

‘obscure the economic purpose behind the series of type-changes which began with Edgar’s recoinage’.² Whilst applauding the fact that the authors wished to give weight to the immediacy of coin-evidence, and to produce the material in the least cumbersome form, I think some indication of these doubts might have been aired. Colman’s *Sylloge* avoids dates in the body of the work, and sticks to *circa* in the Introduction.

This is my only criticism of a very welcome enterprise, and I look forward greatly to seeing it completed.

VERONICA SMART

VICTOR WATTS, *The Place-Names of County Durham*, Part 1, *Stockton Ward*, edited by Paul Cavill, Survey of English Place-Names, vol. 83. English Place-Name Survey: Nottingham, 2007. xxv + 284 pp., £35 (English Place-Name Society members) and £40 (non-members) (ISBN 978-0-904889-73-4)

There is a certain poignancy attaching to this volume. In his General Editor’s Foreword Richard Coates informs us that materials for *The Place-Names of County Durham* were collected by Victor Watts over a period of some thirty years, but that his sudden death on 20 December 2002 meant that the first volume was unfinished, albeit ‘nearly ready for publication’. Just how near to publication it was is clear from Victor Watts’s own Preface, which is dated the month before his death (p. xiv). Nevertheless, the very final stages of publishing anything, especially a work as complex and wide-ranging as a place-name survey, can be long-drawn out and demanding, especially if the work itself is not your own, and this ‘difficult and onerous task’ was carried out at the University of Nottingham by Paul Cavill, with significant assistance from Paul Cullen, David Parsons and Diana Whaley. From the outset, we should acknowledge a great debt to those who ensured this excellent and scholarly volume did make it through that last, often thankless, stage. Certain minor points raised below may well be the result of the difficult gestation of this work. Several other points are as much to do with the general editorial policy of the English Place-Name Survey (EPNS) volumes as they are with this individual volume.

Although Victor Watts did not live to see any of *The Place-Names of County Durham* volumes in print, his *A Dictionary of County Durham Place-Names* (with contributions by John Insley), also published by the English Place-Name Society, did appear earlier in 2002, and allows access to his thinking on other names in the

² C. S. S. Lyon, *British Numismatic Journal*, 35 (1966), ‘The significance of the sack of Oxford in 1009/1010 for the chronology of the coinage of Æthelred II’, 34-37 (p. 37).

county. It also has a very good Introduction (pp. xi–xix), which I would recommend that the user of the volume under review refer to for the wider framework and context, both historical and linguistic, of the place-names of the Stockton Ward.

The book contains only one map (p. xxv) which shows the 22 parishes in the Stockton Ward surveyed in the volume. While this is extremely useful, it does presuppose some local knowledge, such as where the survey-area lies within County Durham as a whole, and, more importantly, where the coast is: the map gives absolutely no indication that the survey-area's eastern boundary is largely the North Sea! Other simple additions would also have made it more useful, such as the main water-courses, an indication of the highest land with one or two spot heights, and last but not least an indication of scale.

Given the somewhat stark nature of this map, the next step is of course to turn to the relevant Ordnance Survey map. However, when this is consulted, the result is confusion rather than clarification. The 22 parishes dealt with in this volume, and shown on its map, do not correspond with the widely available mid-twentieth century OS maps such as the 1 inch 1961 edition. One of the problems is that the boundaries which OS defines as civil parish-boundaries are in fact, in the terms of the volume under review, mainly townships. Furthermore, the map and the lay-out of the names in the EPNS volume reflect various stages in the evolution of the parishes, rather than the parishes in their latest form.

This confusion between parish and township is sometimes reinforced by the text: for example, the introduction to the parish of Grindon informs us that in 1831 it 'contained the townships of Grindon and Whitton. Whitton was subsequently transferred to Stillington and Embleton was added from Sedgely parish in 1908' (p. 87). The careful wording here should warn us that Stillington is not a parish (although shown as such on OS 1 inch 1961), and in fact when we look Stillington up in the index we find that it is a township in Redmarshall parish. With this information it becomes clear why there is a detached part of the parish of Redmarshall shown on the map on p. xxv: although not marked as such, it must be the township of Stillington separated from Redmarshall by the township of Whitton, which according to the OS map is in Stillington parish, but in the EPNS volume is dealt with as a township of Grindon parish. Confused? I certainly was, and somewhere in the volumes dealing with County Durham it would be useful to have a note on the dichotomy between township and civil parish on OS maps versus EPNS volumes. Furthermore, a clear time-frame should be given for the administrative units depicted on any map.

The volume follows the tried and tested EPNS conventions and lay-out. It starts with the most extensive names, in this case that of County Durham itself and Haliwerfolk ('the saints' *or* monks' [of Lindisfarne] people' *or* 'the saint's

[i.e. Cuthbert's] people'), a territorial term, apparently no longer in use, designating 'the estates belonging to the Durham monastery in County Durham and the northern area of the city' (pp. 1–4). The County Durham entry does not, quite properly, concern itself primarily with the name Durham, although a brief etymology of this important name is given: Old English (OE) **dūn** + [OE] **holm** 'hill island', referring to the peninsula occupied by Durham Castle and Durham Cathedral (p. 2). After **holm** is written '(ON *holmr*)', signifying that it derives ultimately from Old Norse, a fact which is best reserved for the elements index. I will return later to the whole issue of ON versus OE or Middle English (ME).

One thing I looked for in vain in this initial section (or anywhere in the book) was the name of the major water-course of this area, the Tees, which occurs as part of the name of the eponymous Stockton of the title's Stockton Ward, viz Stockton-on-Tees, as well as in the deceptively late-looking Pountney's Bridge, first recorded as *Pontasia* 1196 × 1208, a French coining containing Old French *pont* 'bridge' and the river-name Tees (pp. 144–5).

The next section, which is the next level down in territorial terms, covers Stockton Ward (pp. 5–7), and includes Stockton Ward itself (with Stockton as a name discussed under the parish of Stockton-on-Tees pp. 209–10), the 'lost' name Hartness, and Billinghamshire, the order determined not alphabetically but by extent, with the largest unit first. As someone who has been involved in detailed place-name surveying and analysis, albeit in Scotland, I was interested to note that a strict division is observed between the different administrative usages of what is at bottom the same name. For example, early forms of Stockton Ward, such as *balliua de stoketune* 1242×3 (p. 5), are not included under early forms of Stockton (borough, parish, settlement etc) (pp. 209–10). While there is sound and consistent logic behind such a division, it does mean that certain important early forms can become excluded from the main discussion of a name, and an argument could be made for listing all early forms of a name together, regardless of their administrative referent. This would not, and should not, preclude the treatment of names under separate headings such as Stockton and Stockton Ward, as is found quite properly in this volume. Further fragmentation of early forms results from the fact that references to the church of a parish are included under 'Ways, Roads and Buildings' (e.g. under Stranton township, in Stranton parish, p. 227).

There then follow the place-names of the Stockton Ward themselves, arranged alphabetically by parish, then within each parish by township, each parish provided with a short introduction drawn chiefly from *The Victoria History of the County of Durham*, as well as from the work of the north-country historian and antiquarian, 'the incomparable Robert Surtees' (p. xiv). Below

this level the lay-out becomes complex, and the reader has to concentrate hard at first to grasp the pattern. Each township, which is also helpfully numbered, begins with a full analysis (with early forms) of the township-name itself, followed in alphabetical order by a similar full treatment of other settlement-names of a certain importance and/or antiquity within that township. At the end of the discussion of many township-names there is a list of minor names in upper case letters, the bulk of them without any further explanation. Some of these are self-explanatory, such as (under Billingham township) MILL LANE, or GLEBE FM, but some are intriguingly obscure, such as ICHABOE or SYNTHONIA CLUB (all p. 12). These lists in upper case contain a wide range of minor names, including street-names, house-names and field-names, many of them (but not all of them) apparently relatively modern. They can also occur at the end of the analysis and discussion of names below the level of township, as for example in Port Clarence, a name within the township of Billingham (p. 11). It is not entirely clear to me what criteria have been used to distinguish these names in upper case from the names in the next two sections, still within individual townships, the first headed 'Ways, Roads and Buildings', the second 'Field-Names'. In these two sections early forms are always given, and reference is consistently made to the Elements Index, with only the occasional exception, such as the strange *tenement and close called Jolliopp* in Layton township, Sedgefield parish, recorded in 1647 (p. 198). Once grasped, this lay-out works well and consistently, although its complexity does pose certain problems for the casual user of the work, and is a good argument for the inclusion of a comprehensive and unitary place-name index, the lack of which I further lament below.

Four-figure National Grid References are given for all the names with early forms and full analysis, but pronunciation is only very sporadically provided. In fact, one of the few pronunciations in the whole book which is given in IPA (or a form thereof) is Billingham. I have qualified IPA in this way because Billingham is transcribed ['bɪlɪŋəm] rather than the expected ['bɪlɪŋəm]. There are many other pronunciations that this reader would have liked to see included. For example the early forms and discussion of the parish- and township-name Redmarshall make it clear that it has nothing to do with English 'marshall', although the final two elements would seem to have been assimilated to this word. Is it only a written assimilation, or has it also affected the local pronunciation of the place? And while we are told that Sadberge in Haughton le Skerne was pronounced *Sedbury* or *Sadbury* in 1835, there is no indication as to how it is pronounced today.

In the early forms of individual place-names I welcome the sporadic inclusion of the context in which a name occurs, although I question the attempt to render

standard Latin abbreviations by modern typeface e.g. *Omn' b3* for *Omnibus* etc (p. 8). I also wonder whether in the early twenty-first century a level of Latinity can still be assumed for the average user of these volumes, to the extent that such phrases as '*Billi<n>gah<am> cu<m> Eccl<es>ia eiusde<m> uille <et> Omnib<us> ei adiacentib<us>*'¹ are left not only unexpanded but also untranslated (p. 8). To give the reader with some basic Latin a helping hand I would advocate at least the expansion of the abbreviations, which can be signalled in some way in the text, as I have done above using angled brackets (although since *adiacentib3* can only represent *adiacentibus* I would argue that it is perfectly justifiable in such cases to expand silently). When it comes to the early forms themselves the use of abbreviations becomes positively misleading. An illustration of this point can be found in the example quoted above, in which the form *Billi<n>gah<am>* is printed *Billi'gah*, the apostrophe standing for two different abbreviations, and most likely two distinct abbreviation marks in the manuscript: in the first instance it represents the nasal consonant suspension mark over the *i*, presumably here *in* rather than *im*; while in the second instance it presumably represents *-am* or the like. Even more confusingly, in the earliest (twelfth-century) form of Butterwick, Sedgefield parish, *But'wic*, the apostrophe represents yet another kind of abbreviation mark, to be expanded as *<er>*, thus *But<er>wic* (p. 174). This same form is silently expanded as *Buterwic* in Watts's above-mentioned *Dictionary of County Durham Place-Names* (p. 22).

One of the many important facets of toponymics is that place-names can be our sole witness for certain items that must once have existed in the lexicon. They can also contain an attestation of a word which is not recorded in the lexicon until many centuries later: one such example would be the field-name *North crinklandes* 1260, on the lands of Preston-on-Tees (p. 209), which contains a word related to the noun *crink* 'a twist, a bend' not recorded before 1565 in *OED*.² Unfortunately, since field-names are not in the 'Index of the Place-Names of Stockton Ward' (pp. 269–84), this name is accessed only via the Elements Index,³ which itself works on a system of cross-referral not to page number but to township. This is a pity, since I see no reason why there

¹ 1154×60 "Billingham with the church of that (same) vill and with everything lying adjacent to it".

² *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn, edited by J. Simpson and E. Weiner (Oxford, 1989), s.v. *crink n*.

³ The full title of this Index is 'The Elements, other than personal names, in Stockton Ward place-names and field-names', (pp. 235–60). However, 'minor names in the main body of the work' are included in the Index of Place-Names, though many of these are supplied with no early forms or analysis.

should not be a comprehensive and unitary page-number index of all place-names, however minor, discussed in the text. Place-name surveys such as the one under review are in essence works of reference, and the lack of such an index creates an extra barrier between the user and the richness of the contents.

And there is indeed much richness of contents in this volume, a testimony to the author's wide-ranging scholarship, confident mastery of his discipline, and intimate knowledge of his study-area. One small example among many: in the discussion of Urlay, Eggescliffe parish (p. 56), we move effortlessly from the unpromising site of a vitriol factory established in 1831 through early forms such as *Lurlehou* c.1220, to the hypothetical personal name **Lurla* and its connection with the name *Lorelei* on the Rhine, 'possibly "echoing, rumbling cliff"'.

One important aspect of any toponymic analysis is the breaking down of a place-name into its constituent lexical parts. However, this utterly standard procedure always presents the toponymist with a problem to which there is no neat or all-encompassing solution. Since we often have no idea when a place-name was formed, because it can be centuries before it is first recorded, how do we know in which form to present these constituent parts? EPNS generally has approached this problem from the bottom up, as it were, giving the oldest linguistic forms of most elements, chiefly Old English or Old Norse. The rationale for this is briefly set out in the introduction to the Elements Index (p. 235) as follows: 'To enable comparison with other usage, the headwords are given in the forms used by *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names*⁴ and *English Place-Name Elements*;⁵ in practice this means that some headwords are given which are from a linguistically earlier period than the names in the volume to which they relate (e.g. **byht**)'. In fact under OE **byht** 'a bend' only one example is given, the early modern name Bamlett's Bight (Billingham parish, p. 12). While it could be argued that the element concerned here is more accurately ModE (Modern English) *bight*, the anomaly is clearly anticipated and explained in the above-cited introduction to the Elements Index. In my own work on the place-names of Fife I have generally taken an opposite, top-down approach, giving the constituent vocabulary of place-names in modern Scots and Gaelic form and orthography, an approach equally open to the charge of

⁴ D. Parsons et al., *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names* (Nottingham, 1997-) is an ongoing project at the Centre for English Name Studies, and will result in a revision of A. H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, 2 vols., English Place-Name Society vols. 25-6 (Cambridge, 1956; repr. 1970).

⁵ A. H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, 2 vols., English Place-Name Society vols. 25-6 (Cambridge, 1956; repr. 1970).

chronological anomaly. As long as we are dealing with a single language continuum, the main thing here is consistency.

However, where problems are encountered with the bottom-up approach is when more than one language is involved in the evolution of a word, and in County Durham this becomes a particular issue in the case of words which ultimately derive from Old Norse (ON). For example, a common element in the place-names of the Stockton Ward appears in names from 1243 as *myr*, *myre*, *myer* etc. (p. 251). This is clearly the (northern) Middle English word *myre* or *mire*, modern English *mire* 'mire, marsh'. However, in the Elements Index its basic form appears as ON **mýrr**. This gives the distinct, but misleading, impression that those names which contain this element are at least partly ON. It is a similar story for names containing northern English *gate* 'road', on record in the study-area from c.1300 onwards (p. 245). This is given simply as **gata** ON 'a way, road, path', while *ferry*-place-names are said to contain ON **ferja** rather than Middle English *ferry*. There is also some inconsistency here, since other elements are defined primarily as Modern English dialect (e.g. **fitty** 'coastal marshland', with its ultimate derivation given as ON *fit* 'wet meadow'). Although the *fitty* model is, I would suggest, the more accurate and less misleading way of presenting such material, it appears to be in the minority. And it is not only with ON that this way of presenting the elements is problematic. For example *demeine* 'land held [directly] by a lord or institution' is given as Old French (OFr), but again this is misleading: the only example given for this element in the Index is *demesne lands* in Greatham (1647), which has to be an English coining, albeit using a word which originated in Old French many centuries previously. In this methodology's own terms it might be considered an inconsistency that **bog** is given as Middle English (ME) 'morass, moss', appearing in names from the eighteenth century onwards, with no hint at what must be its Scottish or Irish provenance (originally Gaelic *bog* 'soft'); similarly **pete** is given as ME 'peat', rather than deriving from Scots *pete*, *peat*, itself probably a Celtic loan-word.⁶

England north of the Humber and the Ribble share much linguistically with lowland Scotland, and this is reinforced throughout this volume. Words such as *bigging* 'a building', *brig*, 'a bridge', *crook* (Scots *cruik*) 'a bend, a corner of land' and *shouelbrade* (Scots *shuilbraid*) 'a narrow strip of land the breadth of a shovel' would fit in just as well in Scotland. Within this general context of

⁶ See the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue (DOST)* s.v. *pete*, *peit* n.¹ I was intrigued to see this element appearing relatively early in the study-area, in the early thirteenth century (p. 252). *DOST* (loc. cit) notes an occurrence of the Latinised *peta* in a Durham document of 1478.

familiarity, differences stand out. For example amongst the words referring to thoroughfares, large and small, often in an urban environment, *vennel* 'a narrow street', which occurs in a street-name in Hartlepool in fourteenth-century records (p. 110) (but is not included in the Elements Index) would be completely at home in, say, Edinburgh. On the other hand the commonly occurring *chare* is totally unfamiliar north of the border. Meaning 'a narrow lane, a country track', deriving from OE *cerr* 'a bend', it has presumably developed on the same principal as the common Scots *wynd* 'a narrow street', which itself occurs once in a street-name in Stockton-on-Tees (*Romeswind* 1677) (see Elements Index under (*ge*)wind). *Chare* can be found in the modern streetscape of Hartlepool, for example, in names such as Heugh Chare, St Hilda Chare and Sandwell Chare.

The common linguistic heritage of the northern counties of England and the lowland counties of Scotland makes this volume of especial value and importance to Scottish toponymics, and the completion of County Durham, as well as Northumberland, will thus make an immense contribution to the toponymics of both countries. There is no indication in this, the first volume, as to how far towards completion of the survey of County Durham Victor Watts was at the time of his death, nor how many volumes might be involved, but the existence of his *Dictionary of County Durham Place-Names* suggests that firm foundations had been laid. It can only be hoped that resources will be found to ensure that his valuable collections and scholarly analyses will not languish unpublished for too long.

I will leave the last word to Victor Watts. In this era of global warming and its concomitant anxieties, there is one name which might bring solace. In the township of Grindon, parish of Grindon, is Wynyard Hall, first recorded (as *Wyneiard*) in 1237. Watts unequivocally interprets this as an English name meaning 'vineyard', adding (p. 90): 'Earlier writers have resisted this explanation ... but climatic conditions were less averse to viticulture in the Middle Ages even in the north and there was even a modern wine-producing vineyard at nearby Whitworth Hall in recent times'.

SIMON TAYLOR