

## Reviews

Jill Bourne, *The Place-Name Kingston and Royal Power in Middle Anglo-Saxon England: Patterns, Possibilities and Purpose*, BAR British Series 630 (Oxford: BAR, 2017). xii + 167 pp. £44 pbk. ISBN 978-1407315683.

As its title indicates, this book examines the name-type Kingston, offering an interpretation based on comparative analysis of all known place-names from Old English *cyninges tūn* ‘king’s tūn’ or *cyne tūn* ‘royal tūn’. Bourne compiles a corpus of 70 names, and scrutinises each within its documentary, geographical and historical context. Rejecting an interpretation as a centre of royal power or *villa regalis*, she argues that places named Kingston served a functional, administrative purpose directly connected with the enforcement of royal authority.

The book is divided into two parts. Part II presents a gazetteer of Kingston names, systematically setting out their location, ecclesiastical status, early spellings and topographical context. These data underpin the six chapters in Part I, which treat the names both individually and collectively with a view to identifying patterns within the corpus. Non-toponymic occurrences are also discussed, with a particular focus on the early Old English law-codes where the term *cyninges tūn* is first attested. Two main patterns emerge. One relates to status. Rather than reflecting high status, the Kingstons are ecclesiastically dependent, minor settlements. The sole exception is Kingston upon Thames, the topic of a separate chapter where Bourne suggests that *Cyninges tun* in the famous charter of 838 designated not the whole estate but a specific place within it. As a candidate for the original estate name, she proposes the lost *Fræricburna*, recorded elsewhere as the name of an unidentified *villa regalis*. The second pattern relates to distribution. Most Kingston names are in south-west England, notably Wessex and the Severn Valley. Some are sited close to central places on royal estates, while others exhibit a statistically significant correlation with Roman roads and ancient trackways. Moreover, some are regularly positioned at distances of about nine miles along those roads. Bourne

suggests that the ‘road/string’ names were markers of hegemony, created later but for the same purpose as the ‘original’ names, and probably dating from the eighth century.

The argument for a purposeful origin of the Kingston names is largely persuasive, despite some weaknesses. Among them is the danger of circularity. On p. 27, Kingston (Seymour) in Somerset can only be made to fit the ‘road/string’ theory by postulating a Roman road for which there is no direct evidence. Bourne makes a good case for such a road, setting out the circumstantial evidence while acknowledging its limitations. On the same page, another Kingston (St Mary, Taunton) is connected by road to Nether Stowey, a name from Old English *stān* ‘stone’ and *weg* ‘road’. Again, creative thinking suggests that this could have been a Roman road: ‘The OE element *sræt* [*sic*] would be the expected term for such a road, but *weg* is possible’. There is some good detective work here, which could have been supported with reference to the Fosse Way. More circular, though, is the claim that the etymologically ambiguous Kingstone (Ilminster) ‘is almost certainly a Kingston given that it appears to be part of the road/string system’ (p. 27). Speculation also enters the discussion of Kington (St Michael) in Wiltshire, situated on an ancient routeway one mile from a Roman villa: ‘It is possible that this was a private road for the known villa estate, along which there might have been be [*sic*] other villas’ (p. 25). Indeed, the ‘road/string’ theory is further problematised by irregular sitings. Instead of being nine miles apart, Kington (St Michael) is only six miles from West Kington (p. 25). Others are even closer together: ‘The Kingstons Wilmslow and Lisle hint at the possibility that they could have been sited deliberately (although only five miles apart) along the Roman road’ (p. 30). Hinting at possibilities resembles clutching at straws, especially as the discussion of Kingston (Lisle) is garbled, and includes a fictive boundary marker ‘*þæs cingestun þornas*’ translated as ‘the *cingestun* thorns’ (p. 30). Gelling’s (1976, 691) reading is *ðees cincges þornas* ‘the king’s thorns’.

According to p. 3, ‘To be included in the corpus a name must have entered the written record prior to 1600, and be unquestionably a Kingston’. Neither criterion is consistently applied. There are no early forms for Kingston (Yeovil), which appears in Part II as ‘SOMERSET 6’ (despite the absence of a ‘SOMERSET 5’). Chapter 3 includes it in Tables 1, 3 and 4

(alphabetical, distributional and geographical), but not in Table 2 (chronological). Part II also reveals that the etymologies of Kennington in Berkshire (p. 85) and Kennington (Lambeth) in Surrey (p. 135) are uncertain, although this is not apparent from the respective discussions in Part I (pp. 29–30, 31). As mentioned above, Kingstone (Ilminster) in Somerset is insecure. So too, it should have been noted that the derivation of Kingston (Colaton Raleigh) in Devon (pp. 20, 91), first recorded in 1227, is questioned by Probert (2008, 16), who observes that ‘two thirteenth-century Colaton tenants were surnamed “King”’.

Bourne makes a valiant effort to examine ‘all earlier research’ (p. 6) relating to the Kingston names, as well as to discuss documentary and legal occurrences of *cyninges tūn*. Aside from inaccuracies and misquotations, the main problem is that the account lacks a sense of the chronology of scholarship. Research from different periods is treated as contemporaneous, as on p. 14, ‘Chadwick is of the opinion’, where the reader only discovers from the footnote that this opinion dates from 1905. Given the extent of interdisciplinary work in recent decades, it is surprising to read on p. 11 that scholars from different disciplines are ‘beginning to talk to each other’. Again, the footnote reveals that this was the case in 1989. A number of citations cannot be followed up because of faulty referencing, and sources are not always properly documented. Definitions of *frēorig* are taken silently from *DOE* (p. 72), but when Bourne states that ‘Any study of a place-name containing the element *cyning* must wrestle with the concept of what it might have signified at various stages in the Anglo-Saxon period’ (p. 10), she does not appear to consult the same source. Sense I.A.6.c of the entry for *cyning* includes the phrase *cyninges tun*, defined as ‘the king’s residence or estate’. This in itself is not a problem, since Bourne’s argument is that place-name occurrences derive from a compound appellative distinct from other meanings of the phrase. However, the final quotation has implications for the chapter on Kingston upon Thames. Taken from the annal for 777 in the Peterborough Manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* – an interpolation unique to this manuscript, drawing on an eighth-century Latin charter (Irvine 2004, xciii–xciv) – it reads: *ðis wæs don on þe cininges tune Frericburna hatte* ‘this was done in the *cyninges tune* called *Frericburna*’. This is difficult to reconcile with Bourne’s proposal that ‘*cyninges tune* was a

specific place within the estate' of *Fræricburn* (p. 73), although it may leave open her alternative possibility that both were earlier names of Kingston upon Thames.

As the distinction between toponymic and non-toponymic meanings of *cyninges tūn* comprises 'The heart of this study' (p. 3), it is unfortunate that there is some blurring between different types of record, most glaringly in the conclusion: 'We know for certain, that the place-name *cyningestune*, was a known term and a physical actuality eighty or so years before Ine's reign' (p. 80). The allusion is to the laws issued by King Æthelberht of Kent towards the beginning of the seventh century, where the term is not used as a place-name.

There is a good deal of repetition and inconsistency. For instance, p. 24 gives the same translation in the text and in a footnote, and similar comments on the destruction of Taunton appear on pp. 28, 51, 62 and 129. On pp. 42–3, Ekwall's suggestion of a Scandinavian origin for Coniston in Lancashire is criticised on the mistaken grounds that it 'does not work philologically' but correctly attributed to his *Place-Names of Lancashire*, while on p. 65 it is treated as a viable option but incorrectly attributed to his *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (confusingly given different wrong dates here and in the bibliography). On pp. 11–12, Tacitus morphs into Bede within the space of a paragraph, culminating in a translation taken from a book missing from the bibliography (Sherley-Price 1990). This is quoted again on p. 61, with a reference that leads to a different translation. An extra chapter was perhaps added at a late stage, for on p. 30 'Chapter 4' refers to Chapter 5, and on p. 67 'chapter five' refers to Chapter 6.

Expression is not always clear, but it is usually possible to work out what is meant by statements such as 'a lack of evidence does not mean that there is none' (p. 5) and 'Some estates may not have had permanent residences on all his estates' (p. 46). It is worth the effort, since the material itself is interesting, and is thoughtfully handled. Chapter 3 contains some good discussion not only of the recorded names but of potential sites of lost Kingstons (pp. 20–1), and there is a solid attempt throughout to engage with the data. The case for *cyninges tūn* as a place where royal authority was administered is well made, despite going too far with the suggestion that

‘Something similar to to [*sic*] the check-points that abounded in post-war, Cold-War Europe is the most probable’ (p. 76).

The book is beautifully illustrated. Each name in Part II is accompanied by a colour image from the nineteenth-century One Inch Ordnance Survey map, Part I has many useful distribution maps and other figures, and the front cover reproduces the opening folio of the twelfth-century *Textus Roffensis* manuscript, showing the earliest attestation of *cyninges tūn* towards the beginning of Æthelberht’s law-code. Other presentational issues are less well handled. There are many typos and other glitches, Figures 9 and 10 have the same caption (pp. 46–7), the bibliography is poorly set out, and the text and translation of the cover image are reproduced without acknowledgement from the first two pages of Attenborough’s 1922 edition (p. viii), and do not fully correspond to the folio shown.

In short, the book would have benefitted from more rigorous peer-review, copy-editing and proof-reading. However, it contains much detailed and painstaking work, on which future research will build. Overall, Bourne assembles a valuable corpus of material, and presents an interesting and persuasive argument. It is well worth reading.

#### REFERENCES

- DOE = A. Cameron, A. C. Amos and A. DiP. Healey (2016), *Dictionary of Old English: A to H Online* (Toronto: Dictionary of Old English).
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CAROLE HOUGH

Emma Lingard, *Grimsby Streets* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword History, 2017). 143 pp. £12.99 pbk. ISBN 978-1473876019.

This new paperback about street-names caught the reviewer's attention because it deals with his home town. The author is a Lincolnshire journalist and broadcaster specializing in local history.

Grimsby is essentially a creature of the nineteenth century, and many of its street-names relate to patterns of landowning at that period. The far-reaching influence of the Heneage family of Hainton Hall near Market Rasen, the Anderson-Pelhams i.e. the earls of Yarborough, the Grant-Thorold family, and a later generation of trawler owners are among the most readily discernible. Other features are the onomastic embalming of the directors of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway and its successor the Great Central, and of some local politicians. Emma Lingard recognizes this human bias in her foreword, noting that 'a majority of the streets were named after prominent people in the town', where 'in the town' is somewhat misleading; 'having a pecuniary interest in the town' might have served better. Her stated intention is to 'inform the reader of whom those people were'. One result of this is inconsistent attention to other sorts of name; so for example, amongst the major highways of the town with directional names, Cleethorpe Road, Laceby Road and Scartho Road appear in the book, whilst Littlecoates Road, Waltham Road and Weelsby Road do not. But since Lingard does not give etymologies for the names of the destinations, the absence of (some) self-explanatory names is not serious.

So philological explanation is not the author's goal. That would be fair enough if she left it alone altogether. But despite admitting to having the EPNS's *The Place-Names of Lincolnshire* volume 5 to hand, she offers only a 200-year-old antiquarian speculation for Toothill [Road], whereas a glance at the entry in *EPNS Lincs* (p. 105) for a similar name in adjacent parish of Healing would have put her right. With a further glance at *EPNS Lincs* (pp. 76–7) she really could and should have done better than a Middle English "flutter-gate" for Flottergate (Middle English \**flot(i)er* 'sailor', recorded as a surname, + a reflex of Old Scandinavian *gata*). On the other hand we learn the linguistically interesting fact that Newhaven Terrace and Newmarket Street originated as New Haven [Street] and New Market Street,

differentiated from Old or unspecified ones. In the case of Kent Street, close to the Fish Docks, Lingard cautiously takes issue with *EPNS Lincs* in suggesting that it is named by nineteenth-century residents of Kentish family background rather than after a sixteenth-century local family with the surname *Kent*, and there is reason to find this credible in the light of the history of the surname *Emptage*: its stronghold was historically in Thanet and its migration to Grimsby by 1841 is well documented (<emptageofthanet.co.uk>, accessed 2 January 2018).

Lingard's main self-imposed task is made more difficult by the fact that it is sometimes easy to spot a family influence but hard to pin down an individual eponym – and there is no reason to think it is necessary to do that in every case. Veal Street is easy to associate with the prominent local family, but Questor Veal, a political figure of the Reform Bill period whose image appears three pages previously, looks a less plausible individual candidate than Henry James Veal, four-time mayor of Grimsby in the 1870s and 80s but mentioned in what feels like an afterthought. Which Sophia of the Yarboroughs is commemorated in Sophia Avenue, Scartho, surrounded by *Pelham* street-names, is a moot point (compare also the vague caption of image 106 on p. 120) – and similarly with the partly indeterminate (in the present state of research) Albert Street, Henry Street, Holles Street, Lister Street .... Sometimes an entry feels a bit like a lost chance to tighten up. Under Pollitt Street we find a mention of Sir William Pollitt, a bigwig of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, and of Harry Pollitt, its locomotive engineer. The fact that Harry was William's son is not mentioned. (I suspect many Grimbarians of a certain age associated it with the prominent but non-Grimbarian Communist boilermaker also called Harry Pollitt (1890–1960).)

Another minor gripe is a lack of specificity when it ought to be achievable. The former transport hub Riby Square is undoubtedly named after the village a few miles out of town, whose hall was owned by the Tomline family, but whether Riby Square was actually built on land owned by the Tomlines is not stated. (This entry is also poorly organized, giving rise to the impression of some strange genealogy until the chronology is unpicked.)

Some users of the book will be disappointed. Clearly, completeness is not the goal, but no criterion for inclusion or exclusion is given, and the absence of many names, particularly for example in the areas of mid and late twentieth-century development at Littlefield Lane, The Willows and Wybers Wood, is passed over in silence.

The book does not come up to expected editorial and layout standards. There are quite a few entries out of alphabetical sequence, and some uncorrected typos. Of the many interesting archive photos, often previously unpublished, a disconcerting number (the majority) appear on a different page from the street which they illustrate. A street-map would have been a useful addition. That said, it is almost impossible to write a book on street-names which is devoid of at least local interest, and despite the tetchy tone of this review the author succeeds in giving a fair account of the main forces at work in her chosen area. Anyone who documents the transition of Shag-foal Lane to Grosvenor Street deserves a plaudit.

RICHARD COATES

Shaun Tyas, *The Dictionary of Football Club Nicknames in Britain and Ireland* (Donington: Paul Watkins, 2013). 442 pp., £30 hbk, ISBN 978-1907730269; £19.95 pbk. ISBN 978-1907730252.

Richard E. Huws. *The Football and Rugby Team Nicknames of Wales* (Donington: Paul Watkins, 2013). 128 pp., £7.95 pbk. ISBN 978-1907730245.

It seems appropriate to begin this review with a warning to potential readers of Shaun Tyas's book, *The Dictionary of Football Club Nicknames in Britain and Ireland*. As the use of 'Dictionary' might suggest, this is not a book that one picks up and starts reading from page 1; it is very much something to be dipped into as the mood (or necessity for information) arises. However, this is not the reason for issuing a warning. For those who decide to investigate this fascinating book further, be aware that once you delve into its 442 pages, it may well be two or even three hours later before you emerge again. In some senses, 'Dictionary' does not fully reflect the scale of the content, although it is not clear whether a single term could be



found. ‘Gazetteer’ and ‘Lexicon’ do not do the book justice, nor does ‘Compendium’. Given the scope of the book, ‘Encyclopaedia’ might not too far off the mark because this is one of the most thoroughly researched and detailed books on language use and modification that you are likely to come across. Tyas has set out to record as many different nicknames for football clubs across all levels of the game in Britain and Ireland but this is much more than an anorak’s guide to football ephemera. The etymology of club nicknames and the effect of changing patterns of social behaviour are reflected here, with explanations and derivations for the demise of older nicknames and the introduction (sometimes for blatantly commercial reasons) of newer ‘branding’. The full range of clubs are covered from the Premier League to clubs that no longer exist but who had interesting nicknames, and the various alternatives that have or continue to be used are listed.

There are many delights to be found by randomly dipping into the pages of this book, which looks beyond the obvious (‘Town’, ‘United’, ‘Blues’, etc.) and uncovers some geographic oddities that would not otherwise be obvious. Bacup Borough in Lancashire’s Rossendale Valley are known as the ‘Buttercups’, which Tyas claims may have arisen as a result of the town’s name (pronounced ‘Bay-cup’) rhyming with the popular 1930s expression ‘Wake up, Buttercup’. Similarly, ‘Dabbers’ as the nickname of the local team would mean nothing to anyone from outside Nantwich in Cheshire, who would be unaware that this is the local name for those born and bred in the town. When differing opinions exist for the origins of a particular club’s nickname, these are fully explored and the veracity of each claim examined. For example, four competing origins for Clyde FC’s famous ‘Bully Wee’ nickname are unpacked and reasons to raise serious doubts about three of these are given in some detail. Indeed, the half page entry contains more words on the subject than Clyde’s average home attendance and includes what is described as the ‘absurd’ claim that ‘Bully Wee’ originated from the locals mishearing some French visitors asking ‘But il’y, oui?’ [*sic*] after a goal was scored. Other examples identified by Tyas are even more esoteric, even to those of us who think we know a lot about our own football club, as I discovered. The very first entry I came across when opening the book was ‘Glasses’ as an alternative nickname for Preston North End. Even more

revealing was the information that this nickname is only used within the deaf community and involves using the sign for ‘glasses’ as the club’s sign name (a form of visual shorthand that removes the need to fingerspell names). This information came as something of a surprise as I have been watching my home town club for almost 50 years and have acted as the club’s Honorary Historical Statistician for the last 20 years, whilst my ‘day job’ is as Course Leader for British Sign Language and Deaf Studies at the University of Central Lancashire in the town. Despite all these supposed credentials, I have never come across this nickname before but as the source for this information is an esteemed colleague in the field of sign linguistics, I now possess additional knowledge about my club. This one example alone shows the extent to which Tyas has researched this subject and in doing so, he has produced much more than just another book about football. This is a work of interest to anyone with an interest in the way language works, evolves and mutates and thus plays such an important part in expressing our social, cultural and historical identities. I will continue to dip into this book on an informal and ad hoc basis, because this is by far the best way to use such a work, and I will use it to explain to my friends and colleagues who are Dingles, Pie Eaters, Plastics and Donkey Lashers exactly why I refer to them in such terms. I began this account with a warning and I feel I should end with another: be prepared to find a fascinating piece of information and then come across another – only to forget what the previous one referred to. The joy of this book is having to go back and look for it again, whilst acknowledging you may well be repeatedly side-tracked on the way.

There are obvious comparisons to be made between Richard Huws’s book on Welsh football and rugby team nicknames and Tyas’s much more extensive *Dictionary*. Although such comparisons have some validity and Huws takes a similar approach to the subject, there are some clear differences. Geography is the most obvious, together with the broader interest in both round and oval ball games, and both these bring a different flavour to many of the entries. For example, the former status of Llandoverly as a staging point for cattle drovers helps to explain the otherwise obscure use of ‘Drovers’ as the rugby club’s nickname. Or should that be the rugby team, as suggested by the somewhat usual choice of title for the book? The preference for ‘team’ rather than the more obvious ‘club’ is not explained in

the book and hints that such nicknames might be reserved for players rather than indicate a wider affiliation with a club, but this is not apparent in the entries. A minor point but one that raise an interesting but unanswered question.

The issue of language cannot be avoided in Wales and several entries allude to the use of Welsh nicknames even in English-speaking areas. So the Reds (arising from their shirt colours) can also be called 'Y Cochion' even by their English-speaking fans. In areas where the Welsh language is reasserting its status, adherence to former sensibilities remains, as evidenced for example by the retention of 'Port' by CPD Porthmadog even though the Anglicised Portmadoc FC is no longer used. Some interesting examples of how language can be corrupted through local usage and employed as a badge of local pride can be found in the book. Why Kenfig Hill Harlequins are known as the Ganzies is explained as the local form of 'Guernsey', a woollen garment similar to the better known jersey. Cardiff Draconians RFC on the other hand derive their unusual name from a play on the more popular 'Dragons' found throughout Wales.

As with Tyas's book, this is not a volume to be read but one to dip into at random for the illuminating and diverting gems to be found amongst the more obvious and mundane. The 'Ducks' of Wattstown RFC is a case in point; they gained their nickname after a memorable and tempestuous game at the ground of a local rival in which of their players found themselves in the nearby river, when they were said to take to the water like ducks. Finding that a club with the official name of Fleur de Lis in Monmouthshire are known as the Flowers comes as no surprise. What is interesting is how a group of French Huguenot refugees ended up in such an isolated part of Wales and thus influenced local sporting culture. It is from such nuggets that books such as this gain their validity; they may not add greatly to our sum of knowledge but what we do learn may well stay with us long after more worthy facts have long been forgotten.

MARTIN ATHERTON

James Oscroft Wilkes, ed., *Alfred Oscroft: Place-Names of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: James Oscroft Wilkes, with the support of the Hampshire Archives Trust and the Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society, 2015). xiv + 610 pp. £15 (£10 for Field Club members) hbk. ISBN 978-0615862385.

This is without doubt one of the most unusual reviews I shall ever write. It concerns a book about Hampshire place-names consisting of material written between eighty and a hundred years ago, largely unpublished in its day, and prepared for publication as an act of grandfilial piety by a retired chemical engineer resident in America. If readers suspect that is the prelude to a few paragraphs of butchery, read on.

Alfred Oscroft [AO] was not an academic, and did not have the benefit of formal academic training. He was for much of his working life employed by the Ordnance Survey in Southampton, and was clearly an intellectual layman with natural gifts over a very wide range, from sport to music and from draughtsmanship to theology to the philological scholarship which interests us here. By all accounts he was also an in-demand public speaker, a modest and pleasant man, and a good parent. It is no wonder that his grandson was proud enough of him to embark on this remarkable labour of love. That in itself is not enough to justify the publication of this large and spectacularly handsome book. We should expect to find good things in it.

Contemplating the book in 2017, the reviewer cannot focus on what he would disagree with if the material had been written last year. If things had not moved on, our discipline would be in a sealed case alongside alchemy and phrenology. The two questions I shall address, therefore, are: (1) what standard did the author achieve? and (2) what lasting value does the book have in the light of today's scholarship?

The bare bones of the book are as follows: an appreciation of AO from several family members (among other material), which helps to situate his scholarly work from both private and public perspectives; a set of republished articles on place-names from a Hampshire newspaper, followed by cuttings dealing with Hampshire place-names, all conveniently indexed, some cross-referenced to *Victoria County History* entries; two papers on animal and vegetable words as elements in place-names; the core of the

book, a large dictionary of place-names in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight with copious evidence and reasoned etymologies; and an appendix including a substantial bibliography and AO's own notes on 'scribal peculiarities'. The whole is splendidly illustrated, not least by examples of AO's own cartography and capable artwork.

The first thing to say is that AO was well up to date with what place-name scholars were doing at the time, and he embraced their methods. His first writings appeared only two years after the foundation of the Survey of English Place-Names (SEPN). He fully understood the principles of Skeat and Bradley that required the assembling of documentary evidence as a prelude to interpretation, and fully understood the need for such interpretation to take place in context. For example, he confronts (sometimes diplomatically) other newspaper contributors who failed to take account of the fact that Hampshire is a largely 'English' county and that derivation of names from other languages accordingly requires careful judgement. He therefore avoids one of the prevalent vices of the first half of the twentieth century, Celtophilia. ('Why did these writers go so mad over the Celtic derivations of our names?', p. 186.) On the positive side, it seems to me that his own etymological efforts are not seriously out of line with what was being produced by the generation of scholars just a few years his senior such as R. G. Roberts and W. St Clair Baddeley, or by contemporaries like G. B. Grundy, and an order of magnitude better than some lay attempts at original interpretation still being produced towards the millennium. He 'shows his working', as I was exhorted to do at school by a succession of maths teachers, and one understands how he has come to his conclusions. He is undogmatic in those conclusions. The author's achievement was, therefore, respectable: he was methodologically sound and his knowledge of Old English language and of Bosworth's dictionary acceptable. He could have afforded to be a bit more critical about the work of some of his predecessors in history, topography and toponymy which he clearly eclipsed; occasionally he presents some opinion and follows it up with a modest 'I don't think so' (e.g. under *Chale* in the dictionary section), but he also permits himself some sharp interventions (e.g. when attacking Isaac Taylor's attempt to show that *Calshot* represents, linguistically, the *Cerdices ora* of the Anglo-Saxon

Chronicle: ‘I cannot see the slightest resemblance.’ He goes on to call Taylor’s reasoning ‘laboured’, ‘irrelevant’, ‘erroneous’.)

Having come to this positive assessment in relation to question (1), we can move on to the meat of the book, the dictionary, with the intention of taking it seriously as we try to answer question (2). Is this book anything more than testament to a lost opportunity, a work that would not have been disgraced had it appeared on a scholarly bookshelf of the 1940s, even though not organized or expressed like a Survey volume? Could J. E. B. Gover, who clearly did not know of its existence, have profited from it in 1959–60 when writing up his equally unpublished Hampshire volume intended for the Survey? Or Helge Kökeritz when writing up his Isle of Wight book published in 1940, the year after AO’s death? A way of approaching this question is to take a handful of names which appear to me to be, or to have been, unusually problematic, and compare AO’s treatment of them with that of Gover (JEBG) and Kökeritz (HK). The eight I have selected are *Boldre*, *Bonchurch*, *Calshot*, *Carisbrooke*, *Froyle*, *Litchfield*, *Swarraton* and *Swaythling*, and I compare their treatment without intruding my own etymological views even where they differ from those of both writers.

**Boldre.** AO takes issue with a previous published suggestion, adduces evidence from the *Victoria County History (VCH)*, and after consideration of possible evidence for a word ancestral to *bull* in early English concludes that *Boldre* is ‘bull’s rithe (stream)’. He then backtracks and considers the Domesday spelling *Bovre* to be due to the Norman relative of French *boeuf*, and suggests a link with *bo(u)verie*. We may be troubled by the *fil-de-pensée* format of the entry (which is paralleled elsewhere), but his thinking can be followed with ease. JEBG adopts Anderson’s suggestion of *bol rith* ‘plank stream’, but adds a later note that ‘the regular [medieval, RC] spelling does not agree very well with Anderson’s etymology, and perhaps Ekwall’s *bol-ærn* “plank house” is better.’ AO grasps the range of entertainable possibilities for this thorny name better, and more independently, than JEBG.

**Bonchurch.** AO concludes, following the common opinion of the time, that this is ‘(St) Boniface’s church’. HK dismisses this idea out of hand (‘out of the question’), and comes up with various OE solutions, all

requiring special pleading. If I may breach my self-imposed silence just this once, I think AO was right, and I argued the case without knowledge of his work in *Nomina* 14 (1990–1), 41–6.

**Calshot.** AO savages Isaac Taylor's historicizing etymology, as indicated above, concluding that the name is probably from OE *cald* + *sceat*. He weakens his position by then presenting evidence that the second element is *-shore*, not *-shot*, without saying what the relationship between the two types might be. JEBG notes apparent variation between OE *ōra* and *ord*, and considers the latter to be original in defiance of the oldest attested OE spelling, which AO is unaware of. AO does not consider *ord*, despite presenting evidence consistent with it. JEBG does not attack the first element at all. A draw which reveals weaknesses in both parties.

**Carisbrooke.** AO acknowledges the profound difficulty of this name, discusses it sensibly, and settles for a form of *Wihtgarasburh* (attested) with the first syllable lost. ('All the rest [apparently meaning a possible Celtic etymology, RC] is mere guesswork.') HK has a full discussion using a massively larger collection of forms, and is still unable to come to a final judgement, though all of the possibilities he explores have greater inherent credibility than AO's.

**Froyle.** AO says 'It is a puzzle!', and concludes on the basis of some spellings in *Testa de Nevill* and other documents that it is 'Froll's bury', with the 'suffix' lost. JEBG follows Ekwall in suggesting 'hill of the goddess Freo (Frig)'. Whatever one makes of the personal name *Froll*, AO's solution is phonologically sounder than Ekwall's / Gover's.

**Litchfield.** AO dismisses the locally popular 'field of corpses' explanation (given substance by a group of nearby tumuli) and prefers 'ridge or shelf of Luda'. JEBG has *hliþ*, *hlid* + *scylf*, preferring *hliþ*, *hlid* to Ekwall's *hlif*, but the spread of forms supports Ekwall. AO does not cite Ekwall in this entry, which may therefore have been finalized before 1936. If that is the case, AO got to *scylf* in this name independently, via Skeat's work in Huntingdonshire. Both AO's and JEBG's attempts at the first element are inferior to Ekwall's.

**Swarraton.** AO begins: ‘I am not in agreement with any of the fantastic theories put forward.’ He then cites some, but the manner of his presentation is confusing, because what follows appears at first to be his own view rather than someone else’s which he then describes as ‘ludicrous’. His judgement leads him to the view that the first element is ‘a Danish or Jutish personal name’, but he does not explain the lack of a marker of the genitive case, though he surely cannot have been tempted by the idea that the element might have appeared in the ‘Danish’ genitive case. JEBG quotes Ekwall’s suggestion of *swær-wæd-tūn* ‘farm by the heavy ford’, ‘i.e. presumably one with a heavy or sticky bottom,’ but concludes that ‘no certainty is possible’. The difficulty of this name is acknowledged by both parties; AO’s suggestion is the bolder, though not defensible, whilst Ekwall’s / Gover’s is morphologically difficult on the evidence presented and probably not right.

**Swaythling.** AO gives this name a lengthy entry, citing and discussing boundary material from *Cartularium Saxonicum*, and eventually calling in an idea of J. K. Wallenberg’s to ‘corroborate my conjecture of years ago that Swæthelunga-ford (the earliest form of our Hants Swaythling) meant “the ford of the sons of Swæthel”.’ Radically differently, JEBG analyses this as a stream name, though he says only that ‘[i]t seems to be a singular name in *ing*, but connection with OE *swæth* “track” is uncertain.’ JEBG’s view that it was a stream name seems the more likely, but he ducks out of an etymology; AO’s discussion is fuller, but his conclusion appears improbable on the evidence he presents. A nil-nil draw with one team having most of the play, but AO has the advantage of having no space constraints such as JEBG operates under, whether self-imposed or not. One suspects that JEBG would have had nothing else to say on this.

All of AO’s suggestions are fully and carefully grounded in the current literature, including such SEPN volumes as were available at the time of his writing. The final form of the suggestions for *Boldre*, *Calshot*, *Litchfield*, *Swarraton* and *Swaythling* appears to be entirely his own. The comparison above between his work and that of published scholars suggests no weakness in his methodology, a completely pardonable ignorance of some source material, a tolerable but imperfect knowledge of OE onomastic morphology,



and a good eye for a bad argument which he was not afraid to cut down to size. He is occasionally caught in two minds and may appear to sit on the fence, as in the entry for:

**Melchet.** AO settles for OE *myln* + *sceat*, but is aware that Edmund McClure had identified the possibility that relatives of Welsh *coed* could have given rise to similar names in Scotland. AO says: ‘This looks reasonable, and the same influence may have been at work in Brythonic Hampshire.’ For once, his reasoning about the evidence for his final etymological decision is unclear.

A fair appreciation of the man, as represented by his grandson’s magnificent book, is that he was a genuinely gifted amateur, with no hint of disparagement intended by the use of that term, a man of independent judgement which could be, but was not always, trenchantly expressed. His capabilities certainly overlapped with those of his more academically favoured contemporaries. I for one, in my continuing work on his county, will not neglect to look up his opinions. His editor Jim Wilkes is to be commended for putting us in his debt.

RICHARD COATES

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