

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. Submission 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 and Ireland,
21 Caledonia Place,
Clifton,
Bristol BS8 4DL.

LAKE-NAMES ON MERCATOR'S MAP OF IRELAND

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Lakes are not nearly as numerous as rivers on Mercator's map of Ireland (Fig.1). Many minor bodies of water, such as L. Rea (Co. Galway), L. Beg (Co. Antrim), L. Dan (Co. Wicklow), and L. Gartan (Co. Donegal), are omitted, as are some larger ones like Lough Conn (Co. Mayo) and Lough Melvin (Co. Leitrim). Furthermore the location, extent and configuration of many of the lakes shown are grossly distorted. This is especially true of those located in Ulster, where for instance Upper and Lower Lough Erne are combined into a single massive water-body which is represented as more than double the size of Lough Neagh. The northern province, and the north-west generally, were still largely *terra incognita*, as the paucity of toponyms in Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo, Tyrone and Derry confirms. Some small lakelets were included merely because their location close to the coast had made them known, e.g. *L. Legh* (L. Currane) in Kerry or *L. Myles* (Belle Lake) in Waterford, whereas much larger lakes in the interior were not shown. To compound the difficulties of interpretation still further Mercator left un-named a considerable number of the water-bodies which he did show: these include large ones like Lough Carra in Mayo and Lough Owel in Westmeath.

The order of treatment is as follows: anticlockwise from Louth northwards through Down and Antrim into West Ulster; southwards through Connaught into Clare, Kerry and Cork; eastwards through Waterford into Leinster; and back to South Ulster by way of Westmeath and Meath. Mercator's version is given first, followed by the modern Irish version, the O.S. English version, and appropriate notes.

Ulster

1. *L. Karne. Eng.* Camlough? The modern Irish form is probably *Camloch*, 'crooked lake'.
2. *L. Lackan.* No Irish or English form. In view of its proximity to Donogmore this probably equates to Loughorne even though its location is inappropriate.
3. *L. Bryklyn. Ir.* Loch Bricleann, *Eng.* L. Brickland. The older Irish form of the name was *Loch Bricrenn*.¹
4. *Loug [sic] Eag. Ir.* Loch nEathach, *Eng.* Lough Neagh. The largest lake in Ireland, hence the description 'prfomhloch'. Older forms include *L. nEchach*, *L. nEchdach* and *L. nEachdach*.²

5. *L. Antre*. No Irish or English form. This little lake nestles at the foot of *Slew Gallen* (Slieve Gallion). It possibly equates to Lough Fea, a small body of water halfway between Cookstown and Draperstown. *Antre* might be a corruption of *Antrim*.
6. *Lough Erne*. *Ir.* Loch Éirne, *Eng.* Lough Erne. Mercator not merely distorts the size and shape of this body of water, but makes it lie east-west across the very centre of the island. The old form of the name is *Loch Erni*.³
7. *L. Derget*. *Ir.* Loch Dearg, *Eng.* Lough Derg. Older Irish forms were *Derg* and *Dercc*.⁴ Since medieval times at least Lough Derg has been the focus of a great pilgrimage, hence the cartographic importance attached to such a small lake.
8. *L. Fyn*. *Eng.* Lough Finn. In modern Irish the river flowing out of the lake is called *An Fhinn*; by analogy the standard form of the lake might be *Loch na Finne* or *Loch Fionn*. *Loch Finn* is the old form.⁵
9. *Lough Eske*. *Ir.* Loch Iasc, *Eng.* Lough Eske. *Loch Iascach* and *Loch Iasgach* are the older forms.⁶ Its location near the coast of Donegal Bay probably accounts for its inclusion despite its small size.
10. *L. Voghten*. *Eng.* Lough Oughter. The final letter in Mercator's version is undoubtedly a misprint or misreading for *r*. The present-day Irish form is *Loch Úachtair* 'the upper lake': it is a long-established one.
11. *L. Eages*. *Eng.* Lough Egish. Proximity to the coast once more accounts for this inclusion. The name was relatively unknown until its adoption by a local co-operative.
12. *L. Ramore*. *Ir.* Loch Ramhar, *Eng.* Lough Ramor. Apparently not listed in Hogan's *Onomasticon*.
13. *L. Sylon*. *Ir.* Loch Síleann, *Eng.* Lough Sheelin. The older form was *Loch Sighlenn*.⁷

Connaught

14. *Loug [sic] Bille*. *Ir.* Loch Gile, *Eng.* Lough Gill. It is unclear whether this was intended as a lake-name or a settlement-name: if the former, then a settlement was marked but not named. In any case it clearly corresponds to Lough Gill.
15. *Meske L*. *Ir.* Loch Measca, *Eng.* Lough Mask. Older forms: *Loch Measg*, *Loch Mesca*, *Loch Mesctha*.⁸
16. *L. Corbes*. *Ir.* Loch Coirib, *Eng.* Lough Corrib. Older forms: *Loch Oirben*, *Loch nOrbsen*, *Loch nOirpsean*,⁹ *Lough Erbsen* and *Lough Erpsen*¹⁰ and *Loch Fairbsen*.¹¹

17. *L. Alyne*. *Ir.* Loch Aillionn, *Eng.* Lough Allen. Older forms: *Loch Aillinne* and *Loch Aillinde*.¹² Mercator fails to capture the distinctive shape of this feature, mistakenly extends it southwards to the village of Leitrim, and unites it with a non-existent *Lough Eske* (Lough Boderg?), which in turn is joined to Lough Ree.
18. *L. Eske*. *Eng.* Lough Boderg?
19. *L. Ree*. *Ir.* Loch Rí, *Eng.* Lough Ree. Older forms: *Log Rí* and *Loch Ribh*.¹³
20. *L. Derigid*. *Ir.* Loch Deirgeirt, *Eng.* Lough Derg. This, the lowest of the great lakes on the Shannon system, has many older forms in Irish: *Derccderc*, *Deirgderc*, *Derccderc*, *Dergderc*, *Deirdeirc*, *Deirgneirc* and *Dergert*.
21. *L. Coult*. *Ir.* Loch Cútra, *Eng.* Lough Cutra. *Lough Cooter* is an older anglicised form.¹⁴

Munster

22. *L. Enend*. No Irish or English form. This may represent Lough Graney, or possibly Lough O Grady.
23. *L. Layne*. *Ir.* Loch Léin, *Eng.* Lough Leane. Alternative older form: *Loch Léin Línfiacclaigh*.¹⁵ The principal lake at Killarney.
24. *L. Leauer*. No Irish or English form. Impossible to identify. A corruption of *Luachair*?
25. *L. Cattes*. *Eng.* Lough Guitane.
26. *L. Kackry*. No Irish or English form. Mercator's depiction of the Lakes of Killarney is very distorted: he shows them (erroneously) joined to the head of Kenmare as well as linked to Castlemaine Harbour by the *Larcyn fl(umen)*, i.e. the River Laune. From a locational viewpoint *L. Kackry* would seem to equate to the Upper Lake of Killarney.
27. *L. Legh*. *Ir.* Loch Luigheach, *Eng.* L. Currane. Older Irish forms include *Lughdach*, *Luigdech* and *Lugdech*.¹⁶ This small lake was associated with Saint Finan. Presumably its conspicuous position on the very coast accounts for its inclusion by Mercator. *Curran* is an alternative English form.
28. *L. of Melles*. No Irish or English form. This lakelet is shown as the source of the R. Tar, a tributary of the Suir. There is nothing suitable to which it might be equated. The only faint possibility might be Lough Muskry, but it lies on the wrong side of the Galty watershed.
29. *L. Myles*. *Eng.* Belle Lake. Once again the coastal location is significant.
30. *L. Palace*. No Irish or English form. This lakelet is shown as one of the

three main sources of the River Suir. No obvious candidate for the position exists.

31. *L. Neskyne*. No Irish or English form. Another small coastal lake. Not identified.

32. *L. Canon*. No Irish or English form. This looks like the Lower Lake at Glendalough: indeed the Upper Lake is also shown and the words *Glan de loy lough* are printed immediately to the south. However the name may be a corruption of *Loch Deán* (Loch Dan) which lies only 2 miles further north.

33. *L. Pon*. No Irish or English form. This small lake is marked to the east of *Brestnogh fl.* (Brosna R.). It may correspond to Lough Boora.

34. *L. Derrydong. Ir.* Loch Dairbhreach, *Eng.* Lough Derravaragh. The older forms were *Loch nDairbrech* and *Loch nDarbrech*.¹⁷

35. *L. Broke*. No Irish or English form. Presumably the un-named lake to the east of *L. Broke* is *L. Kinale*. If so *L. Broke* presumably represents Glen Lough, or possibly one of the lakelets near Ballinalee such as Gorteen L. or Currygraney L. There is a townland south of the last of these called Bracklon, but it does not contain a lake.

36. *L. Came*. No Irish or English form. Mercator's map is very distorted in this belt of territory between *L. Eske* (Lough Boderg) and an un-named water-body which presumably represents Lough Gowna. This tract is littered with small lakes of which Mercator only marks four, none of which bears a close relationship to actual configurations, sizes, or locations. Lough Machugh, Lough Erril, and Cloonfinnan Lake are all possibilities. Even *L. Scur*, *St. John's Lough*, and *Drumlaheen L.* cannot be ruled out.

37. *L. Nenany*. No Irish or English form. *Rinn L.* seems the most probable.

Clearly, Mercator's knowledge of the interior geography of Ireland, especially of the north, was both limited and confused. As a result, corrupted versions of place-names were linked with features which were in many cases incorrectly positioned and represented. Worse still, many physical features were left un-named. Identification is thus often difficult; sometimes impossible. Nevertheless, of the 37 lakes listed above, 21 can be identified with certainty (and, curiously, no less than ten of these are located in Ulster, the least-known province), and tentative interpretations can be advanced for some of the others.

Whatever its defects, Mercator's work represents a considerable advance on previous efforts to map this remote western island, and consequently it deserves detailed study.

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NOTES

¹ Edmund Hogan, *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (Dublin, 1910), 496.

² *Ibid.* 498.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.* 342.

⁵ *Ibid.* 498.

⁶ *Ibid.* 499.

⁷ *Ibid.* 504.

⁸ *Ibid.* 502.

⁹ *Ibid.* 503.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 498.

¹¹ *Ibid.* 499.

¹² *Ibid.* 494.

¹³ *Ibid.* 503.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 497.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 501.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.* 497.

Victor Watts

I. INTRODUCTION

The first record of Scandinavian activity in the North-East of England is the notable entry in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 793:

'In this year terrible portents appeared over Northumbria and miserably frightened the inhabitants: these were exceptional flashes of lightning and fiery dragons were seen flying in the air ... In the same year on 8 January the harrying of the heathen miserably destroyed God's church in Lindisfarne by rapine and slaughter'.¹

The Laud Chronicle records that Jarrow (*Donemuth*) was looted the following year, though not without severe loss to the attackers.² Excavation has revealed that both Jarrow and Monkwearmouth were destroyed by fire and it is hard not to associate this discovery with the events of 794.³ Roger of Wendover records further attacks on Tynemouth and Hartness in 800.^{3a}

To these inroads which took Norsemen from the Norwegian fjords to the Western Isles, Man, Dublin, and elsewhere, the communities along the north-east coast of England were in no position to offer concerted resistance. King Æthelred of Northumbria was killed by his own court on 18 (or 19) April 796,⁴ and his successor reigned for a mere 27 days.⁵

Apart from the isolated mention of the slaying of an otherwise unknown Northumbrian King Rædwulf by a heathen army in 844,⁶ subsequent incursions into Northumbria are not documented until the arrival in 865 of the 'Great Army', led by the Danes Ivar the Boneless, Ubbe and Halfdan. The fall of York in November 866, and the virtual elimination of the fighting stock of the North in its streets the following March, was a momentous event marking the end of sporadic raiding and the inception of conquest proper: henceforth Deira was to be a Danish territory. In 874 a break-away army under Halfdan moved north to winter on the river Tyne and spent the following summer campaigning against the Picts and the Strathclyde Welsh.⁷ The following year, 876, in the laconic words of the Chronicle: 'Halfdan shared out the lands of Northumbria and they were engaged in ploughing and making a living for themselves'.⁸

Scholarly opinion has generally placed the southern boundary of what remained as English Northumbria – the ancient Bernicia ruled by ealdormen in Bamburgh – on the river Tees: 'the region in which he planted his men corresponded generally with the modern county of York ... It was not until the

Fig. 1 THE LAKE-NAMES OF IRELAND

