COUNCIL FOR NAME STUDIES IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

ESSAY PRIZE

1. A prize of £50 will be awarded annually for the best essay on any topic relating to the place-names and/or personal names of England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Man and the Channel Islands.

2. Submissions are invited from all students and young researchers. The prize will normally be awarded to those who have not hitherto had work on onomastics published.

3. Entries should be about 5000 words in length.

4. Entries should in some way make an original contribution to the subject.

5. One copy of the essay should be submitted to the Secretary of the Council in clear typescript, double-spaced, and should include a bibliography of sources of material used and of books and authors cited.

6. Entries will be judged by a panel appointed by the Chairman of the Council, and may be considered for publication in NOMINA, the Journal of Name Studies relating to Great Britain and Ireland.

7. Entries must be submitted by December 31st and, provided an essay of sufficient merit is forthcoming, the winner will be announced at the Annual Name Study Conference in the spring of the following year.

Entries should be sent to:

The Secretary,
Council for Name Studies in Great Britain & Ireland,
School of Scottish Studies,
27 George Square,
EDINBURGH EH8 9LD.

DEIRDRE FLANAGAN

SOME LESS FREQUENTLY ATTESTED IRISH PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS
OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST*

There are positive onomastic indicators that the secular habitative elements that most strongly characterise the Later Iron Age in Ireland, mainly dún, ráth, and lios, also cathair and caiseal (all of which may be translated 'fortress') (and inferred to be used to some extent in place-name coinage well into the Anglo-Norman period. Nevertheless, the impression gained from both onomastic and archaeological evidence is that as standard elements on a national scale they were, in general, losing currency from about the thirteenth century onwards. Other native habitative elements were emerging (notably baile 'homestead') alongside the range of newly-introduced Anglo-Norman names. It is noticeable that the onomastic usage of the term dún, hitherto the standard 'blanket' term for the defended dwelling of substance, was on the wane from the twelfth century onwards and may be seen as virtually outmoded by the late fourteenth century. Of the less commonly attested elements associated with native settlement longhopt and daingean are among the more obvious instances; they are frequently interpreted 'fortress' although both elements are open to other interpretations. This paper attempts to establish a terminus a quo for the deployment of the elements longhopt and daingean with apparent habitative association.

Longhopt as a lexical item is translated in RIA Contrib as '(a) camp, encampment, temporary stronghold; (b) manion, princely dwelling: stronghold, fortress'. The appellative longhopt in the sense of 'encampment' or 'temporary stronghold' is attested in onomastic usage from the mid ninth century onwards, gradually supplanting the early onomastic usage of dínadh: it is also well attested in this same sense in literary and historical texts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The onomastic usage of longhopt with reference to an 'established residence' does not begin to feature until the thirteenth century (Comm. 1224; MIA 1274; L. C6, Comm. 1261; A1280, 1311; A2 1306, 1336, 1342, etc.) and becomes increasingly more frequent in the fourteenth and succeeding centuries, although longhopt in the sense of encampment also continues to be employed. The onomastic evidence indicates that by the thirteenth century longhopt had the meaning of an 'established residence', applied, as in the observed instances, to the dwelling of an Irish chieftain. It may be assumed that the popular usage of longhopt in this sense predates the onomastic usage, although perhaps not by any considerable span. The writer has not observed any instance of its use in non-onomastic Irish sources prior to the thirteenth century. Onomastic documentation of longhopt in Irish-language sources is comparatively late and relatively sparse; APM 1348 Longhopt Mhíc Dhiarmada, equated by the editor with a fort on Longford Hill, Co. Roscommon; AU 1430 An Seanlonghopt ('the old longhopt') equated with Longhopt Óg Pheachall (APM 1448), now Longford, Co. Longford; APM 1595 An Longhopt identified with Longhopt Óg Muadhthaín, Longford Castle, Co. Galway. To these may be added Longhopt Óg Dhubh, identified with Longford Densmore, Co. Sligo (O'Donovan, J., Genealogies, tribes and customs of Hy-Flachrach, Dublin, 1844, 122-3). The surname specific in the above instances is that of the local ruling family. In all, the writer has encountered no positive evidence either from lexical or onomastic sources for the deployment or potential deployment of longhopt in the sense of 'established residence' before the twelfth/thirteenth-century period. The indications are that the element longhopt in the habitative context is later than the main dún, ráth, lios phase.

In the O.S. townland-name coverage Longford is the standard anglicisation of longhopt (although variant forms also occur). Longford most frequently appears as a
simplex name; sixteen instances are listed in the Topographical Index. In view of the case summarised above and in particular the Irish notices of four O.S. Longford names, one might reasonably expect some further instances of Longford names to have derived from an 'established residence'. This remains to be determined from documentary research on individual instances; seventeenth-century sources may in some cases reveal an earlier surname qualification or family association. There is no certainty that all instances of 'longford' (et var.) have an 'established' habitative reference. The possibility of longhorth in the sense of 'temporary encampment' cannot be entirely discounted, although the alternative term Ídhnaith does not seem to feature significantly as a place-name element. 3

Daingean (earlier daingen), adj. means 'firm, fast, strong, solid'; daingean subst. means 'a stronghold, fastness, fortress, defence; a strong thing' (RIA Contribb). Both adjective and substantive feature as place-name elements, the substantive as a generic element (commonly anglicised 'dangan', with some regional variants) and sometimes as a specific. While the element daingean (subst.) may in many instances denote a natural fastness or 'a strong thing' (such as a boulder or a large rock), this inquiry confines itself to daingean in the sense of 'stronghold, fortress' for which there is sufficient evidence to merit consideration. In the annalistic terminology daingean has but a sporadic usage: the earliest significant instance is in AJ 1012: Daingnach Inda . . doronta la Brian 'many fortifications were made by Brian', of which four are listed, the cAthair ('fort') of Cenn Corad, Inis Caill Dubh, Inis Loocha Sainglenn and the cathair of Cuoc Fochuir. It would seem that by the eleventh century daingean in the sense of 'fortress' or 'fortification' was being employed as a definitive term of general coverage. 4 There are occasional instances of the appulative daingean apparently in the sense of 'fortress' in eleventh- and twelfth-century texts. The earliest annalistic reference to a daingean name is AFM 1145, Daingean Bona Cullinn, equated with Dangan Castle, Co. Roscommon, followed in 1221 (L.CÉ) by Daingean ri Cuin (in Co. Longford) and in 1316 (AI) by Daingan I Cubais (Dingle, Co. Kerry). To these instances may be added the entry Daingan Ul Dhonnaibhin in Omnahonicon Geoldelchum: 'curious fort in p. of Dangandubh, c. Cork'; the name is documented in the Papal Taxation c. 1306. The sum total of the evidence is sparse; the impression gained is that daingean in the definitive sense of 'fortress' is unlikely to have been a creative element in place-names much before the eleventh century.

One might expect some further instances of the O.S. 'dangan' (et var.) names to represent daingean 'fortress'. As with the element longhorth, research on the earlier documentation and associations of individual instances of its occurrence, in conjunction with observation in the field, may indicate whether or not daingean was employed in the habitative usage. Balleydan td, Co. Down, appears from seventeenth-century documentation to be Ir. Baile an Dáinín (‘homestead of the daingean’); the presence of a prominent ring-fort called Roughfort within the townland is surely more than a coincidence, Roughfort being almost certainly a loose translation of the element daingean.

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NOTES

* This is a summary of the paper given on March 26th, 1983 at the XVth Annual Conference of the Council for Name Studies held at Ennismore, Montespan, Cork.

1. The earliest use of the term longhorth in AU (s.a. 841, 866, 902) is with reference to Viking naval encampments or possibly beach-heads. Here longhorth does not appear to mean 'permanent residence'. The etymology and semantic evolution of the term longhorth require further investigation and were not intended as part of the subject-matter of the present narrow line of enquiry.

2. AFM 860 records the destruction of 'longhorth Rothlaith' which the editor identifies with 'Dun-Rathlaigh, anglicised Dunally' in Co. Laois. The dún element in the surviving name would indicate that longhorth here is more likely to mean 'encampment'. AI 1280 has a reference to 'longhorth in rig' which the editor thinks may not be a place-name but simply 'the king's dwelling'.

3. In discussion of this paper Professor O Móille suggested as a possible early meaning of the element longhorth a 'wet place alongside a bank'. A number of the Longford townlands are located alongside or near a water-course. I have not had the opportunity, as yet, to follow up this suggestion.

4. The use of the adjective daingean to denote a fortified site is suggested by two early annalistic entries: AU 709 Allen daingan ('strong island') aedificatur; AU 714 Allen daingan distrivit.

ABREVIATIONS

MIA Miscellaneous Irish Annals, ed. Séamus Ó hIolláin, Dublin, 1947.
RIA Contribb Contributions to a dictionary of the Irish language, published by the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin.