

toponymic ones. Of course the validity of the category is not in doubt. But rather than elevating it into a fifth fundamental type of surname, when the other semantic categories usefully embrace a variety of sub-types and even of grammatical formations (nicknames, for instance, covering sub-types from physical, moral or mental descriptions to verbal expressions and oaths: III, 24), and especially in view of the difficulty sometimes in distinguishing toponymic from topographic surnames, it seems more appropriate to group toponymic and topographical surnames together as one of the four main semantic categories. Alluding to the places where people lived or worked, this category then sits comfortably alongside the other three, alluding to people's occupations, family relationships and other descriptive characteristics. If no better term is available for the category, 'locational' would serve. 'Locative' is rejected by some because of the technical meaning of that word, referring to a grammatical case; however, within the context of surname studies, and particularly in the British Isles, there is no danger of ambiguity, and as an English word 'locative' is actually attested earlier in this broader sense than as a technical grammatical term. Or perhaps Reaney's 'local' is best, being simplest.

Anyone who spends £195 on these three volumes will be well rewarded; but they might justifiably be highly unamused to learn, perhaps on first opening the book (I, xi), that an earlier volume of essays, *The Durham Liber Vitae and its Context*, edited by the Rollasons and others (2004; still available at £60) 'should be regarded as an essential companion to the present edition'. To be fair, the essence of the essays in that book which are specifically concerned with the Durham manuscript is largely repeated here; so it may be the seven essays on comparative material in that earlier book (including Keynes on the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, and Keats-Rohan on the necrology of Mont Saint Michel) which are intended by that remark. But in order to see the wood, rather than the individual trees, of this remarkable manuscript, I have found the essays in that earlier book sometimes more helpful than the new ones, some of which have doubtless been written with an awareness that a broad outline of the topic was already printed in the earlier book.

The point is illustrated by asking the basic question of the overall number of names in the manuscript, for I cannot see that the approximate total is given here. In the earlier volume Elizabeth Briggs said (p. 83) that the Original Core contained 3,120 names, presumably a more accurate figure than that of 2,819 given here (I, 7a), citing a reckoning made in 1923. The number of laypersons and secular clergy entered between 1085 and 1315 is given as 5,509 (III, 20b); with a further 1,688 non-monks entered in c.1300–1539 (III, 20n., citing the earlier essays). This gives a sub-total of 10,317, but that does not include the small number of persons entered between the creation of the Original Core and

1085, nor the figures for monks entered from 1083 to 1539. It would be understandable, but nevertheless a pity, if the amount of detailed work necessary, over many years, to produce this fine edition has meant that the overall shape of the project was sometimes lost to sight.

However, the main and lasting achievement is there—a sound edition of this dauntingly complex text, in all its anthroponymic richness, with ample explanatory material to make possible further studies, onomastic and other. Since it was a ground-breaking venture, problems of method were perhaps inevitable, and lessons can be learnt for future work on this kind of source. The experience of this edition will hopefully ensure that any future projects on this kind of source will build into their plans enough time for full linkage between the prosopographical and philological studies, so as to analyse the names within the contexts in which they appear, and the usages apparent within the groups themselves. Meanwhile there is a great deal to welcome and appreciate in the volumes offered here.

O. J. PADEL

DAVE POSTLES, *The North Through Its Names*, English Surnames Survey, vol. 8. Oxford: Oxbow, 2007. xii + 243 pp., £35 (ISBN 978-1-84217-176-9)

Forty years ago, the founders of the English Surnames Survey expressed the hope that it would eventually form the basis of a general history of English families, at every level of the social scale. It was felt that the study of surnames would throw new light on genealogy and social history, particularly on matters such as population movement and the expansion or decline of family names. David Postles enigmatically describes this present book as 'a new departure' in the Survey and 'a move to its dissolution', leaving us in doubt about what the future holds and setting himself, I feel, an almost impossible task.

The *Introduction* briefly examines what he defines as 'northern-ness' and then touches on some perceived characteristics of northern surnames. These are: the custom in parts of Lancashire of forming surnames with the suffixes *-daughter* or *-maugh*;¹ certain aspects of the influence of bastardy on surnames;² and the relationship between toponymic surnames and the localities where they originated. These subjects are familiar to us, of course, from vol-

¹ The suffix *-maugh* was not "circumscribed to southern Lancashire" as the author claims. Examples occur also in Cumberland and Yorkshire, and several for the West Riding were quoted in volume 1 of the English Surnames Series (1973).

² This is a topic dealt with in some depth in Redmonds, *Surnames and Genealogy: a new approach* (Boston MA, 1997; repr. Bury, 2002), pp. 104–114.

umes 1 and 4 of the Survey, but there is additional information here and, by using what he calls 'marriage horizons', the author sheds some light on the stability of local populations.

Chapters 2 and 3 are entitled 'An expansive "North"', concentrating initially on surnames with *-son* as a suffix. The catalogue of counties in which these occur in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries helps to explain his use of the word 'expansive', and emphasises how difficult it can be to define a regional term like 'the North', even though it may be in common use. More than once the claim is made that northern surnames had largely stabilised by c.1350, exhibiting only 'features of transience' after that date (e.g. p. 48). In fact, evidence has been brought forward elsewhere to show that many names remained unstable through the 1400s and some few did not finally become hereditary until long afterwards.³ The late Lancashire examples of surnames which had *-daughter* as a suffix are treated as exceptions, but they are a substantial group and part only of a wider phenomenon.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the regional characteristics of northern surnames and bynames and it starts with a section on the use of *-man* as a suffix, followed by an examination of the distribution of bynames such as Walker, Lister, Thakker/Thatcher. Ten maps provide illustration of the points made, although some are rendered ambiguous by limitations in the source material. For example, the two distribution maps for Walker have the disadvantage that the data for Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire is defective.

In 'The North as a mosaic', Postles turns his attention to regional differences within the North, looking first at distinctive 'locational' bynames such as Ousterby, Northiby and Westerby and then widening the context to consider similar types of names further south—in Essex and Sussex principally.⁴ Figure 34 neatly defines the pattern of distribution. Comparisons are also made between Fox and Todd, Pinder and Punder, and the regional spellings of elements such as *-man* and *-bank*. Here, as elsewhere, the concentration is on bynames rather than surnames. No mention is made of the fact that Pinder became a common surname whereas Punder appears to be extinct, nor is any attempt made to pursue the history of the 'locational' names, even though they can be

³ See, for example, R. McKinley, *The Surnames of Lancashire* (London, 1981), pp. 355–59 and Redmonds, *Surnames and Genealogy*. The author's example of how Greaves stabilised in Derbyshire during the period 1324–c.1450 more accurately reflects what was happening.

⁴ These names have been the subject of much discussion over the years, notably by Kenneth Cameron in 'Bynames of location in Lincolnshire subsidy rolls', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 32 (1988), 156–64.

shown to have fascinating histories. Ousterby, for example, survives in good numbers as Oxtoby and Austerberry. The same criticism could be made of subsequent chapters on personal names, occupational names and nicknames, although many of the individual bynames that are discussed are of real interest. The value of some as lexical items is clearly indicated.

It is in 'Early-modern comparisons' that Postles considers the distribution and migration of family names, touching at the same time on the topic of expansion versus decline. Unfortunately, his assumption that most surnames had stabilised by the middle of the fourteenth century, puts the conclusions in doubt. There is a problem, for example, with the tables on pp. 230–32, which are designed to measure the continuity of surnames within parishes, in the period 1379–1543. The use of the poll tax lists of 1379 for that purpose must be criticised, since a large proportion of the taxpayers clearly had bynames not hereditary surnames. If we take Skipton as an example, it is clear that the total of 65 surnames from 72 taxpayers would have to be substantially reduced: it would surely be better not to count the following as surnames, that is: Rogerus Roper, *roper*, Henricus serviens Ranulphy and Adam filius Elie.⁵ It is also doubtful if many of the single women in the list should be considered as having stable surnames: Alicia Semstre and Agnes Semestre are two such cases.

A further problem with the table is that forty places are listed as parishes and yet most of these did not have parish status: (Kirkby) Malham is included correctly, but Airton, Calton, Hanlith and Otterburn had only township status: all four were part of Kirkby Malham parish. Similarly, there are separate headings for Cowling, Glusburn, Silsden and Steeton, although they were all in Kildwick parish. Kildwick itself is not in the list. In total, 27 of the places listed did not have parish status, and one or two important parishes were omitted. Gisburn, for example, was an extensive parish with a population dispersed through numerous townships. Several of these were included as parishes and yet Gisburn itself was omitted.

Regrettably, there are avoidable errors throughout this work and it is irritating to have incorrect spellings repeated numerous times. Two localities to which the author returns frequently for his examples are Hunsworth and Holme, but they are repeatedly mis-spelt Hundsworth and Holne. Among the Yorkshire place-names referred to there are a dozen or more similar misspellings and, more seriously, Stainforth is given as Stainton; Alverthorpe as Alverley and Sowerby near Thirsk as Souneby. I have been unable to identify Calthorpe, Eastanby, Littleby, Peerston and Reedley. It is equally frustrating to find

⁵ These are examples only: Rogerus Roper was just one of seven Skipton men whose "surname" was identical with their given occupation.

Barforth described as a West Riding village and Farnham as in Lancashire; the former was in the North Riding and the latter in Yorkshire. The lack of both an index and a bibliography adds to the frustration. I cannot help but feel that an opportunity for the English Surnames Survey to break new ground has been squandered.

GEORGE REDMONDS

JAYNE CARROLL and DAVID N. PARSONS, *Anglo-Saxon Mint-Names*, I, *Axbridge-Hythe*, English Place-Name Society Extra Series, vol. 2. English Place-Name Society: Nottingham, 2007. 198 pp. (ISBN 978 0904889758)

FRAN COLMAN, *Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles*, 54, *Royal Coin Cabinet Stockholm*, Part 5, *Anglo-Saxon Coins, Edward the Confessor and Harold II*, Oxford University Press and Spink: Oxford, 2007. 215 pp., 57 plates. (ISBN 9780197262337)

Campbell's *Old English Grammar*, first published in 1959 but still in print and in use as a standard textbook, is dismissive of coin-evidence in its survey of sources, because of its 'abnormal and bad spelling ... so frequent' in the legends.¹ For a long time Sir Frank Stenton's was a lone voice in advocating its value, and onomasts, with a few honourable exceptions, tended to ignore or avoid its potential. Stenton was a prime mover and first chairman for the *Sylloge* series, which continues to profit from his bequest. Fran Colman has been a tireless worker at the interface of numismatics and linguistics, and this volume makes welcome inroads into the vast collection of Viking Age English coins in Sweden, joining Talvio's *Sylloge* 40 which covers the reigns of Harthacnut and Harold I. Sadly the tens of thousands of pennies of Æthelred and Cnut in Stockholm remain easily accessible only through Hildebrand's 1881 lists (where only types are illustrated) and the uncompleted hoard project.

All the surviving personal-name data for Edward the Confessor's coinage has been available since 1992 through Colman's *Money Talks* in de Gruyter's *Trends in Linguistics* series (no. 56), but whilst her *Sylloge* volume is confined to the Swedish material, it scores in that every coin is illustrated, so that readings can be verified. *Money Talks* was designed to open up the numismatic sources to the linguistic community: the introduction to the *Sylloge* volume, on the other hand, addresses a numismatic audience to show the methods by which onomasts interpret the evidence of the coin legends. There is an extensive section explaining the criteria for selection of head-forms, and discussions on

¹ A. Campbell, *Old English Grammar* (Oxford, 1959; repr. 1997), p. 358.

the difficulties in determining the language of origin of names, as well as the possibilities and limitations for prosopography exhibited by similar personal names in diverse places.

It must be admitted that to onomasts more used to dealing with documents, coin evidence does raise some hurdles. Colman's section on epigraphy goes a long way towards rebutting Campbell's complaint of bad spelling and abnormal forms. When letters are made up from mostly straight-line punches, and on a minute scale, many errors are apparent rather than real. The numismatist treasures difference, and will record a die as reading, for example, -WING when the name is clearly intended for -wine in order to differentiate one coin from another. The photograph of the coin however is user-neutral, and the onomast can then recognise the misplaced punch and restore the form.

Another reason personal- and place-name students may have shied away from coin evidence has been the often rather esoteric nature of numismatic study and the fact that current information is scattered throughout journals and monographs. Again, in the specific instance of place-names, there are the additional disincentives of abbreviation and monotony, as well as the suspicion that since most of the mint-towns were major centres, the place-names must already be so well documented as to render the mint-signatures superfluous. The task that Parsons and Carroll have taken on will be enormously useful to scholars of many disciplines, and the results will play in many directions. Numismatists will welcome having readily to hand the history of the mint-town as a context for the coinage, whilst the certainty and contemporary closeness of dating which the coins provide must be of great value to the toponymist. To be able to compare at a glance the coin forms with documentary instances serves all interests, and confirms Colman's and my findings with the personal names, that 'the coins are less conservative in their presentation of language than contemporaneous manuscripts'.

There is little one can find fault with in the method. The authors have assimilated current numismatic research and use it with clarity, without on the whole smoothing over areas of uncertainty. I am however slightly uneasy over the decision to omit the use of *c.* in the date-ranges. The rationale that 'for our purposes it makes little difference whether a coin is dated *c.*1040-*c.*1042 or 1040-42' may be fair enough in Edward the Confessor's reign when the type-changes are this frequent, but for the longer running, earlier issues there is a greater margin of uncertainty, especially as regards Æthelred. Dolley's establishment of the order in which the substantive types were issued, and hence their relative chronology, was definitive, but his deduction of absolute dating based on an immutable six-year cycle has been seriously challenged. Stewart Lyon summed up the controversy by saying that the six-year theory might