles: The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire (Cambridge, 1901; 2nd ed. 1911), . . . of Hertfordshire (Hertford, 1904), . . . of Huntingdonshire (Cambridge, 1904), . . . of Bedfordshire (Cambridge, 1906), . . . of Suffolk (Cambridge, 1913). See E. Ekwall, 'Walter William Skeat, 1835-1912', Onoma 5 (1954), 45-8.
2. See recent EPNS volumes, passim.
3. The usefulness of the source-based approach is demonstrated by such studies as: P. H. Sawyer, 'The Place-Names of the Domesday Manuscripts', Bulletin of the John Rylands Library 38 (1956), 483-506; G. Fellows-Jensen, 'The Domesday Book Account of the Bruce Fief', JEPNS 2 (1969-70), 8-17; A. L. F. Rivet and K. Jackson, 'The British Section of the Antonine Itinerary', Britannia 1 (1970), 34-82.
4. DEPN (4th ed.) 241.
5. Cartularium Saxonicum, ed. W. de G. Birch, 3 vols and index (London, 1885-99).
6. Winchester Cathedral Library, Showcase (Sawyer no. 312(1)).
7. It was written by the same scribe as BL, Cotton Charters viii. 18 and xii.76 (Sawyer nos. 804(1) and 1013(1)).
8. It seems actually to have been copied from the cartulary-text in the Codex Wintoniensis, BL, Additional MS. 15350, fos 85v-86r (Sawyer no. 312(2); s.xii¹).
9. It reads: Carta Adeluulphi regis de .xx^{ti} mansis. in Wenbeorgen, que modo Hynyton dicitur.

10. Edinburgh University Library, Laing Charter 18 (Sawyer no. 313(1); s.xi). The endorsement reads: Donum. Apulf. regis. de We[n]b'gh' hoc est. Hyneton'.
11. Cf. the endorsements quoted in nn.9-10, above. In the main text of these documents the name of the estate is given as 'at Wanborough'. In the time of Bishop Stigand (1047 x 1070), his estate 'at Wanborough' included the later estates of both Wanborough and Little Hinton, see T. R. Thomson, 'The Early Bounds of Wanborough and Little Hinton', Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine 57 (1958-60), 203-11. The Winchester cathedral priory estate of Wemberge in Great Domesday Book (fo. 65v) is probably to be identified, in part at least, with the later priory estate of Little Hinton. Note that these 'Wanborough' name-forms are listed under the parish-name Wanborough in DEPN (495) and PN Wi (283). I have first found the form Hynetone in 1171 (13th), Registrum Johannis de Pontissara Episcopi Wintoniensis 1282-1304, ed. C. Deedes, 2 vols (Canterbury and York Society 19, 30; London, 1915, 1924), ii. 625; for the date (6 January) 1171, rather than 1172 as modernized by Deedes, see H. E. Salter, 'The Death of Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester', English Historical Review 37 (1922), 79-80.
12. Cf. A. R. Rumble, 'The Quotation of Name-Forms in Anglo-Saxon Charters', JEPNS 9 (1976-77), 3-5.
13. Cf. M. T. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307 (London, 1979), chap. 6, 'Languages of Record'.
14. For pleadings of misnomer, see C. L'Estrange Ewen, A History of Surnames of the British Isles (London, 1931), 395-401. I am grateful to Peter McClure for referring me to this discussion of a very complicated subject.
15. See A. Gransden, Historical Writing in England c.550-c.1307 (London, 1974), 38-41.
16. See the parallel texts and the prefatory facsimiles in vol.i of The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, ed. B. Thorpe, 2 vols (Rolls Series 23; London, 1861).
17. See A. R. Rumble, 'HAMTVN alias HAMWIC (Saxon Southampton): the Place-Name Traditions and their Significance', in Excavations at Melbourne Street, Southampton, 1971-76 ed. D. A. Hinton (CBA Research Report 33; London, 1980), 7-20 (p. 13).
18. Cf. PN Nth, xix, 6. For the division of MS. C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle between eight hands, see N. R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon (Oxford, 1957), 253.
19. For the contexts of these examples, see Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People, edd. B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), 382, 436, 190 respectively.
20. Cf. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record, 165-70.

21. For the most recent expositions of the opposing views, see P. Chaplais, 'The Origin and Authenticity of the Royal Anglo-Saxon Diploma', Journal of the Society of Archivists 3(1965-9), 48-61 and S. Keynes, The Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready' 978-1016: A Study in their Use as Historical Evidence (Cambridge, 1980), chaps. 2 and 3.
22. See Sawyer, passim.
23. For examples, see P. Chaplais, 'The Authenticity of the Royal Anglo-Saxon Diplomas of Exeter', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research 39(1966), pp. 1-34, nos 15 (Sawyer no. 795), 16 (Sawyer no. 830), 23 (Sawyer no. 971(1)), 26 (Sawyer no. 1003).
24. For a list of separate texts of boundaries, see Sawyer nos 1540-1602, but note that not all of these are of Anglo-Saxon date (1559, for example, states itself to be temp. Richard I, as is probably 1558 which was written by the same cartulary-scribe of s. xiii¹; both concern Crondall, Hants).
25. 'Some Scribal Memoranda for Anglo-Saxon Charters of the 8th and 9th Centuries', Mitteilungen des Oesterreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung 14 Erg. Band (1939), 13-32.
26. Ibid. 15-19; BL, Stowe Charter 17 (Sawyer no. 293; s. ix med.).
27. Both lists are reproduced in W. B. Sanders, Facsimiles of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, 3 vols (Ordnance Survey, Southampton, 1878-84), iii. no. 17. Neither the edition in Parsons, 'Some Scribal Memoranda', ibid., nor that in BCS 442 is wholly accurate.
28. For the interpretation of ceġ as Latin cellerarius, 'cellarer', see D. Whitelock, 'Some Charters in the Name of King Alfred', in Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones, edd. M. H. King and W. M. Stevens, 2 vols (Minnesota, 1979), i. 77-98 (p. 80).
29. With regard to the lay subsidy returns, these two categories would cover not only the county rolls, but also the local assessment lists. For an important criticism of the lay subsidy rolls as a phonological source, see Peter McClure, 'Lay Subsidy Rolls and Dialect Phonology', in Otium et Negotium: Studies in Onomatology and Library Science Presented to Olof von Feilitzen, ed. F. Sandgren (Stockholm, 1973), 188-94.
30. See Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, circa 1200-1359, ed. P. D. A. Harvey (Historical MSS. Commission and Oxfordshire Record Society; London, 1976), 58-71 for a discussion of the fiscal relationship between final manorial accounts and subsidiary records. Harvey's edition of a draft reeve's account for 1276 (no. 30) may be compared to the final account (no. 57); compare also no. 104, a list of agenda for the manorial court, to the court roll for 4 July 1310 (no. 105).
31. See The Dorset Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327, ed. A. R. Rumble (Dorset Record Society 6; Dorchester, 1980), xxi-iii.

32. For an analysis and discussion of the differences between a particular cartulary and its surviving exemplars in relation to the work of three copyists, see A. R. Rumble, 'The Structure and Reliability of the Codex Wintoniensis (British Museum, Additional MS. 15350; the cartulary of Winchester cathedral priory)', University of London Ph.D. thesis 1980, vol. 2, appendix 3; and vol. 1, pp. 231-69, 320-4, 391-3.
33. On the personal-names, see in particular O. von Feilitzen, The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book (Uppsala, 1937) and G. Tengvik, Old English Bynames (Uppsala, 1938), passim; also T. Forssner, Continental-Germanic Personal Names in England in Old and Middle English Times (Uppsala, 1916), passim. On the place-name forms as evidence for the logistics of the recording of the Domesday Inquest, see Sawyer, 'Place-Names' (n. 3 above).
34. In ExonDB at least, these scribes had Norman characteristics, see Sawyer, ibid. 495, and N. R. Ker, Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries, ii, Abbotsford-Keele, 807.
35. Sawyer, 'Place-Names' (n. 3 above), 495-8. On the relationship between GDB and the provincial volumes, see V. H. Galbraith, 'The Making of Domesday Book', English Historical Review 57(1942), 161-77 (pp. 164-71).
36. For examples of name-forms present in ExonDB but omitted from GDB, see Domesday Book, 8: Somerset, edd. C. and F. Thorn (Chichester, 1980), 389-98 (italic entries in Index of Persons). For similar examples present in the Inquisitio Comitatus Cantabrigiensis and the Inquisitio Eliensis but omitted from GDB, see Domesday Book, 18: Cambridgeshire, ed. A. Rumble (Chichester, 1981), italic entries in Index of Persons.
37. For examples of such numismatic name-forms and a very useful discussion of their nature as linguistic evidence, see Smart, passim; also the review by F. Colman in NOMINA 7 (1983), 117-20.
38. Smart, xvi.
39. Ibid. 89, 92, 95.
40. See R. H. M. Dolley and D. M. Metcalf, 'The Reform of the English Coinage under Eadgar', Anglo-Saxon Coins, ed. R. H. M. Dolley (London, 1961), 136-68.
41. Smart, 111, s.n. York.
42. PN Ch V(1, i). 6.
43. Rumble, 'HAMTVN alias HAMWIC' (n. 17 above), 9.
44. Ibid. 11, 9.
45. Smart, xii-xvi.

46. Ibid. xvi.
47. Based on an estimated total of 1,100 tenants-in-chief and 6000 subtenants listed in 1086, a multiplier of 5.0, and a total population of 1.6 million, cf. H. C. Darby, Domesday England (Cambridge, 1977), 87-91.
48. BL, Cotton MS. Tiberius B. v, fo. 76v (N. R. Ker, Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon, no. 22, art. a, s.x/xi); see edition in B. Thorpe, Diplomatarium Anglicum Ævi Saxonici (London, 1865), 649-51.
49. 'Personal Names in Place-Names', Introduction to the Survey of English Place-Names, edd. A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, part I (EPNS 1(i); Cambridge, 1924), 165-89 (p. 178).
50. Ibid. 177.
51. Since giving the present paper, I have noticed the discussion (with illustrative family-trees) of the Hatfield names in H. B. Woolf, Old Germanic Principles of Namegiving (Baltimore, 1939), 139-42.
52. Anglo-Saxon Wills, ed. D. Whitelock (Cambridge, 1930), no. 3 (Sawyer no. 1539).
53. Whitelock, *ibid.* 113; Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici, ed. J. M. Kemble, 6 vols (London, 1839-48), no. 1290.
54. Modified from that in Whitelock, *ibid.* 14-15.

THE FAMILY OF Ó GNÍMH IN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND:
A LOOK AT THE SOURCES*

At the back of my mind when I suggested this subject for a session at the Aberdeen conference was the hope that I could involve Scottish colleagues in considering the origins of families in Ireland and Scotland who in modern times have the same surname: Agnew. I was therefore delighted when I learned that Professor Geoffrey Barrow would be at the conference, for I expected that he would be able to supply answers where I still had question-marks. Unfortunately Professor Barrow had duties which required his presence elsewhere and so he did not hear my paper. However, I have consulted him since then, and I refer later on to his opinion on 'the earliest "Scottish" Agnew on record' which he has kindly conveyed to me in a letter.

On the eastern side of the narrow sea that separates Scotland from Ireland we have the Agnews of Lochnaw in Galloway whose genealogical descent, as given in Burke's Peerage and Baronetage, starts with Andrew Agnew, Constable of Lochnaw and Sheriff of Wigtown in 1451. A very detailed account of their supposed antecedents, originating in Normandy in the tenth century, was compiled by a later Andrew Agnew and published, under the title The Hereditary Sheriffs of Galloway, in 1893. This was a revised version of a work first published in 1864. I shall return to it later.

On the western side of the North Channel we have the family of Ó Gnímh whose members appear as professional Gaelic poets and as land-holders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although their family name is anglicised Ognieff (Ogneiffe, Ogneife) in the early years of the seventeenth century and some decades later as Ogneeve, it generally appears as Agnew after 1660.¹ The possibility that the Scottish and Irish families were identical in origin has been mooted and it cannot be ruled out without careful examination.

Let us first consider some linguistic aspects. The form of the Antrim surname in Irish sources, including what I believe is an autograph of the poet Fear Flatha, is Ó Gnímh.² Both Patrick Woulfe (Sloinnte Gaedheal is Gall, Dublin, 1927) and Edward Mac Lysaght (The Surnames of Ireland, Shannon, 1969) derive the name from the word gníomh 'deed'. However, as gníomh was originally a u-stem, with genitive gníomha,³ the form gnímh would be irregular. This does not mean that it would be impossible, for we have similar alternative genitives in Aonghus, gen. Aonghusa, Aonghuis, and Donnchadh, gen. Donnchadha, Donnchaidh. So a personal name *Gníomh might have given forms Ó Gnímh and Ó Gníomha as surnames. Moreover while anglicised forms Ognieff and Ogneeve could well represent Ó Gnímh, the form Agnew would be better explained as coming from Ó Gníomha /o:'g'n'i:və/ through /ɔ'g'n'i(:)u:/. And it may be significant that in an English translation accompanying the document which I believe was written by Fear Flatha, and which was also, I think, written by him, we find the anglicised form Fear Flaha O Gniuu.⁴ Both in the original Irish and in anglicised forms the stress in surnames is generally on the element after Ó or Mac. Hence shortening of /o:/ to /ɔ/ and hence /a/, as in Agnew, would not be surprising.⁵ Pronunciation of Agnew in the south of Ireland is now generally /'ag'n'u:/, with stress on the first syllable, while in the north it is /a'g'n'u:/, with stress on the second syllable. The latter would be more in accord with an Irish origin.

Next let us consider the evidence relating to persons with the surname Ó Gnímh or Ó Gníomha in Ireland. Oddly enough the only two pieces of evidence I have prior to