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Editorial	v
ARTICLES	
The value of recent records, historical context, and genealogy in surname research <i>Harry Parkin</i>	1
Literary influences on Berwickshire place-names <i>Eila Williamson</i>	21
Some philological and methodological thoughts on the problematic place-name Avening, Gloucestershire <i>Richard Coates</i>	57
Playfulness in a Lake District namescape: the role of onomastics in the literary development of place and space in Ransome's <i>Swallows & Amazons</i> series <i>James O. Butler</i>	77
REVIEW ARTICLE	
Names and people in the Thorney Liber Vitae <i>Peter McClure</i>	97
REVIEWS	
<i>The Place-Name Kingston</i> , by Jill Bourne (<i>Carole Hough</i>)	119
<i>Grimsby Streets</i> , by Emma Lingard (<i>Richard Coates</i>)	124
<i>The Dictionary of Football Club Nicknames</i> , by Shaun Tyas, and <i>The Football and Rugby Team Nicknames of Wales</i> , by Richard E. Huws (<i>Martin Atherton</i>)	126
<i>Alfred Oscroft: Place-Names of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight</i> , edited by James Oscroft Wilkes (<i>Richard Coates</i>)	130

[continued]

BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR 2015 (<i>Alice Crook and Eleanor Rye,</i> with <i>Aengus Finnegan and David N. Parsons</i>)	137
NOTICES	
Welsh Place-Name Society	20
English Place-Name Society	76
Scottish Place-Name Society	136
Essay Prize	158

Literary influences on Berwickshire place-names

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This paper largely concerns place-names with a literary connection that are being examined as part of a wider survey of Berwickshire place-names.¹ The focus is on seven names in particular: Scott's View (NT 593343); Sybil's Well (NT 889462); Rhymer's Tower (NT 572382); Tibby Fowler's Cottage (NT 942541) and Tibby Fowler's Glen (NT 938541); Wallace's Crook (NT 813409); and Godscroft (NT 742631). Each of these names, with the probable exception of the final one, as shall be seen, has been inspired by an author or character, and the paper demonstrates the influence that literature and its creators has had on the place-nomenclature of a Scottish county.² While it is not the purpose of this article to examine fully the uses of Berwickshire place-names within literature – a vast subject in its own right – attention will be given towards the end of the paper to select aspects of the topic using a few examples from early modern poetry, which are deemed particularly pertinent to the work of toponymists.

¹ The *Recovering the Earliest English Language in Scotland: Evidence from Place-Names* project is funded by the Leverhulme Trust (2016–18) and is based at the University of Glasgow. See <gla.ac.uk/reels>, and the report in *Nomina* 38 (2015), 101–15, for further information. Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Scottish Place-Name Society spring conference in Galashiels (May 2017) and at the International Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Scottish Language and Literature at the University of Glasgow (July 2017). I am grateful for comments received on both occasions, and to Prof. Carole Hough and Dr Simon Taylor for their advice and encouragement.

² Berwickshire ceased to exist as a county in 1975. The Survey of Scottish Place-Names organises its volumes according to the Scottish counties as they existed between 1891 and the local government reorganisation of 1975.

Scott's View

The first place-name under consideration here is Scott's View, named for arguably the most famous author of the Scottish Borders, Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832). Numerous place-names in Scotland and throughout the world commemorate this writer and his work.³ In the parish of Mertoun in Berwickshire, a scenic view associated with Scott has given rise to a name on modern maps and road signs designed to promote visitor attractions. Scott's View is traditionally associated with the story told by John Gibson Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law and biographer, concerning an incident which took place during the funeral procession for Scott from Abbotsford to Dryburgh Abbey:

Some accident, it was observed, had caused the hearse to halt for several minutes on the summit of the hill at Bemerside – exactly where a prospect of remarkable richness opens, and where Sir Walter had always been accustomed to rein up his horse. The day was dark and lowering, and the wind high (Lockhart 1901, v, 440).

Scott's View often tends to be used to describe the view itself (Kelly 2010, 97), but the place-name on the map really denotes the viewpoint. On maps it can be traced back to the 1960s,⁴ perhaps unsurprisingly since the viewpoint was built in 1955 by the Automobile Association, and was unveiled on 15 May 1956 (Squires 2016, 176; Lang 1957, 24). No evidence has yet emerged to indicate whether the exact name was ever used before the establishment of the viewpoint (cf. Watson 2006, 107), but in the account of the July 1953 visit of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club to Thirlestane, Cowdenknowes and Bemersyde (*Report 1953*, 16–21), initially published the following year,⁵ it states that:

During the drive from Cowdenknowes a halt was made on Bemersyde Hill to admire the extensive prospect. It was here that Sir Walter Scott came so often

³ For a few examples, see Kelly (2010, 72–4), and Taylor with Márkus (2006–12, IV, 472: Sir Walter Scott's Tree, Kilmany parish, Fife).

⁴ See 1:2500 (1963) map, available online on Digimap.

⁵ The Club's issue for 1953 was published in 1954, but is included along with the issues for 1954 and 1955 to form volume 33, which was printed in 1956.

to gaze upon his favourite view of the Borders. It is said that as his funeral cortège passed this spot, the horses halted through force of habit (*Report 1953*, 19–20).

It is notable that no mention is made of a specific place-name here.

The funeral procession had set out from Abbotsford, Scott's grand home in Roxburghshire, visited by tourists not only at the present day, but during the author's own lifetime and in the years immediately after his death.⁶ When Scott purchased the original estate and farmhouse in 1811 the lands were officially known as Newarthaugh, and the farmhouse called Cartleyhole (or Cartley Hole), or even 'Clarty Hole'⁷ by local people (Buck and Garside 2013, 41, 45; Lockhart 1901, II, 233; Lang 1957, 6; Cruft *et al.* 2006, 91; Maxwell 1909, 77; Strang 1994, 184).⁸ Scott changed the name of the estate and house to Abbotsford, literally meaning the 'abbot's ford'; i.e. a ford over the River Tweed providing a crossing point on the route to Melrose Abbey.⁹

Sybil's Well

In later life, Scott became famous as a novelist, but his earlier fame as a writer was as a poet, and his poetic works include the epic poem *Marmion*, published in 1808, prior to the acquisition of Abbotsford. *Marmion* was to prove a bestseller, appearing in six editions in 1808 alone (Stevenson and Pentland 2012, 363). The poem is set at the time of the battle of Flodden in 1513.¹⁰ Its main character, Marmion, is an English knight and favourite of

⁶ See, for example, Watson's discussion of Abbotsford and literary tourism (2006, 93–105). In February 1833, less than a year after Scott's death, Abbotsford became available to the public through paid visits (*ibid.*, 100).

⁷ 'Clarty' is a Scots and Northern English dialect word meaning dirty or filthy. See *DOST* s.v. *clarty* and OED s.v. *clarty*.

⁸ With regard to the farmhouse, 'Scott himself was to refer to it as "Mother Redford", combining the surname of the previous tenant and Mother Redcap, a folklore figure and name of a haunt for smugglers' (Buck and Garside 2013, 45).

⁹ The house Abbotsford as it is seen today was developed and extended in three stages, two of which were in Scott's lifetime (Cruft *et al.* 2006, 91–3).

¹⁰ A brief summary of the epic poem of six cantos can be found in Ferber (2012, 173–6).

Henry VIII. Towards the end of the poem he dies at Flodden beside a cross and well, described in the following way:

A little fountain cell,
 Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
 In a stone basin fell.
 Above, some half-worn letters say,
 Drink . weary . pilgrim . drink . and . pray .
 for . the . kind . soul . of . Sybil . Grey .
 Who . built . this . cross . and . well (Canto 6, Stanza xxx, lines 920–6).

Towards the end of the poem, the location is described from a perspective of years later:

Less easy task it were, to show
 Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
 They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
 But every mark is gone;
 Time's wasting hand has done away
 The simple Cross of Sybil Grey,
 And broke her font of stone:
 But yet from out the little hill
 Oozes the slender springlet still,
 Oft halts the stranger there,
 For thence may best his curious eye
 The memorable field descry ... (Canto 6, Stanza xxxvii, lines 1119–30).

This episode has led directly to the creation of two place-names in Northumberland, purportedly marking the site in question near the battlefield in Branxton parish. The first of these is in Floddenhill Plantation, in neighbouring Ford parish, and is marked on the OS Explorer map as Sybil's Well (NT 914359). It was installed in the 1880s by Louisa, marchioness of Waterford and features a stone basin and the inscription 'DRINK WEARY PILGRIM DRINK AND STAY / REST BY THE WELL OF SYBIL GREY', wording notably different from and less religious than that in Scott's poem (Usherwood *et al.* 2000, 25; Griffiths 2007, 48).¹¹ The

¹¹ On the website of the Friends of Berwick and District Museum and Archives, it is claimed that the well 'was built around 1860 for Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford, who

second one is situated close to Branxton church (NT 891375). It is a well, the current masonry of which was constructed about 1935, with an inscribed stone cross and features the correct wording of the ‘Drink Weary Pilgrim’ inscription from *Marmion* (Branxton & Flodden). Other names for either or both of the wells are Sybil Grey’s Well and Marmion’s Well (Branxton & Flodden; Strang 1994, 91). The first, in Ford, is also known as the Soldier’s Well (Usherwood *et al.* 2000, 26; Griffiths 2007, 48).

Therefore there are two wells or fountains associated with the battle of Flodden, by virtue of Scott’s *Marmion*, and known as Sybil’s Well. In Berwickshire, there is also a Sybil’s Well, shown on the OS Explorer map in the grounds of Ladykirk House. In the Ordnance Survey Name Book for Ladykirk parish, in which the preferred spelling is Sibyl’s Well, it is described as follows:

of this well Dr Stevenson¹² states the following – ‘The name Sibyl’s well was probably given by the late Mr Robinson¹³ as it is not well known among the people. It is on what is | popularly known as the Bloody Head-Rig, where some border struggle ended. Some say it was a party from Flodden & that its Waters ran bloody long after. I suppose it was the uncertainty of tradition respecting this well, that induced the proprietor to call it the Sibyl’s, in allusion to the Sibyls at Rome, but there is no certainty about the why of this name. I

would lead her guests to see it from Ford Castle’, and there is an image of a drawing of the ‘Flodden Well’ made by Lady Waterford in 1862 (Branxton & Flodden). According to Usherwood *et al.*: ‘The precise date and circumstances of the well’s commission have not been discovered’ (2000, 26). However, they record that the installation of the sandstone monument happened later, in the 1880s. It seems likely that this was the site of a natural spring, identified by the marchioness as the location of Sybil’s Well, and on which the later structure was built. Stevenson and Pentland state that before the century had ended, ‘the monument to the well was being ridiculed by antiquarians as a wildly inaccurate folly’ (2012, 367).

¹² Rev. Dr John Stevenson (1798–1858) was minister of Ladykirk from 1855 until his death in August 1858. Before becoming a parish minister in Berwickshire, Stevenson had served successively in India from 1823, as a missionary, chaplain and minister. He was a renowned Sanskrit scholar (Buckland 1906, 402–3; Numark 2013, 21–4).

¹³ This is more likely to refer to Mr Robertson of Ladykirk, the proprietor of the estate, who died in 1783, rather than Mr Robert Robinson, the garden designer; see below, and notes 15 and 16.

have little doubt but the Stone Cutter was at fault about the spelling of the name.¹⁴ The country or common people, call it Sibyl – making the i long’ (NRS, OS 1/5/26/47–8, underlining therein).

The entries in the Name Book for Bloody Headrig (the slopes and flat land on both sides of Bow Burn, which had been formed by the process of ploughing) and Bow Burn both refer to a tradition that the battle of Flodden ended there, although there is a discrepancy between them as to whether it was two or three days that the burn ran with blood (NRS, OS 1/5/26/36; OS 1/5/26/37). The remains of the well are recorded as bearing an inscription ‘Sybill’s Well and end of the Bloody Headrig’ (HES Inventory, GDL00250).

It does seem plausible that the name of the well is connected with the classical Sibyl of Cumae, a Greek prophetess who also features in Roman literature, including Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The relevant entry in the Historic Environment Scotland Garden and Designed Landscape Inventory indicates that a Mr Robinson met with the laird’s son in 1757 and 1758 and discussed garden design, and further suggests that this could refer to the designer Robert Robinson, who is known to have worked at Paxton House and was a former apprentice to Lancelot ‘Capability’ Brown (HES Inventory, GDL00250; Strang 1994, 54).¹⁵ The laird’s son was Roger Robertson, who had recently returned from a three-year Grand Tour on the Continent and was later to acquire fame as a noted antiquarian (HES Inventory, GDL00250).¹⁶ Therefore, in this context, naming a well after a classical figure makes sense. Nevertheless, it seems intriguing that there is such a strong Flodden connection in the close vicinity of the well, and the

¹⁴ In the Name Book, *Sibyl’s Well* is the form of the name given by three authorities (Rev. Dr Stevenson, minister; David Robertson Esq., Ladykirk; and ‘General usage’). The authority for the form, *Sybill’s Well* is ‘Cut on wall over the well.’ (NRS, OS 1/5/26/47).

¹⁵ For Robinson, see also Brown and Williamson (2016, 148), where he is identified as the son of William Robinson of Whorlton, County Durham, and born in 1724, rather than as the son of William Robinson, gardener of Durham, and born in 1734, as stated by Eden (1997, II, 438).

¹⁶ Writing of his time in Venice in 1752 during his Grand Tour, Robertson is described as ‘a model Grand Tourist in terms of probity’, by Iain Gordon Brown (2006, 7). Robertson died in November 1782, predeceasing his father, who died less than a year later at the age of ninety-five (Russell 1881, 377).

question arises as to whether there could be any likelihood of this Sybil's Well providing inspiration for the well in Scott's *Marmion*.

Rhymer's Tower

Another prophetic figure with strong links to Berwickshire is Thomas the Rhymer or Thomas of Ercildoune, an early name for Earlston, a village and parish in Berwickshire. There was a historical person named Thomas of Ercildoune who lived in the thirteenth century. A legend grew that having met the Faerie Queen under the Eildon Tree, he had been spirited away to Fairyland for seven years. Prophecies were attributed to him in a number of medieval chronicles, such as Thomas Gray's *Scalacronica* (c.1362) and Walter Bower's *Scotichronicon* (1440s), as well as in later sources (Edwards 2006),¹⁷ and there was a medieval romance about him – *Tomas Off Ersseldoune*, dated c.1440 (Cowan 2009, 14). His prophecies were published in a collection entitled *The Whole Prophesie of Scotland, England, & some part of France, and Denmark, Prophesied bee meruelous Merling, Beid, Bertlingtoun, Thomas Rymour, Walhave, Eltraine, Banester, and Sibbilla, all according in one. Containing many strange and meruelous things*, which was printed by Waldegrave in 1603 (Cowan 2009, 12). Five versions of the ballad of Thomas the Rhymer exist, the earliest of which is that recorded by Anna Gordon, Mrs Brown of Falkland (Edwards 2006; Rieuwerts 2011, 218–19, 294–5). The manuscript in which the latter is recorded was written in 1800 (Rieuwerts 2011, 15).

Rhymer's Tower lies close to the A68 main road at the west end of Earlston village. It stands in ruins, with only 'the SW corner and parts of the two adjacent walls' surviving (Cruft *et al.* 2006, 246). It was already in ruins in the mid-nineteenth century, being recorded in the Ordnance Survey Name Book for Earlston parish as: 'The ruins of the tower, or Castle of the celebrated Sir Thomas the Rhymer is situate near the west end of Earlston

¹⁷ Crockett (1893, 331) provides a useful selection of 'References to Thomas of Ercildoune by Older Scottish and English writers', but this should be used with a degree of caution as the dating of some of the works has altered as a result of subsequent scholarship. Some, but not all, of these references are also to be found in Edwards 2006.

Village. a part of the west and north walls are still standing. A small thatched Cottage occupies a portion of the site' (NRS, OS 1/5/16/43). The tower is of later date than Thomas's lifetime, however, dating to the sixteenth century, and is 'possibly that mentioned in the late C16 as belonging to the Homes of Cowdenknowes', an estate also in Earlston parish (Cruft *et al.* 2006, 246).

Aside from the tower itself, the legend and life of Thomas the Rhymer continues to be celebrated in the place-name landscape of Earlston. The site of the tower now lies in the garden of the modern business known as Rhymers Tower Coffee Shop and Restaurant. The local amateur football team, Earlston Rhymers FC has not only incorporated the *Rhymer* into its name, but its logo also depicts the Rhymer's Tower (Lang 1957, 77).¹⁸ Street names include Rhymers Avenue and Rhymers Court, while Rhymers Cottage and Rhymers Mill Cottage are two house names.¹⁹ Road signs leading into the settlement announce to their readers that they are about to enter Earlston, 'Home of Thomas the Rhymer'. This list of Earlston place-names related to the Rhymer is not comprehensive, nor are Rhymer place-names restricted to this settlement, or indeed the county of Berwickshire, alone. For example, not far from Abbotsford in Roxburghshire is the Rhymer's Stone and viewpoint, which looks across to Leaderfoot and Black Hill. Within walking distance is a modern house with the name of Rhymers Ha'.

While Earlston's new road signs were one of the initiatives of a local group, the Friends of Thomas the Rhymer,²⁰ to promote tourism, Rhymer tourism is not a new phenomenon. During his tour of the Borders and North of England from May to June 1787, Burns dined at Earlston, 'the birth-place and residence of the celebrated Thomas A Rhymer', and 'saw the ruins of his castle', on Tuesday 15 May (Leask 2014, 120). Washington Irving visited Sir Walter Scott in 1816 and was taken to sites (the Eildon Stone and

¹⁸ The logo can be seen on the website of the youth team <earlstonrhymersyouth.co.uk> (accessed 17 December 2017).

¹⁹ Rhymers Mill Cottage takes its name from Rhymer's Mill, which the Ordnance Survey Name Book describes as, 'A large flour mill situate at the west end of the Village of Earlston on the bank of the Leader, and worked by water power ...' (NRS, OS 1/5/16/43).

²⁰ The group's website can be found online at <thomastherhymer.co.uk> (accessed 17 December 2017).

Huntley Bank) associated with the Rhymer in the Eildon Hills area, Roxburghshire (Watson 2006, 96). The ballad of Thomas the Rhymer was one of the ballads that Walter Scott collected for his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, first published in two volumes in 1802, followed by an enlarged edition containing a third volume in 1803. The Rhymer was clearly a subject of much interest to Scott, who extended his estate in Roxburghshire by buying up surrounding land and renaming places to reflect the Rhymer legend. When he purchased Dick's Cleugh in December 1816, he renamed it Rhymer's Glen 'to locate True Thomas's meeting with the Queen of Fairies on his own estate', and in September 1817 he purchased Toftfield, which was renamed Huntlyburn (Hewitt 2008).²¹

Tibby Fowler's Cottage and Tibby Fowler's Glen

The place-names Tibby Fowler's Glen and Tibby Fowler's Cottage both have links with a ballad too, although not one recorded in Scott's *Minstrelsy*. Both of these names are located in Mordington parish near Edrington Castle and can be found on the OS 6" 1st edn map of 1862. Neither name appears on the current OS Explorer map, but they are recorded on modern maps as late as the 1:2500 dated 1975. The Ordnance Survey Name Book for Mordington parish (dated 1856), describes the cottage in the following way: 'There are no remains of the cot<tage> to shew its actual position—but <the> spot where it stood is stil<l> pointed out by some of th<e> old inhabitants—who delight <in> relating some of Tibby's explo<its> among

²¹ For Scott's interest in the Rhymer, see also Kelly (2010, 64–6). For a discussion of the three definite place-names in the four Scottish variants of the ballad of Thomas the Rhymer, i.e. Huntlie bank/banks, the Eildon tree and Farnalie, see Lyle (1969), who includes an annotated map of the Eildon Hills area (p. 67). In Spring 1817, Captain Adam Ferguson (Scott's long-standing friend) and his sisters took up residence in Toftfield, on which, according to Lockhart, 'Scott then bestowed, at the ladies' request, the name of Huntly Burn: this more harmonious designation being taken from the mountain brook which passes through its grounds and garden, – the same famous in tradition as the scene of Thomas the Rhymer's interviews with the Queen of Fairy. The upper part of the *Rhymer's Glen*, through which this brook finds its way from the Cauldshiels Loch to Toftfield, had been included in a previous purchase. He was now master of all these haunts of "True Thomas," ...' (Lockhart 1901, III, 175).

the Border Gallant<s> Tibby Fowler, is the Heroine of the most popular Scottish Bal<lad>' (NRS, OS 1/5/34/46).²² In the Name Book, the Glen is recorded as being, 'A deep romantic vale a little above the ruins of the Castle. It obtains its name from having at one time situate in it the cottage of the renowned "Tibby Fowler o' the Glen" The heroine of one of the most popular Scottish songs' (NRS, OS 1/5/34/35).²³ The popularity of the song is attested by reference to it in Elizabeth Gaskell's contemporary novel, *Cranford* (Gaskell 1853),²⁴ and its inclusion in chapbooks of the late eighteenth century and nineteenth century.²⁵

²² The angled brackets in this quotation, and in the quotation in the following footnote, indicate letters which have been obscured on account of the binding of the Name Book. Underlining is as in the Name Book.

²³ There is another entry for Tibby Fowler's Glen later on in the same Name Book, but it is less informative: 'A deep glen through whi<ch> the Whiteadder flows. sit<uated> a little N. of Edrington Ca<stle>' (NRS, OS 1/5/34/46).

²⁴ In chapter 12, 'Engaged to be married', the song is mentioned in a discussion between the two characters, Miss Matty and Miss Pole. The relevant passage reads: "Marry!" said Miss Matty once again. "Well! I never thought of it. Two people that we know going to be married. It's coming very near!" "So near that my heart stopped beating when I heard of it, while you might have counted twelve," said Miss Pole. "One does not know whose turn may come next. Here, in Cranford, poor Lady Glenmire might have thought herself safe," said Miss Matty, with a gentle pity in her tones. "Bah!" said Miss Pole, with a toss of her head. "Don't you remember poor dear Captain Brown's song 'Tibbie Fowler,' and the line – 'Set her on the Tintock tap, The wind will blow a man till her.'" "That was because 'Tibbie Fowler' was rich, I think." "Well! there was a kind of attraction about Lady Glenmire that I, for one, should be ashamed to have." It is clear from this excerpt that the song in question is the same, or a similar, version to the one recorded by the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club (Robson 1876, 171).

²⁵ For an introduction to chapbooks and chapmen in Scotland, see Cowan and Paterson (2007, 11–40 and 41–64). On pages 258–9 of this volume, there is the text of 'Jack Tar', highlighting the hard life of a sailor. This is from the chapbook entitled, *Tibby Fowler; or the Lass with the Siller Bridle*, printed in Glasgow in 1799, and now held by the University of Glasgow (GUL Bh13-d.3). Other chapbooks containing the Tibby Fowler ballad, and dating from c.1790 onwards, can be found through a search on the Chapbook database of the Special Collections of the University of Glasgow, available online at <gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/specialcollections/collectionsa-z/chapbooks/>. For the circulation of chapbooks, see Pittock (2016, 12–14).

Members of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club passed through the glen on their way to Edrington Castle in June 1874, and recorded the song in their records (Robson 1876, 171), noting that it first appeared in that form in 1787 in 'Johnson's Museum' – that is, James Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, a six-volume collection, the first volume of which was printed in 1787 (Johnson 1787–1803),²⁶ and to which Robert Burns contributed his own songs, as well as collecting and editing others. The Club's records also note that a fragment of the song had been published in 'Herd's Collection' in 1776. This was the second edition of *The Ancient and Modern Scots Songs, Heroic Ballads, &c.*, which had been collected by David Herd.²⁷ The version printed by the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club reads:

Tibbie Fowler o' the Glen,
 There's ower mony wooing at her;
 Woin' at her, puin at her,
 Courtin' her and canna get her.;
 Filthy elf, it's for her pelf
 That a' the lads are woin' at her.

Ten cam' east and ten cam' west;
 Ten cam' rowin' ower the water'
 Two cam' doon the lang dyke-side:
 There's twa-and-thirty woin' at her.

There's seven but, and seven ben,
 Seven in the pantry wi' her;
 Twenty head about the door:
 There's ane-and-forty woin' at her.

She's got pendles in her lugs,
 Cockle shells wad set her better!
 High-heeled shoon and siller tags:
 And a' the lads are woin' at her.

²⁶ The ballad was printed as no. 440 in volume v, published in 1796.

²⁷ The fragment which contains two stanzas of four lines reads: 'Tibby Fowler o' the glen / There's o'er mony wooing at her; / She has lovers nine or ten, / There's o'er mony wooing at her:/ Wooing at her, kissing at her, / Clapping at her, cannae get her; / Shame fa' her filthy snout, / There's o'er mony wooing at her' (Herd 1776, 223).

Be a lassie e'er sae black,
 Gin she hae the name o' siller,
 Set her up on Tintock Tap,
 The wind will blaw a man till her.

Be a lassie e'er sae fair,
 An' she want the penny siller,
 A flee may fell her i' the air
 Before a man be even'd till her.

According to Hardy, whose notes formed the basis of James Scott Robson's anniversary address to the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club in September 1874, the ballad was regarded as either of eighteenth-century origin or of sixteenth-century origin, the latter proposition based on the thinking of Robert Chambers (the Scottish publisher), who considered 'Tibbie' to equate with Isabella Fowler, wife of a son of Logan of Restalrig. What was not mentioned in the address was that in the second edition of Herd's collection there was another song entitled (or to the tune of) 'Tibby Fowler of the Glen', which also featured in the first edition published in 1769. This song is written in the voice of a suitor who compares the respective attractive qualities of Tibby and Nelly and, since he cannot decide which one he prefers, he beseeches 'Ye gods' to provide a 'good lad' for one, so that he can 'get the other' (Herd 1776, 104–5; Herd 1769, 189–90). Furthermore, this song was printed even earlier, in 1724, in the first edition of Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*, under the title, 'Genty Tibby, and sonsy Nelly', and 'To the Tune of Tibby Fowler in the Glen' (Ramsay 1724, 145–6). This latter version emphasises Tibby's charms and physical beauty rather than the wealth mentioned in the other version.

Also not mentioned in the September 1874 address was another fragment of Herd, which had not appeared in his printed work, but existed in manuscript. This fragment corresponds to the last two stanzas of the later *Scots Musical Museum* version, 'with some verbal differences and the ending: She may sit seven years and mair, / Afore a man'l come till 'er' (Kinsley 1968, III, 1507). James Kinsley describes this fragment as 'a verse proverb which has no essential connexion with Tibbie Fowler, and which enjoyed independent popularity in nineteenth-century Lanarkshire'. He advances the likelihood that it was Burns who brought together this fragment

of Herd with the opening verses of Tibby Fowler, using them as the basis to create the version which would ultimately appear in the *Scots Musical Museum* (Kinsley 1968, III, 1507).²⁸

A further inspiration for the composition of the song has been suggested by Christopher Maycock, recent biographer of the Cumberland poet, Susanna Blamire (1747–1794). Blamire wrote a song of ten stanzas (with four lines) entitled, ‘I’m Tibby Fowler o’ the Glen’. The first stanza reads:

I’m Tibby Fowler o’ the Glen,
And nae great sight to see, sirs;
But ‘cause I’m rich, these plaguy men
Will never let me be, sirs (Lonsdale and Maxwell 1842, 230).²⁹

Maycock suggests that it may have been Blamire’s song which inspired Burns to link the various fragments of Herd in his work on ‘Tibby Fowler of the Glen’ for the *Scots Musical Museum*. He proposes that Burns may have seen Susanna Blamire’s manuscript some time after she had left Scotland in 1773 and before volume V of the *Scots Musical Museum* was published in c.1796 (Maycock 2003, 56–7).

Neither ‘Genty Tibby, and sonsy Nelly’, as printed in the *Tea-Table Miscellany*, nor ‘Tibby Fowler of the Glen’ as printed in the *Scots Musical Museum*, contains sufficient geographical detail to link the ballad to the site in Edrington. While the former contains no geographical detail at all, the latter mentions only ‘the lang dyke-side’ in stanza 2 and ‘Tintock tap’ in stanza 5. Given that stanza 5 is from the verse proverb that was later to circulate independently in Lanarkshire, the hill-name *Tintock* clearly refers to Tinto Hill in South Lanarkshire (at NS 953343), rather than Tintock Hill

²⁸ For Kinsley’s edition of the ‘Tibbie Fowler’ song and corresponding notes, see Kinsley (1968, II, 852–3 (no. 569); III, 1506–8). For Herd’s fragments, see Hecht (1904, 174–5, 304–5). Hecht states that Herd’s manuscript ‘supplied him [i.e. Burns] with the beginnings of over twenty songs’ (1904, x). In a recent article, Pittock (2016) explores the subject of authorship and editorship in relation to the *Scots Musical Museum*. A new edition of the *Scots Musical Museum*, edited by Murray Pittock and published by Oxford University Press, was launched on Burns Night (25 January) 2018.

²⁹ The song is attributed to Susanna Blamire, but published without the refrain ‘sirs’, in Gilpin (1866, 75–6).

in Dumfries and Galloway (at NX 367517).³⁰ Another candidate for the setting of the song or a variant of it is in the north-eastern county of Banffshire. Rev. George Gordon, compiler of the Old Statistical Account for Mortlach parish in Banffshire, published in 1796, writes that his parish:

claims a relation to two Scottish songs of no little vogue, Roy's wife in Aldevellach, and Tibby Fowler in the Braes. There are some old men yet alive who remember to have seen the heroine of the latter. She lived in the braes of Auchindown, and was a plain looking lass | with a swinging tocher.³¹ The Glacks of Ballach, mentioned as the scene of the former, is a narrow and remarkable pass, near the old castle of Auchindown, between this parish and the Cabrach. Both ballads are said to have been composed by disappointed woers (*OSA*, vol. 17, pp. 439–40).

Despite all this, the New Statistical Account for the parish of Mordington in Berwickshire, which was written in 1835, states (in a footnote) that the glen on the estate of Upper Edrington is, 'said to have given rise to the old Scottish song of "Tibby Fowler o' the Glen"' (*NSA*, II, 341). Only one earlier link between the song and Berwickshire has been found. The year before the New Statistical Account for Mordington parish was written, John Mackay Wilson published in Berwick the first part of his *Tales of the Borders*.³² The second tale was that of Tibby Fowler, which is preceded by the first two lines of an 'Old Song' (Wilson 1834, 5–7).

Wilson's story tells of Tibby living in the cottage near Edrington Castle with her parents, before becoming orphaned and inheriting a fortune. Tibby

³⁰ On account of the tradition of the Berwickshire location, Crockett altered the line to 'Set her up on Cheviot tap', believing that this was the original form, which had been altered to 'Tintock Tap' (1893, 326). Tinto Hill is a prominent, well-known hill in Lanarkshire, and is also referred to as Tintock Tap in other popular rhymes; for example, 'The height atween Tintock-Tap and Coulterfell / Is just three quarters o' an ell.' (Chambers 1826, 16), and 'On Tintock-Tap there is a mist, / And in that mist there is a kist, / And in the kist there is a caup, / And in the caup there is a drap; / Tak up the caup, drink aff the drap, / And set the caup on Tintock-Tap' (Chambers 1826, 24).

³¹ 'swinging tocher', i.e. a substantial dowry – literally 'a swaying dowry', in the sense of a dowry large enough to have influence. Cf. *DOST*, s.v. *swing* n., sense 4.

³² Wilson was editor of the *Berwick Advertiser* from 1832. For more on Wilson and his tales, see the website of *The Wilson's Tales Project*, online at <wilsonstales.co.uk>.

is plagued by a number of suitors, most of whom she suspects desire her on account of her money. She sells the cottage, moves to Edinburgh and works as a children's maid in Restalrig. The story is set at the time of the first bank in Edinburgh, and therefore must date to after 1695 when the Bank of Scotland was founded (Saville 1996, 1).³³ On walks to Leith Links, Tibby meets a sailor called William Gordon, whom she marries the following year. William is given Tibby's fortune with which he purchases a small coasting vessel. Over the next five years the couple have three children. William enjoys success as a merchant (purchasing a larger boat, which he names the *Tibby Fowler*), but on a foreign voyage is captured at sea during a time of war, leaving the family destitute. Tibby and the children wander round the country, finally arriving at her childhood home, in which one of her previous suitors is now residing. William then reappears after an absence of eighteen months. He had rescued his captors during a storm, in return for which he got his own boat back, and had spent the previous three weeks searching for his family. A few years later, they repurchase the cottage, 'where Tibby Fowler lived to see her children's children, and died at a good old age' (Wilson 1834, 7). Wilson claims that the remains of the cottage are still to be seen 'until this day' (Wilson 1834, 7).

At the outset of the tale, Wilson states, 'All our readers have heard and sung of "Tibby Fowler o' the glen," but they may not all be aware that the glen referred to lies within about four miles of Berwick'. After describing the picturesque location, he writes:

Now, gentle reader, if you have looked upon the scene we have described, we shall make plain to you the situation of Tibby Fowler's cottage, by a homely map which is generally *at hand*. You have only to bend your arm, and suppose your shoulder to represent Edrington Castle, your hand Clarabad, and near the elbow you will have the spot where "ten cam' rowin' ower the water;" a little nearer to Clarabad, is the "lang dyke side," and immediately at the foot of it is the site of Tibby's cottage, which stood upon the Edrington side of the river; and a little to the west of the cottage, you will find a shady row of palm trees, planted, as tradition testifieth, by the hands of Tibby's father – old Ned Fowler,

³³ Wilson writes, 'Tibby deposited her money in the only bank, we believe, that was at that period in the Scottish capital' (Wilson 1834, 5).

of whom many speak until this day. The locality of the song was known to many, and if any should be inclined to inquire how we became acquainted with the other particulars of our story, we have only to reply that that belongs to a class of questions to which we do not return an answer. There is no necessity for a writer of tales taking for his motto – *vitem impendere vero* (Wilson 1834, 5).³⁴

The lack of clarity as to ‘how we became acquainted with the particulars of our story’ lead to some suspicion about the link to Berwickshire of the ballad. This may be an invention of Wilson. Nevertheless, Wilson does state that the ‘locality of the song was known to many’ and that the remains of the cottage were still to be seen (in 1834). This may be a literary motif rather than a statement of fact; certainly by the time of the Ordnance Survey Name Book just over twenty years later, traces of the cottage were no longer visible. It is not impossible that a local legend may have grown up around the family of a man named Ned (or Ned Fowler), who had a daughter named Tibby (perhaps named after the character in the ballad), and who lived in a cottage in the glen in Edrington, and that this was conflated with the ballad of Tibby Fowler of the Glen.³⁵ Regardless of whether there was an existing legend or whether Wilson himself was the source of the Berwickshire connection, a comparison can be drawn with place-names elsewhere. As Kay Muhr has demonstrated in the case of the hill-name Bessy Bell in Cappagh parish, Co. Tyrone in Northern Ireland, names of characters from Scottish ballads could be applied to places distant from their source, stating: ‘it seems clear that the name Bessy Bell was imported from Scottish tradition in the mid-18th century, probably by the Abercorn landlords of the area’ (Muhr 2016, 106). Bessy Bell and the nearby lower hill Mary Grey take their names from the two characters, daughters of Perthshire lairds, in the ballad

³⁴ *vitem impendere vero* [*sic*] should read *vitam impendere vero*, meaning ‘to devote one’s life to truth’.

³⁵ A search through the online indexes of census and testamentary records for Mordington parish, available on the ScotlandsPeople website at <scotlandspeople.gov.uk> (accessed 15 December 2017), has not revealed any families of the name Fowler, however.

beginning, ‘O Bessie Bell and Mary Gray / Thay war twa bonnie lasses’, which has the earliest dating of 1688 (Muhr 2016, 106).³⁶

Wallace’s Crook

The next place-name to be considered is *Wallace’s Crook*, which commemorates the Scottish patriot, William Wallace (d. 1305).³⁷ Wallace place-names include towers, caves, camps, trees and chairs, etc. and can be found scattered throughout different parts of Scotland. They are summarised by Graeme Morton in his study of Wallace, in which, *inter alia*, he mentions a mid-nineteenth-century survey by Patrick Yule, listing over fifty sites, and a survey of Wallace place-names on modern Ordnance Survey maps by Elspeth King. The latter reveals a concentration of names in the central belt or borders, but King’s total of eighty-three names does not include obsolete ones (Morton 2004, 86–7).³⁸

Before discussing Wallace’s Crook in detail, two other Berwickshire Wallace place-names deserve mention. Wallace’s Statue and the Tree of the Helmet offer two contrasting types of name. The former is signposted as a tourist attraction on surrounding roads, while the latter is scarcely known. Wallace’s Statue near Dryburgh in Mertoun parish is the first statue of Wallace. It was commissioned by David Steuart Erskine, earl of Buchan, founder of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Erected in 1814, it stands at 21½ feet high and was restored in 1991 (Morton 2004, 83; Strang 1994, 172). In contrast to this is the microtoponym the Tree of the Helmet, a type of name that does not make it onto official maps, but was known in local legend in 1953. This minor place-name, denoting a tree on the road from

³⁶ The difficulties of locating the geographical origins of ballads in a Gaelic context are discussed by Donald Meek (1998, 166–7).

³⁷ Numerous articles and books have been written about Wallace. Useful starting places are Cowan (2007) and Morton (2004).

³⁸ Yule’s survey was printed in his 1856 pamphlet, *Traditions, etc., respecting Sir William Wallace: Collected Chiefly from Publications of Recent Date* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd), as cited by Morton. Details of his survey can also be found as Appendix IV ‘Localities associated with the patriot’, in Rogers (1889, 1, 304–5). For Elspeth King’s survey, see King (1998, 224–5).

Earlston to Redpath, is described in a field interview recording of the School of Scottish Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Not only was the tree associated with Wallace, but it was said to get its name because the top of the tree resembled the shape of his helmet (*Tobar an Dualchais*, no. 20731/2).

The early forms of Wallace's Crook can be traced back in both map and written sources, including literature.³⁹ In the Ordnance Survey Name Book for Eccles parish, Wallace's Crook is defined as:

This name is well known, and applied to the bend of a small Brook, that forms the parish Boundary between Coldstream, and Eccles. Tradition asserts that the Scottish Patriot Sir Wm Wallace passed a night hidden beside the stream, from which circumstance it is supposed to have derived the name (NRS, OS 1/5/17/84).⁴⁰

On the corresponding OS 6" 1st edn Berwickshire sheet XXVIII map, published in 1862, the name duly appears beside the bend of a small brook on the parish boundary between the two parishes stated. Although the name does not feature on the modern OS Explorer map, it is recorded on the OS 1:25,000 map series on sheet NT 74 dating to 1954. However, the name is no longer positioned at the bend on the parish boundary, but is applied to the watercourse further to the west beyond Lithtillum Loch (NT 803409). Looking at earlier maps around the turn of the twentieth century, the name is positioned eastwards of this, on the other side of the loch, closer to the location on the OS 6" 1st edn map.⁴¹

³⁹ In addition to being discussed individually below, these early forms are also listed together in chronological order in the Appendix below.

⁴⁰ The Ordnance Survey Name Book for Coldstream parish also contains a very similar entry for Wallace's Crook with the same list of informants (NRS, OS 1/5/12/41).

⁴¹ The maps consulted are the OS 6" 2nd edn Berwickshire sheet XXVIII NE (revised in 1897 and published in 1900) and the OS 25" 2nd edn Berwickshire sheet 28.08 (revised in 1896 and published in 1898). The name is noticeably positioned near woodland where there is a bend on the water. Although this would tie in with the legend of Wallace hiding beside a stream (since there is woodland cover at this point), the name (with its directional arrow on the OS 6" map) clearly indicates that it is the water feature which is referred to, and that its positioning on the map beside woodland is more than likely to be coincidental.

Two further pieces of evidence come from maps of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On Robert Gordon's map, 'A description of the province of the merche. The mers.' (c.1636–52), *Wallace Crooke* appears to be the name given to the bend in the river up from The Hirsell and to the north east of Birgham, which tallies with the OS 6" 1st edn map two centuries later. On the Armstrong 'Map of the County of Berwick' (1771), two settlements – Crook (west of the water, at approximately NT 812409) and Crooks (east of the water, NT 820405) – are shown near the river bend. It seems reasonable to propose that they take their names from the bend or 'cruik' in a similar way to Crook of Devon in Kinross-shire acquiring its name from its proximity to a bend in the River Devon (Taylor *et al.* 2017, 238–9).⁴² The first of these settlements, Crook, is now obsolete, but significantly the field-name Wallaces Crooks is still located in this area.⁴³

When documentary sources are turned to, three entries in the *Retours* and the *Register of the Great Seal* can help to fill in some gaps. An entry from the *Retours* dated 1645 clearly relates to 'lands called the *Wallace-cruikis* of one husbandland in extent' (*Retours*, no. 257).⁴⁴ Earlier in 1627 there is a record of the same lands – *lie Wallace-cruikis* – in the *Register of the Great Seal* (*RMS*, VII, no. 1019).⁴⁵ Taken together with the contemporaneous Gordon map which appears to indicate the name relating to the river bend, there are records of the name referring to the river bend and to land round about the same time. The earliest Great Seal record is dated 1613 and refers to '2 husbandlands with *lie Wallacecruik* in the territory of Birgham' (*RMS*, VII, no. 947).⁴⁶ The prefix and use of the vernacular may indicate a particular piece of land, but perhaps could indicate the river bend. It is not entirely clear.

⁴² The earliest form for Crook of Devon is 'villa de *Cruik* de *Dovane*' 1615 *RMS* vii no. 1261 (Taylor *et al.* 2017, 238).

⁴³ Allan Telford, farm manager at The Hirsell, has confirmed the field-name and its location at Hatchednize (pers. comm. 30 September 2017). According to a recent history of Coldstream, 'two fields at Hatchednize are called Wallace's Crooks' (C&DLHS, 35).

⁴⁴ *Terris vocatis Wallace-cruikis extendentibus ad terram husbandiam.*

⁴⁵ *terras lie Wallace-cruikis extenden. ad unam ter. husb.*

⁴⁶ *2 terras husbandias, cum lie Wallacecruik, in territorio de Birgim.*

In her 1942 thesis on Berwickshire place-names, May Williamson suggested that a place-name – *Birgeane cruk* – in Blind Hary’s poem *The Wallace* ‘may be the land enclosed by the bend in the Tweed, or may be the present farm of Crooks near The Hirsell’. She locates the name in Birgham in the parish of Eccles (Williamson 1942, 14; online edn, 6). The name and its context in the earliest extant version of *The Wallace* (a manuscript copy of 1488), as it appears in Moir’s edition, which was used by Williamson, is:

Wallace tuk state to gowern all Scotland;
 The barnage hail maid him ane oppyn band.
 Than delt he land till gud men him about,
 For Scotlandis rycht had set their lyff in dout.
 Stantoun he gaiff to Lauder in his wage;
 The knycht Wallang aucht it in heretage.
 Than Birgeane cruk⁴⁷ he gaiff Lyle that was wicht;
 Till Scrymgeour als full gud reward he dycht.
 Syne Wallace toun, and othir landis thartill,
 To worthi men he delt with nobill will.
 (Book VIII, lines 415–24; Moir 1889, 194–5).

In this excerpt Wallace is distributing land to his followers. *Birgeane cruk* is given to Lyle.

James Moir, who edited *The Wallace* for the Scottish Text Society in the late nineteenth century, wrote this note about the name: ‘*Birgeane cruk*, or *Brigeane cruk* – i.e. Bridge-end Crook. I cannot identify this place. Note the minuteness of these details. Harry could hardly have invented them’ (Moir 1889, 430).⁴⁸ The literary scholar, Felicity Riddy, concurs with this,

⁴⁷ The reading in the 1488 manuscript is ‘*birgeane cruk*’: NLS, Adv. MS 19.2.2(ii), fol. 61v. I am extremely grateful to Mr Kenneth Dunn, Head of Archives & Manuscript Collections at the National Library of Scotland, for granting permission to me to consult this manuscript, one of the most important manuscripts in the Library’s collections.

⁴⁸ McDiarmid, who edited *The Wallace* for the Scottish Text Society in 1968–9, is quite scathing about Moir’s edition, claiming that Moir introduced more errors than were in the more reliable 1820 edition by Jamieson (McDiarmid 1968–9, 1, xiii), which was reprinted in 1869 (Jamieson 1869). He states that: ‘Moir’s real concern was the investigation of the historicity of Hary’s story, an investigation that he guilelessly limited to a comparison with the historical records of Wallace’s day. I have not thought it worthwhile to note more than

claiming that: ‘I do not know of any other medieval poem, Scots or English, that has so many place names in it’. She writes ‘Real places are mentioned again and again throughout the poem. These are places that had perhaps never before reached the written word, except in documents, and certainly not all together ...’ (Riddy 2007, 191). This adds credence to the likelihood that *Birgeane cruk* refers to a real place-name of the time, rather than a fictional one, and that May Williamson’s identification of the name as Birgham Crook is entirely plausible.⁴⁹ May Williamson, however, does not make any mention of the place-name Wallace’s Crook.

The Wallace has been dated to the late 1470s, but, as stated above, the earliest version is a manuscript copy dating to 1488. It was an extremely popular poem, and was one of the earliest printed works in Scotland (Riddy 2007, 182). Fragments exist of a Chepman and Millar print dating to c.1508–9 (Riddy 2007, 188). Later in the sixteenth century, there were printed editions in 1570 and 1594. The seventeenth-century editions include two (in 1601 and 1611), which also predate the first mention of the place-name *lie Wallace-cruik* (Morton 2004, 39).⁵⁰ What this suggests is that *Wallace Crook*, whether it be land or the river bend, or both, was originally known

a few of his errors and irrelevances.’ (McDiarmid 1968–9, I, xii). Jamieson’s edition, based on the 1488 manuscript, also has, ‘Than Birgeane cruk he gaiff Lyle that was wicht’ (1869, 183, Book VIII, line 421). McDiarmid’s reading of Book VIII, line 421, however, is ‘Than Birgеме cruk he gaiff Lyle that was wicht.’ (McDiarmid 1968–9, I, 190). McDiarmid claims elsewhere, ‘In fine, the present editor believes that by a critical collation of the above-mentioned sources he has been able to present Hary’s poem very much as he wrote it, and for the first time in its complete form.’ (McDiarmid 1968–9, I, xii). These sources include the 1570 printed edition, which has ‘Than Birgem cruik he gaif Lyle yat was wicht’ (Craigie 1940, Book VIII, line 421). As stated in the previous note, the reading in the 1488 manuscript is ‘*birgeane cruk*’.

⁴⁹ McDiarmid, who renders the place-name *Birgеме cruk* in his edition (see previous note), also identified it as being in Birgham. The relevant note reads: ‘the village of Birgham is on the Tweed, in Eccles parish, Berwickshire. When Hary wrote it was the inheritance of Margaret, Countess of Crawford, wife of the Sir William Wallace of Craigie, who is mentioned at XII.1443 (*Scots Peerage*, vol. 35; *Exchequer Rolls*, vol. 9, p. 66), but some time before 1493 came into the hands of David Lyle of Stanypeth (*Reg. Mag.*, vol. 2, no. 2126)’ (McDiarmid 1968–9, II, 222).

⁵⁰ For the earliest editions, see also Moir 1889, xiii–xvi.

as Birgham Crook, and that it was the popularity of *The Wallace* which led to its association with Wallace and subsequently to a change in its name. On the other hand, it is possible that a local legend inspired the name independently, in a similar way to the process that caused names to be recorded in *The Wallace* itself. As King notes: ‘It is my belief that the story of Wallace was kept alive through people associating his deeds with geographical features, trees and woods to compensate for the historical deficit, the absence of Wallace from the official historical record, and that Blind Hary’s work is a reflection of this rather than an invention’ (King 2007, 205).

Godscroft

There are many motivations for the renaming of places, of course. Comparisons have been drawn between Walter Scott’s renaming of Abbotsford and David Hume’s supposed renaming of his estate in Abbey St Bathans parish (Maxwell 1909, 283). David Hume of Godscroft (1558–c.1630), the writer of histories of the Douglas family and also a neo-Latin poet, is traditionally thought to have renamed his estate from Gowkscroft to Godscroft ([Hume] 1839, xi; Sutton 2016, Introduction). *Gowk*, Scots for cuckoo, is to be found as an element in place-names such as Gowkhill in Fife (Taylor with Márkus 2006–12, I, 213), and features in literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as can be seen from some of the examples listed in *DOST* (s.v. *gowk*, sense 1).⁵¹ Writing in 1889, George Muirhead comments that the original name ‘is said to have been “Gowkscroft,” from the great number of Cuckoos which frequented it’ (1889, 278). A further meaning of *gowk* is ‘a fool or simpleton’, and the word is used in this way in the late-sixteenth-century, *The Flyting of Montgomerie and Polwart* (the latter being a Berwickshire poet).⁵² Like Scott, if Hume was responsible for

⁵¹ These include: ‘the gukkit golk’ (*Buke of the Howlat*), ‘gowk fart’ (Henryson III), ‘Gaill lyke ane goik’ (Lyndsay, *Testament of the Papyngo*); ‘golk of Maryland’ (*King Berdok* and Bann. MS).

⁵² ‘Gok, wyt not me to gar the greit’ and ‘I summon the, ... Gouk, to compeer vpon thy knee’ (*DOST*, s.v. *gowk*, sense 2).

the renaming, he no doubt wanted to give a higher status name to his estate, and both of the names have religious connotations. However, while it appears that Scott chose a name for antiquarian reasons to highlight the medieval past, Hume may have been motivated by his own religious beliefs, or by a desire to be seen as a dweller in God's chosen land.

Despite any change to Godscroft by its owner, the original name Gowkscroft was not lost, as indicated in the following popular rhyme from the turn of the twentieth century, attributed by Maxwell to 'a privileged class, the gaberlunzies, licenced mendicants', which lists a number of local place-names:

Gowkscroft and Barnside
 Windy wallets fu' o' pride;
 Monynut and Laikieshiel,
 Plenty milk, plenty meal.
 Straphunton Mill and Bankend,
 Green cheese as teugh as bend;⁵³
 Shannabank and Blackerstane
 Pike the flesh to the bane (Maxwell 1909, 283).⁵⁴

In addition, in 1889, Muirhead reported that 'to this day the country people call the place "Gowkscraft," and sometimes "Gowkie"' (1889, 278). The 'Gowkie' name is still being used in the twenty-first century.⁵⁵

There is a problem, however, with the above analysis because it appears that Godscroft existed as a place-name prior to the acquisition of the land by David Hume. A John Allanesoun is recorded in *Godiscroft* in 1529 (*HMC*

⁵³ 'as teugh as bend', i.e. as tough as the thickest hide. According to the OED, *bend* is a 'shape or size in which ox- or cow-hides are tanned into leather'. The *bend* is half of a *butt*, 'the entire hide of the back and flanks reduced to a rough rectangle'. The OED also states that: 'Butts and bends contain the thickest and strongest hide, the qualities of which are further developed by special processes in tanning, so as to make the stoutest leather.' (OED, s.v. *bend* n.2., 4a).

⁵⁴ The modern Ordnance Survey forms of these settlement names are: Godscroft, Barnside, Monynut, Luckie Shiel, Strafountane Mill, Bankend, Shannobank (although note Shannabank Hill and Shannabank Wood), and Blackerstone.

⁵⁵ See Sutton (2016), notes to lines 353 ff. of the poem *Aselcanus* at <philological.bham.ac.uk/hume2/notes.html#a11.353>.

(*Earl of Home*), 181, no. 308). In January 1574, in a list of rentals of the prebendaries of the collegiate church of Dunglass, John Frost is described as ‘ane prebendarie having of the teyndis of Strafontanes, personage and vicarage landis of Goddiscroft, Heland and Channonbank’ (Kirk 1995, 166). The lands of Strafountain (or Trefontains) had been granted to the collegiate church in January 1452 (*HMC (Earl of Home)*, 127, no. 127; *RMS*, II, no. 520).⁵⁶ In 1589 Thomas Ogilvy, provost of the collegiate church of Dunglass and prebendary of Strafountain, with consent of Alexander, Lord Home (who was patron of all the prebends in the church), granted a feu charter to John Home, brother german of George Home of Wedderburn, of the lands of *Goddiscroft*, *Malcomescheill* and *Hilend* for a yearly payment of £4. One of the witnesses was William Nisbet, son of James Nisbet in *Godis Croft (HMC (Home of Wedderburn)*, 56–7, no. 120). The association of David Hume of Godscroft with the Godscroft lands can be dated to at least August 1594 as evidenced by a contract ‘whereby Mr. John Hume, brother of George of Wedderburn, dispones to his brother, Mr. David Hume’, the lands of *Goddiscroft* and *Lukascheill (HMC (Home of Wedderburn)*, 80, no. 176).⁵⁷ Thus it is extremely unlikely that David Hume was responsible for any renaming. Furthermore, *Goukscroft* appears as a name in the 1694 hearth tax for Abbey St Bathans parish, which contains an entry for one hearth belonging to George Gillie, cotter in *Goukscroft*, and a separate entry for one hearth belonging to John Dods in *Godscroft (NRS, E69/5/1/32)*.⁵⁸

Regardless of whether any renaming took place, David Hume of Godscroft was clearly interested in the meanings of local place-names. When writing his Latin poetry, he wrote under the name *Theagrius*, which

⁵⁶ For the medieval church of Strafountain (or Trefontains), see its entry in the *Corpus of Scottish Medieval Parish Churches*, online at <arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/corpusofscottishchurches/site.php?id=158904>. See also Cowan and Easson’s discussion of the collegiate church of Dunglass (1976, 219).

⁵⁷ May Williamson’s thesis contains two early forms for Godscroft: *Goddiscroft* (1589) and *Godscroft* (from Blaeu, 1654). She describes it as ‘a piece of ground belonging to the abbey’, presumably basing this assumption on the place being located in Abbey St Bathans parish (Williamson 1942, 185; online edn, 75).

⁵⁸ The parishes of Strafountain and Abbey St Bathans had been merged by 1627 (*Reports 1627*, 23–4).

his recent editor Dana Sutton indicates is a combination of Greek and Latin words, translating as ‘god’s farm’ or ‘god’s acre’.⁵⁹ Sutton bases this conclusion partly on the evidence of a quotation from Hume’s Argument to the third eclogue of his poem *Daphn-Amaryllis*, in which *Theager* is described as *vulgo Gods-croft*, ‘commonly Gods-croft’ (Sutton 2016, Introduction).⁶⁰ Hume’s classicisation of other local place-names in his poetry can be commented on too. The same quotation refers to *Lamyrii montes*, the Lammermuir Hills, while in his third elegy Hume has *albenti ... aquae* for the Whiteadder Water (Sutton 2016, Text).⁶¹ In his poem *Aselcanus*, Hume describes the setting of Godscroft and three *flumina* (‘streams’) that flow nearby, rendering the Whare Burn as *Quarus* (line 356) and the Monynut Water as *Pollynucus* (line 355), a probable translation for

⁵⁹ Crockett had earlier stated of Hume’s ‘territorial appellation’, Godscroft, that it ‘is supposed to have been assumed as more euphonious than the real name of his property – Gowkscroft. It bears, especially in its Latin form, *Theagrius*, a strong analogy to the word so touchingly employed in German to designate a burial ground, as “God’s Acre.”’ (1893, 48 note 1).

⁶⁰ *Lamyrii montes sunt in provincia Marciae, ubi villula scribentis Theager, vulgo Gods-croft*. Sutton states that this can be found on page 17 of the 1605 London edition of *Lusus Poetici*.

⁶¹ Lines 1–2 of Elegia III read, *Collis erat modico tollens fastigia clivo / Miscet ubi albenti se Deus hospes aquae*, which Sutton translates as, ‘There was a hill, with a moderate-sized cliff for its summit, / where its hospitable god mixed himself with the white water.’ Two annotations (either by Hume or his son) to the 1639 edition of the *Lusus Poetici* indicate that the ‘white water’ is *Fluvius inter Lammyrios montes, vulgo Whytwatter dictus* (‘The stream between the Lammermuir Hills, commonly called the Whiteadder’) and that the other water concerned is the Dye Water: *Alius fluvius vulgo Daye dictus, in Albentem fluvium influens* (‘The other stream commonly called the Dye Water, flowing into the Whiteadder’). After describing the Dye Water joining the Whiteadder at Ellemford, and the Whiteadder being augmented by the Monynut at Abbey St Bathans before merging with the Blackadder Water, Sutton states that, ‘Absent any such thing as a comprehensive Latin gazetteer of the British Isles, it is just a guess that the sidenote’s *Alloentem [sic] fluvium* designates Blackadder Water’. However, since *albentem* is a Latin present participle meaning ‘being white’, and the sense does not necessarily dictate that a different river is meant here, it seems merely to be the case that a different name for the same river is being used in each of the two sidenotes. The text for Elegia III in Sutton’s edition can be found at <philological.bham.ac.uk/hume2/text.html#a3>.

‘Many a Nut’, as Sutton has discussed.⁶² The third of the streams rendered as *Vobetus* has not been identified by Sutton. One possible candidate based solely on its proximity to Godscroft and the other two watercourses might be the Phillip Burn. If *Vobetus* is read as a Latinisation of the Scots *vob* (*DOST*, s.v. *wob*, *web*), then a connection with weaving (perhaps in a figurative sense of a weaving watercourse) should be considered.

Berwickshire place-names in literature

As stated at the outset of the paper, the topic of Berwickshire place-names in literature is a vast one. Setting aside rhymes, sayings and proverbs as collected by George Henderson in *The Popular Rhymes, Sayings and Proverbs of the County of Berwick*, which was published in 1856, and merely looking through a volume such as Crockett’s *Minstrelsy of the Merse*, a county anthology for Berwickshire published in 1893, relevant ballads and poems for such a survey would include: ballads such as ‘The Broom o’ the Cowdenknowes’, ‘William and Madeline’, and ‘The Ballad of the Twinlaw Cairns’; and poems such as Robert Mennon’s ‘Chirnside’, William Air Foster’s ‘Gude Coldstream Toon’, and Andrew Steele’s ‘The Hirsle yet for me’.⁶³ More modern material could be considered too; for example, by adding poems from Walter Elliot’s *New Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, which contains poetry covering the period from 1805 to 2005, and is designed to pick up where Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* left off. For this paper, one early modern Berwickshire poem, of slightly earlier date than the work of David Hume of Godscroft, has been chosen to serve as an example of a piece in which a place-name and its etymology are skilfully blended by the poet to fulfil his desired function and add additional meaning.

The poem is attributed to Richard Maitland of Lethington, a poet who had property in Berwickshire as well as being a prominent figure in political life in sixteenth-century Scotland. He died in 1586 at the age of ninety, having become blind in later life (Martin 2015, 1–3). This four-stanza poem,

⁶² See Sutton’s notes to ll. 353 ff. at <philological.bham.ac.uk/hume2/notes.html#a11.353>.

⁶³ For the ballads and poems named, see Crockett (1893, 72–3, 295–302; 115–16; and 320–3 (ballads); 134; 151; and 160–1 (poems)).

edited most recently by Joanna Martin for the Scottish Text Society, concerns an incident dated 1570 when Maitland's barony of Blythe in Lauder parish was attacked by troops of the King's party and English soldiers (Martin 2015, 77–8, 315–18).

The poem is a play on words: Blythe (*Blyithe*) (capitalised editorially by Martin) as the name of the barony and blith/blyth (*blythe*) as a Scots adjective meaning 'happy, cheerful, in good spirits'. The first two stanzas read:

Blind man, be blyithe, thocht that thow be wrangit;
 Thocht Blyithe be herreit, tak na melancholie:
 Thow salbe blyithe quhen that thay salbe hangit
 That blythe hes spuilzit so malitiouslie.
 Be blyithe and glaid that nane persauie in the
 That thy blyithnes consistis into riches,
 Bot thow art blyith that thow eternallie
 Sall ring with God in eternall blyithnes.

Thocht thay haue spuilzit Blyith of gud and geir,
 zit haue thay left lyand still the land,
 Quhilk to transport wes not in thair power,
 Nor zit wilbe, thocht no man thame gainestand.
 Therfoir, be blyith! The tyme may be at hand
 Quhen Blyithe salbe zit, with Goddis grace,
 Als weill pleneist as euer thay it fand,
 Quhen sum sall rew the rinning of that race (Martin 2015, 77).⁶⁴

Maitland not only plays with the two different uses – as adjective and as proper name – of the same lexical item in the context of the action of the poem, but also skilfully plays on the place-name's own etymology, being derived ultimately from the adjective (Williamson 1942, 190–1; online edn, 77). Furthermore, he raises the level of the place-name by associating it with the eternal joy of the heavenly realm.

⁶⁴ Martin has omitted to capitalise 'blythe' in line 4. As well as being included in the Maitland Quarto manuscript, dating to c.1586, the poem can also be found in the slightly earlier Maitland Folio manuscript. See Craigie's editions of these manuscripts (1920, 40–1, 284) and (1919–27, I, 43–4; II, 62).

Conclusion

Berwickshire as a county provides a wealth of literature for toponymists to engage with. While the place-names contained within its literature are certainly worthy of attention, as demonstrated by the examples from the poetry of Hume of Godscroft and Richard Maitland of Lethington, it is clear that close analysis of those names which have been inspired by literature is equally rewarding, not only for toponymists but also for literary scholars. As this study of seven Berwickshire place-names has shown, though, it is not so straightforward a task as it may seem initially. The importance, and indeed difficulty, of extricating fact from legend (so far as is possible), together with questions concerning the transmission of literary works, are two issues in particular which have been highlighted in this paper.

APPENDIX – EARLY FORMS OF WALLACE’S CROOK (NT 813409).

b[ir]geane cruk 1488 NLS, Adv. MS 19.2.2(ii), fol. 61v, Book VIII line 421

Birgeane cruk 1488 Wallace MS Book VIII line 421 (Moir 1889, 195; Jamieson 1869, 183)

Birgeme cruik 1488 Wallace MS Book VIII line 421 (McDiarmid 1968–9, I, 190)

Birgem cruik 1570 Wallace edn Book VIII line 421 (Craigie 1940)

2 terras husbandias, cum *lie Wallacecruik*, in territorio de Birgim 1613 *RMS* vii, no. 947

terras *lie Wallace-cruikis* extenden. ad unam ter. husb. 1627 *RMS* viii, no. 1019

Wallace Crooke c.1636–52 Gordon map

Terris vocatis *Wallace-cruikis* extendentibus ad terram husbandiam 1645 *Retours* no. 257

Crook 1771 Armstrong map [settlement]

Wallace’s Crook 1862 OS 6" 1st edn BWK sheet XXVIII

Wallace’s Crook 1862 OS 25" 1st edn BWK sheet XXVIII.8

Wallace’s Crook 1898 OS 25" 2nd edn BWK sheet 28.08

Wallace’s Crook 1900 OS 6" 2nd edn BWK sheet XXVIII NE

Wallace's Crook 1909 OS 6" 2nd rev. BWK sheet XXVIII NE

Wallace's Crook 1954 OS 1:25,000 sheet NT 74

Wallace's Crooks 2010 C&DLHS 35 [field-names]

Wallaces Crooks 2017 A. Telford (pers. comm.) [field-name]

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E69/5/1 = Hearth Tax for Berwickshire (1694). This is available online on the ScotlandsPlaces website <scotlandspplaces.gov.uk>.

The Ordnance Survey Name Books are also available online on the ScotlandsPlaces website <scotlandspplaces.gov.uk>:

OS 1/5/12 = Ordnance Survey Name Book for Coldstream Parish, Berwickshire (1858).

OS 1/5/16 = Ordnance Survey Name Book for Earlston Parish, Berwickshire (1857).

OS 1/5/17 = Ordnance Survey Name Book for Eccles Parish, Berwickshire (1858).

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