Women in the Landscape: Place-Name Evidence for Women in North-West England

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A significant minority of place-name qualifiers refer to women, either by name or through an appellative relating to an attribute such as age, appearance, occupation, religion, marital status or social class. These can be revealing, especially as the historical sources tend to be reticent about the role of women, and in any case deal mainly with the lives of major players on the political scene, rather than with those of the ordinary people who farmed the land and helped to shape the countryside. An earlier study of feminine personal names in English place-names from the Anglo-Saxon period convinced me that this was an area full of potential for further research. By extending the chronological and geographical coverage, as well as including other types of references to women, it may be possible to assemble a substantial body of evidence in order to facilitate comparative studies of different parts of mainland Britain. The purpose of the present article is to present a preliminary corpus and discussion of place-names referring to women in north-west England, focusing on the historical counties of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire.

The appendix lists all such place-names that I have been able to find

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1 This paper is dedicated to the memory of the late Mary Higham. An earlier version was given at a day conference on “Names and Places in the North-West of England” organised by the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland in collaboration with the English Place-Name Society and the Society for Landscape Studies, and held in Manchester on 3 November 2007. I am grateful to those present for their comments, including Eric Higham, Oliver Padel, Simon Taylor and Diana Whaley. The final version has also benefitted from comments by an anonymous referee.

within this area, working from the published sources. Coverage of the three counties is both uneven and incomplete. Most references to women are found in minor names and field-names, which have been treated in much less detail in the available surveys for Lancashire than in those for Cumberland and Westmorland. To some extent there may be a genuine imbalance in the number of references to women, at least as regards the personal names that make up a high proportion of the corpus. Ekwall notes that personal names in general are less common as place-name qualifiers in Lancashire than in other counties such as Berkshire; and this is bound to impact on the number of feminine personal names represented. On the other hand, Ekwall was dealing primarily with major place-names, and it remains to be seen whether the


4 PNLa, p. 259.

5 Although some of Ekwall’s etymologies require revision, the number of personal names is more likely to be reduced than increased, since as Kenyon, ‘Notes on Lancashire place-names 2’, 38, points out, Ekwall and his contemporaries tended to favour derivations from personal names to a greater extent than more recent scholars.
same trend is represented in the minor names of Lancashire. This will not become clear until completion of the English Place-Name Survey for Lancashire, currently in progress under the direction of John Insley. The high proportion of minor names in the present corpus means that they have received correspondingly little discussion in the surveys; and in some instances, the very process of bringing the material together may reveal comparative evidence with a bearing on interpretation.

The main challenges involved in compiling such a corpus relate firstly to the identification of relevant place-names, and secondly to their interpretation. Even when a feminine eponym can be established beyond reasonable doubt, the nature of the association may not. The grouping of the material into categories in the appendix is offered as a rough guide only, as it is often unclear whether the woman commemorated in a place-name was a contemporary landholder or inhabitant, the saint to which it was dedicated, or a notional character. A rare literary allusion is Meg’s Well in Cumberland, from Meg Merrilies in Sir Walter Scott’s *Guy Mannering*; and ownership can also be ruled out for some other names such as Deadwin Clough in Lancashire ‘dead woman’s clough’, and Widow Hause in Cumberland, possibly used as a corpse road between Wythop and Lorton. In other instances, information on how land came into female hands is lacking. Queen’s Hames in Cumberland was the dowry of Henry III’s daughter Margaret on her marriage to Alexander of Scotland in 1251, but how many of the minor names and field-names may similarly represent dower land is wholly uncertain. Strong candidates include the field-names Bride’s meadow in Westmorland and *Bride Mead* in Cumberland, but either or

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6 No volumes have yet been published, but a report on the Lancashire Place-Name Survey presented on behalf of Dr Insley at the Manchester day conference intimated that the first would be a survey of major place-names.
7 PNCu i, 114.
8 PNLa, p. 93, comments: “A dead woman may have been found in the clough”.
9 Whaley, *A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names*, p. 372, suggests that alternatively the first element may represent a corruption, perhaps of a word for ‘willow’.
10 PNCu i, 3.
11 PNWe i, 125; PNCu ii, 299.
both could alternatively comprise dedications to St Bridget as in Bridekirk and Kirkbride.\textsuperscript{12}

The corpus aims to include all types of references to women, as well as names based on a perceived resemblance between a topographical feature and a woman or an item connected with women. Examples such as the scar Old Woman Playing the Organ,\textsuperscript{13} the pothole Bull Pot of the Witches,\textsuperscript{14} and the megalithic circle Long Meg and her Daughters\textsuperscript{15} give an insight into the propensity for associating landscape features with female referents. So too do names from the Norse-derived term \textit{carline} ‘old woman’, the qualifier of Carling Stone, Carling Knott and a lost \textit{Kerlingsik} in Cumberland,\textsuperscript{16} and of Carling Gill, Carlingwha and Curling Steps in Westmorland.\textsuperscript{17} The \textit{Oxford English Dictionary (OED)} describes the word as “ch[iefly] Scots”,\textsuperscript{18} and it is certainly more common in Scottish names such as Carlinhead Rocks and Carlingnose in Fife,\textsuperscript{19} Carlin Tooth in Roxburghshire,\textsuperscript{20} Carlin’s Cairn in Galloway and Carlin’s Loup at Carlops.\textsuperscript{21} However, the Cumberland and Westmorland names indicate that it was also current in northern dialects of Middle or Early Modern English, reflecting the more intense survival of Scandinavian vocabulary in the dialects of the north-west than in the actual Danelaw.\textsuperscript{22} It is worth noting that \textit{Kerlingsik} predates the earliest occurrence noted in the \textit{OED} by about fifty years, and Curling Steps by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} PNCu ii, 272; PNCu i, 144.
\item \textsuperscript{13} PNWe i, 201.
\item \textsuperscript{14} PNWe i, 28.
\item \textsuperscript{15} PNCu i, 238.
\item \textsuperscript{16} PNCu ii, 440; PNCu ii, 412; PNCu ii, 397.
\item \textsuperscript{17} PNWe ii, 52; PNWe i, 47; PNWe i, 155.
\item \textsuperscript{18} \textit{Oxford English Dictionary}, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1989), s.v. \textit{carline}. Also available at \texttt{<http://www.oed.com/>}.
\item \textsuperscript{19} S. Taylor with G. Mákus, \textit{The Place-Names of Fife} Vol. 1 \textit{West Fife between Leven and Forth} (Donington, 2006), pp. 396, 375.
\item \textsuperscript{21} P. Drummond, \textit{Scottish Hill Names: Their Origin and Meaning} (Nairn, 2007), p. 188. I am grateful to Mr Drummond for generously providing me with information on references to women in Scottish hill names.
\item \textsuperscript{22} I owe this point to an anonymous referee.
\end{itemize}
about a century; while Fishcarling Head ‘fish-wife’s headland’ shows the term productive in forming compounds, possibly as late as the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{23}

Omitted from the corpus are derived names such as Annetwell Street in Carlisle, named from the earlier Annotewell ‘St Ann’s well’,\textsuperscript{24} and Mary Mount in Borrowdale, named in the 1950s from Mount St Mary’s College in Derbyshire.\textsuperscript{25} Also excluded is the name-type Maiden Castle, which Coates has identified as a literary topos.\textsuperscript{26} Other names in maiden are included, but it is not always clear whether they refer to young women, as with the lost Penrith street name Maiden Lane oth. Lovers Lane,\textsuperscript{27} or to the Virgin Mary, as with the lost Brampton field-name Crosflat, sicum de Maydane Cross.\textsuperscript{28} Similar ambiguities apply to the term lady, one of the most common appellatives within the corpus. Some of the names concerned may refer to a female landholder or local resident, but as Field notes, “many are allusions to dedication to the Blessed Virgin”.\textsuperscript{29} Recurrent formations such as Lady Lands and Lady Well fall into the religious category, and the lost Cumberland field-name the Lady Holme\textsuperscript{30} has also been included here by analogy with the Westmorland doublet recorded with the alternative name St Mary Holme.\textsuperscript{31} The occurrence of doublets, however, is not always a safe guide. The field-name Lady acre, unexplained by the Westmorland editor\textsuperscript{32} but also found in Oxfordshire,\textsuperscript{33} might perhaps be understood as a religious name-type; but despite the occurrence of a Lady Wood in

\textsuperscript{23} PNWe i, 88. The compound fish-carline is not found in the OED.
\textsuperscript{24} PNCu i, 46.
\textsuperscript{25} Whaley, A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names, p. 231.
\textsuperscript{27} PNCu i, 231.
\textsuperscript{28} PNCu i, 69.
\textsuperscript{30} PNCu ii, 348.
\textsuperscript{31} PNWe i, 193.
\textsuperscript{32} PNWe ii, 102.
\textsuperscript{33} Field, English Field Names. A Dictionary, p. 120.
Leicestershire, the same interpretation cannot be applied to its Westmorland counterpart, “named from Lady le Fleming”. In some instances the reference may be to monastic ownership, as with names like Nunclose, the property of Armithwaite Nunnery. In others, a legend associated with the name points to a secular interpretation but may need to be viewed with caution, as with the conflicting explanations of Lady’s Rake in Cumberland.

Further issues are raised by the place-name Ladyford in Skelsmergh. The Westmorland Survey offers “probably ‘ford belonging to the lady (of the manor)’, or ‘ford which could easily be crossed by a lady’”. The latter would appear to be paralleled by the name-type Bridford ‘ford which could be crossed by a bride’, an interpretation against which I have argued elsewhere. An alternative possibility may be ‘ford whose upkeep was the responsibility of a lady’, following a suggestion by Fell that names such as Aberford ‘Eadburg’s ford’ in the West Riding of Yorkshire may refer to the woman responsible for the construction or upkeep of the crossing-place. On the other hand, there may again be links with toponymic uses of the term maiden, which include about a dozen in combination with the generic ford. The precise significance of these is not yet clear, and it is hoped that this is one of the issues that may be addressed in more detail at a later stage of the present project.

The appendix includes the earliest recorded spelling for each name, or the date first recorded for names attested only in the modern form. The date of coinage is of course often much earlier. The name Portinscale is first recorded c.1160 as Porqueneschal, although it dates

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34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 PNWe i, 201.
37 PNWe i, 206.
back to the Anglo-Saxon period, deriving from Old Norse (ON) skáli ‘hut, shieling’, in combination with either Old English (OE) portcwēn(e) ‘?townswoman’ or the cognate ON portkona ‘prostitute’. Similarly, while the lost name Raswraget is recorded from c.1169, a dating prior to the Anglo-Saxon takeover of the area is suggested by the Celtic etymology from Welsh rhos ‘high ground’ and gwragedd ‘women’. The lost field-name Quinnefel is unrecorded before c.1245, but is plausibly explained by the Cumberland editors as ‘apparently “women’s fell,” from ON kvinna and fell’. In many other instances, it is impossible to ascertain whether a name recorded only in late spellings is contemporary with the forms of the elements represented or if it derives from their medieval or earlier etymons. Hence whereas personal names have been grouped in the appendix according to language or date, with a standardised form given in square brackets for Old English, Old Norse and Gaelic names, no attempt has been made to do the same for dedications or appellatives.

Personal names themselves present many difficulties. Those ambiguous as to gender have been included only where the balance of probability appears to favour a feminine referent. Particularly doubtful occurrences are preceded by a question mark, as with Julian Holme, from either the masculine name Julian or a variant of Gillian, and Hannakin, from either the masculine name Hankin or a diminutive of

42 A case in favour of the former derivation is made by C. Hough, ‘The ladies of Portinscale’, Journal of the English Place-Name Society, 29 (1997), 71–78; arguments in favour of the latter are presented by G. Fellows-Jensen, English Place-Names and Settlement History—Seen with the Wisdom of Hindsight, Hilda Hulme Memorial Lecture (London, 2001), pp. 7–8. It is worth noting that Portinscale is untypical of the corpus as a whole in that it contains a habitative generic. The majority of references to women combine with landscape terms, and this may to some extent set this problematic name apart.
43 PNCu i, 103.
44 PNCu i, 184.
45 Some names tentatively included in Hough, ‘Women in English place-names’, have been excluded from the present corpus, as with Bailey in Lancashire and Dowthwaitehead in Cumberland.
46 PNCu ii, 396.
Ann.\textsuperscript{47} Also problematic is Melmerby, from a Celtic personal name \textit{Máel-Muire} or \textit{Máel-Maire} cited by Ó Corráin and Maguire among examples of normally male names applied to women.\textsuperscript{48} The meaning ‘devotee of Mary’ is clearly appropriate to both. Perhaps most significantly, it is recorded as the name of several high-ranking women, including the wives and daughters of kings:

Máel Muire was one of the wives of the high-king Aed Finnliath (†879) and mother of the high-king Niall Glúndub (†919). Niall Glúndub himself had a daughter Máel Muire who died in 966. Another Máel Muire was daughter of Amlaíb, king of Dublin, and wife of the high-king Máel Sechnaill II.\textsuperscript{49}

This helps to establish it as a feminine name within the social class that might be associated with the naming of a \textit{by}, supporting its tentative inclusion within the corpus alongside Motherby, more straightforwardly derived from a Scandinavian feminine personal name \textit{Móðir}, originally a nickname from \textit{móðir} ‘mother’.\textsuperscript{50}

Still more doubtful is Gubberford in Lancashire, originally from ON

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\textsuperscript{47} PNLa, p. 218. Whaley, \textit{A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names}, pp. 151–52, notes that the place-name is first recorded in the entry for the burial of the mother of Ann Ashburner.


\textsuperscript{49} Ó Corráin and Maguire, \textit{Gaelic Personal Names}, p. 130.

\textsuperscript{50} PNCu i, 198; Fellows-Jensen, \textit{Scandinavian Settlement Names in the North-West}, p. 36. Motherby was omitted from the corpus presented in Hough, ‘Women in English place-names’, but will be included in a forthcoming list of \textit{addenda} intended both to remedy omissions from that corpus and to update it with material from English Place-Name Survey volumes and other sources published since 2002. PNWe ii, 148, attributes the lost field-name \textit{Modersike} (e. 13th century) to the same personal name, but I have argued elsewhere that this is a doublet of \textit{Mothersike} (1603) in Cumberland (PNCu i, 59) and derives from an appellative term (‘The role of onomastics in historical linguistics’, paper presented to a day conference of the Forum for Research in the Languages of Scotland and Ulster, Perth, 8 December 2007).
‘clearing’ with a qualifier that may be a personal name. Ekwall mentions the feminine Guðbjǫrg as one possibility,\(^{51}\) while Fellows-Jensen seems slightly to prefer the masculine form Guðbiǫrn.\(^{52}\) It is tempting to suggest a parallel with Gubbergill in Cumberland, but in the absence of early forms for the latter name, no etymology can be established.\(^{53}\) Nearer at hand is Cumeralgh in Whittingham, Lancashire, first recorded in 1292 as Gumberhalgh, and attributed by Wyld and Hirst to the feminine personal name ON Gunnbjǫrg.\(^{54}\) This has been omitted from the corpus as the place-name is not covered by Ekwall’s more authoritative survey, and does not appear in Fellows-Jensen’s study of the Scandinavian place-names of the area.\(^{55}\) Another Lancashire place-name is Goodber in Roeburndale, recorded in 1588 as Goberthwayte, and for which Wyld and Hirst tentatively suggest an OE *Gōdbeorg or ON *Gōðbjǫrg.\(^{56}\) It may be possible that all four names contain a related first element, but the evidence does not support a firm conclusion.

Names dating from the Anglo-Saxon period are particularly problematic, as many monothematic personal names have corresponding forms for both genders. The database compiled by the Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England (PASE) project has been invaluable here, making it possible to trace the names of all recorded inhabitants of England from the late sixth century to 1042.\(^{57}\) The lost

\(^{51}\) PNLa, p. 165.
\(^{52}\) Fellows-Jensen, Scandinavian Settlement Names in the North-West, p. 128.
\(^{53}\) Whaley, A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names, p. 147, comments: ‘‘Gubber’ is unidentified’’.
\(^{54}\) Wyld and Hirst, The Place Names of Lancashire, pp. 107–08.
\(^{55}\) Fellows-Jensen, Scandinavian Settlement Names in the North-West. Other place-names which I have hesitated to include on the sole authority of Wyld and Hirst are Cunliffe (Gundeclyf 1278, ‘?Gunnhildr’s cliff’) and Gunnell’s Fold (Gunnildisford 1258, ‘?Gunnhildr’s ford’), although the single spellings recorded for each name look reasonably convincing.
\(^{56}\) Wyld and Hirst, The Place Names of Lancashire, p. 135.
\(^{57}\) Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England <http://www.pase.ac.uk>. The second stage of the project, covering names recorded during the later eleventh and twelfth centuries, is currently in progress.
field-name *Bubbegarth* in Cumberland is ambiguous for a masculine or feminine personal name, but has not been included in the corpus as PASE lists two men called Bubba and has no entries for the putative feminine *Bubbe*. Also omitted is Love Clough in Lancashire. Ekwall suggests a derivation from an Old English personal name *Lufa* or *Lufu*, the second of which could be feminine; but PASE has one male occurrence of Lufa and two occurrences of Lufu, one male and one female, so that the odds are two to one in favour of a masculine referent. The situation is rather different as regards Tetlow in Lancashire. Other place-names with the same qualifier are usually attributed either to the attested feminine name *Tette* or to an unattested masculine form *Tetta*. However, PASE has one entry each for Tetta and Tette, and both are women. There is no evidence for a cognate masculine name, so Tetlow has provisionally been included in the corpus. More secure is Redvales (*Rediveshale* 1185, *Redinall* 1246, *de Redyval* 1296, *Ridevalls* 1542), attributed by Ekwall to an unattested feminine personal name *Rēdgifu*. The prototheme is not on record, but Rædfrith, Rædnoth, Rædwald, Rædwine and Rædwulf all appear in the PASE database, with several recorded spellings in *Red-*. It therefore seems likely that the etymon of Redvales is an OE *Rǣdgifu*.

Other qualifiers are ambiguous between personal names and appellatives. The field-names *Kitty cum Kell Close*, Kitty Frisk Well and Kitty Went Head in Cumberland, and Kitty slosh and Kittycrag in Westmorland, may be from either a diminutive form of *Katherine*, or

58 PNCu i, 122.
59 PNLa, p. 92.
60 PNLa, p. 33.
62 The name of Tette, the seventh-century mother of St Guthlac, is recorded once, while the name of Tetta, the eighth-century Abbess of Wimborne, is recorded in that form six times in two different sources.
63 PNLa, p. 61.
64 PNCu i, 233, 218; ii, 363.
65 PNWe i, 201; ii, 59.
an appellative term *kitty* defined in the *OED* as ‘A girl or young woman; a wench; sometimes ... a woman of loose character’.\(^{66}\) The *OED* describes this as an obsolete Scots sense, attested during the sixteenth century only and derived from Scots *kittock* of similar meaning. As with *carline*, however, many dialectal features are common to both southern Scotland and northern England. The second element of Kitty Went Head is ME *went* ‘path, passage’, offering a possible parallel with street-names of the *Lovers’ Lane* variety. It may therefore be possible that the field-names contain *kitty* in the sense ‘young woman’, extending both the geographical and the chronological range of this meaning of the term.

Other qualifiers ambiguous for personal names or appellatives include *Peg, Sally* and *Lily*. *Peg Huck Well* is identified with one of two women named *Margaret Hucke* mentioned in sixteenth-century documents,\(^{67}\) and Peggy’s Bridge was built in 1991 to commemorate Mrs Peggy Webb-Jones (1922–90).\(^{68}\) Other occurrences, however, may refer to pegs. *Sally* and *Lily* are even more dubious. Sally gate and Sally Hill could contain either a feminine personal name or a dialect word for ‘willow’;\(^ {69}\) and while Lily Mere, Lily Wood, *Lyllye Dubbz* and Lil(l)y bed & garth could each be named after a woman,\(^ {70}\) it is notable that the generics in all four instances would go particularly well with the plant name.

Another type of ambiguity is between personal name and place-name. The Westmorland editor suggests a place-name meaning ‘little clearing’ as an alternative to a personal name as the first element of Lily Wood and *Lyllye Dubbz*, although since the generic of the latter name is identified as OE *dubb* ‘pool’, an interpretation ‘lily pool’ may seem at

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\(^{66}\) *OED*, s.v. *kitty*. Alternative senses of the word as a local name for the wren, a pet-name for a kitten, a short form of *kittiwake*, a prison, a sum of money, or the jack in a game of bowls, are less plausible in the toponymic contexts. The last three are in any case recorded only from the nineteenth century, whereas the field-name occurrences date from 1650 through 1859.

\(^{67}\) PNWe ii, 185.

\(^{68}\) Whaley, *A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names*, p. 263.

\(^{69}\) PNWe ii, 49; Whaley, *A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names*, p. 292.

\(^{70}\) PNWe i, 17, 94, 169.
least equally plausible. Ekwall suggests an Old English personal name *Goldgifu as the qualifier of Goldshaw Booth, noting that it was later understood as a place-name and used alone.\textsuperscript{71} Fellows-Jensen believes that the qualifier was an earlier place-name (a possibility also considered by Ekwall), and prefers a derivation from an OE *gold-geafu ‘golden gift’ as a celebratory name for the site.\textsuperscript{72} It may be relevant that PASE records no personal names with the prototheme Gold- up to 1042;\textsuperscript{73} and this is also consistent with Cox’s argument that the lost Goldburgh Wra in Lincolnshire derives from a place-name rather than from a putative feminine personal name *Goldburg.\textsuperscript{74}

Some places are named after known historical characters. Countesses land, Countess Pillar, Pembroke House and Lady’s Pillar are named from Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Pembroke, who also founded St Anne’s Hospital in 1653.\textsuperscript{75} Dora’s Field was given by the poet Wordsworth to his daughter Dora;\textsuperscript{76} and Carrington hole is allegedly named from a deep place in the river where the pregnant young Elizabeth Carrington was thrown in by her lover, but saved by her petticoats!\textsuperscript{77} Sometimes, though, identities can be more difficult to establish. According to the Cumberland editors, Queen Street in Whitehaven commemorates Catherine of Braganza, the queen of Charles II, while Catherine Street is named “probably from a member of the Lowther family of that name”.\textsuperscript{78} Since, however, both Charles Street and King Street in the same town are taken to have been named after Charles II,\textsuperscript{79} it seems not unreasonable to suggest that Catherine Street as well as Queen Street may commemorate his wife.

Where the only record of an eponymous woman is the place-name

\textsuperscript{71} PNLa, pp. 80–81.
\textsuperscript{72} Fellows-Jensen, Scandinavian Settlement Names in the North-West, p. 208.
\textsuperscript{73} A number of entries for the later Anglo-Saxon period can be expected.
\textsuperscript{75} PNWe ii, 125, 129, 133, 17, 93.
\textsuperscript{76} PNWe i, 212.
\textsuperscript{77} PNWe i, 66.
\textsuperscript{78} PNCu ii, 451.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
itself, interpretation is often problematic, especially if she happens to share her name with a saint. A religious context is established by the kirk of Bridekirk and Kirkbride mentioned above, but in other instances the balance of probability depends on the recurrence of individual generics or types of generics with the same appellative or personal name.

A high proportion of dedications are in connection with water, particularly wells and springs. This is of course a trend also seen elsewhere. Scherr estimates that in Somerset, as many as a quarter of the names of wells and springs may have religious or superstitious associations, and she also draws attention to the popularity in this connection of St Agnes, possibly sometimes confused with St Anne.\(^80\) In the present corpus, the name Agnes occurs in a range of place-names, some taken to denote a local woman, and others identified with the saint. On the one hand, Aggie Fields and Agnesgill seem likely to be ad hoc coinages referring to medieval women,\(^81\) and Annyhouse is named from Agnes Howse, who held it in 1536;\(^82\) on the other, Agnes Well and Annas Cross point to a dedication.\(^83\) Somewhere between the two extremes falls Annas Sike, attributed to a personal name in the Westmorland Survey but containing a generic sike ‘small stream’ also found in Lady Sike in Kaber and Lady Syke in Haberthwaite.\(^84\) This generic not infrequently combines with feminine personal names or other references to women, with several further instances within the present corpus.\(^85\) The OED identifies it as a word of mainly northern and Scots distribution, and defines the first sense as ‘A small stream of water, a rill or streamlet, esp[ecially] one flowing through flat or marshy ground, and often dry in summer; a ditch or channel through which a

\(^{81}\) PNCu i, 209; PNWe i, 142.
\(^{82}\) PNWe i, 75.
\(^{83}\) PNCu i, 107; PNWe ii, 197.
\(^{84}\) PNWe ii, 7; Whaley, A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names, p. 203.
\(^{85}\) Annas Sike We, Hannakin La, f.n. Joansike Cu, f.n. Kerlingsik Cu, f.n. Maud’s Slack Sike We, Maudsike Cu, Quenildesyk’ Cu.
tiny stream flows’.\textsuperscript{86} One of its uses, as the \textit{OED} also notes, was “as a boundary between lands, fields etc.”, and this may explain why it occurs in minor names in combination with a personal name identifying the owner of one of the adjoining holdings. A secondary sense, attested in northern England as ‘a gully, a dip or hollow’, may also be relevant in some of the names, as may the obsolete sense ‘a stretch of meadow, a field’, which would make it possible to interpret Annas Sike, Lady Sike and Lady Syke within the context of religious dedications.\textsuperscript{87}

Like \textit{Agnes}, \textit{Anne} is ambiguous for a woman or a saint, but may most plausibly be taken as a dedication in names such as Anne’s Well in Shap and its doublets \textit{Annottewell} in Carlisle and \textit{Annet-well} in Kirkby Thore.\textsuperscript{88} More tricky is the Cumberland field-name \textit{Anneislandes}.\textsuperscript{89} It may be no more than a coincidence that this has a doublet in Scotland, the Glasgow suburb Anniesland; but if any further instances of the formation come to light as the current project progresses, it will be worth considering whether it may be a name-type, parallel to Lady Lands. The same applies to the two occurrences of Mary Lands,\textsuperscript{90} which have been grouped with secular names in the corpus, but may alternatively represent dedications.

Another problem lies in differentiating personal names and appellatives from the surnames cognate with and sometimes derived from them. An example is Belles Knott in Grasmere, where the first element may be either the surname \textit{Bell} or a hypocoristic form of \textit{Isabella}.\textsuperscript{91} Not included in the corpus is a series of names generally attributed in the Survey volumes to a surname \textit{Goody}. These are as follows:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{OED}, s.v. \textit{sike}, \textit{syke}, n.\textsuperscript{1}.
\item Topographical evidence is against this interpretation of the Haberthwaite name, as Whaley, \textit{A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names}, p. 203, notes: “There are \textit{sykes} or small streams in the vicinity”. On the other hand, no alternative interpretation appears to be available, for she goes on to comment: “Why \textit{lady} ... is unclear”.
\item PNWe ii, 173; PNCu i, 46; PNCu i, 46.
\item PNCu ii, 383.
\item PNWe ii, 163, 214.
\item Whaley, \textit{A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names}, p. 23.
\end{itemize}
Goodie (n.d.) Cu\textsuperscript{92}
Goodies (\textit{Gooddies} 1626) We\textsuperscript{93}
f.n. Goody (1840) We\textsuperscript{94}
Goody Bridge (\textit{Guddy brig} 1586) We\textsuperscript{95}
Goody Nook We\textsuperscript{96}
Goodyhills (\textit{Goodyehilles} 1538) Cu\textsuperscript{97}
f.n. Goodyinge (1652) Cu\textsuperscript{98}
f.n. Goodylands (1701) We\textsuperscript{99}
f.n. Goodystook (c.1840) Cu\textsuperscript{100}

The problem with such a derivation is that the surname does not appear to belong to this part of the country. Reaney has no early examples from the north-west;\textsuperscript{101} it is not listed in the only volume of the English Surnames Survey so far available for the area;\textsuperscript{102} and Hanks and Hodges describe it as seemingly confined to north-west Essex until the mid-fifteenth century.\textsuperscript{103} This does not of course preclude it from turning up here, especially as the place-name occurrences date from the sixteenth century onwards; but it may indicate that the surname is unlikely to have been sufficiently common to account for the number of minor names concerned.\textsuperscript{104} Alternative possibilities suggested in Whaley’s entry for

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item PNCu ii, 274.
\item PNWe i, 34.
\item PNWe i, 26.
\item PNWe i, 200.
\item PNWe i, 147.
\item PNCu ii, 297.
\item PNCu ii, 275.
\item PNWe i, 96.
\item PNCu ii, 450.


104 The surname \textit{Goodill} or \textit{Goodhall}, on local record from the seventeenth century and adduced as the etymon of Goodles and Goodlie Hill in Westmorland (PNWe ii, 57), is unlikely to be relevant.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Goody Bridge are “a rustic title (from goodwife); or a forename, as seemingly in Wordsworth’s poem ‘Goody Blake and Harry Gill’ ... where Goody occurs alone as well as with Blake”.\(^{105}\) The *OED* explains goody as a shortened form of goodwife ‘the mistress of a house or other establishment’,\(^{106}\) and defines it as: ‘A term of civility formerly applied to a woman, usually a married woman, in humble life; often prefixed as a title to the surname. Hence, a woman to whose station this title is appropriate’.\(^{107}\) This apppellative term or title, recorded from 1559 and thus slightly predated by the earliest record of Goodyhills, seems to me to be a plausible etymon for the place-names listed above.

It may, however, be worth looking more closely at the meaning of the term. The *English Dialect Dictionary* records a meaning of goodwife as ‘a female farmer, one who manages a farm’.\(^{108}\) This sense is taken to be confined to Scotland, and does not appear in the *OED*. Nonetheless, it would make good sense in the toponymic contexts, with over 50% of occurrences in field-names. Much regional vocabulary is common to southern Scotland and northern England, and I should like to suggest that the place-names may provide evidence for this meaning of the term south of the current border. Indeed, even if a surname continues to be preferred as the place-name qualifier, the sense ‘female farmer’ might perhaps be considered as a possible derivation for the surname in this area.\(^{109}\)

In conclusion, attention may be drawn to the size of the corpus presented in the appendix, and to its potential for illustrating the role of

\(^{105}\) Whaley, *A Dictionary of Lake District Place-Names*, p. 134. Evidence of the use of Goody as a synonym for Mrs in north-west England is also provided by Beatrix Potter’s *Tale of Timmy Tiptoes*, where the wife of the eponymous squirrel is named Goody Tiptoes. I am grateful to Oliver Padel for drawing this to my attention.

\(^{106}\) Either goodwife or the surname derived from it may be the origin of Goodwife Stones (1859) in Westmorland (PNWe ii, 16).

\(^{107}\) *OED*, s.v. goody, n. 1.


\(^{109}\) Other derivations of the surname listed in standard dictionaries are topographical (‘dweller at the good enclosure’), occupational (‘good servant’) and metronymic (OE *Gōdgifu*, ME Godeve).
women in the historical landscape. While some of the female referents are saints or historical figures, the majority are otherwise unknown women whose posthumous fame depends solely on their impact on the local community, and the mark they made on the countryside in which they lived. Like the much-missed honorand of this article, they were women of character, and their influence lives on.
Appendix

Place-names relating to women

1. Personal names

1.1. Old English


1.2. Old Norse


1.3. Gaelic

Bethecar (Bothaker 1509) La [Bethoc]; ?Melmerby (Malmerbi 1201) Cu [*Máel-Muire / Máel-Maire]
1.4. Medieval or post-medieval
f.n. Aggie Fields Cu; Agnesgill (1836) We; f.n. Alice holme (1578) Cu; Alice Howe (Allicehow 1828) We; f.n. Alice yare (1836) We; Anastice (1857) We; f.n. Ann wandales (1843) We; ?f.n. Annas howe (1836) We; Annas Sike (1859) We; Annegarth (Anngarth 1838) We; f.n. Anneislandes (Anneslands t. Ed 3 [t. Eliz]) Cu; Annesdale (1869) We; f.n. Annet hole (1847) We; f.n. Annett close (Annat close 1619) Cu; Annisgarth We; ?f.n. Annisteds (1836) We; Annotherges (Annodeslegehes 1349) We; Anns Hill (Ann’s Hill 1776) Cu; f.n. Anns hole (1836) We; f.n. Annyhouse (1536) We; Barbara Crag (1857) We; f.n. Barbara Jones close (1839) We; ?Belles Knott (1859) We; f.n. Bessy bit (1836) We; Bessyboot (1867) Cu; Bessygarth Well (Bessy well garth 1841) We; f.n. Bessyghight (1667) Cu; Burntippet Moor (Brenkibeth 1169) Cu; Catherine Holme (Catherine Holm 1823) We; f.n. Catherine holme (1842) We; st.n. Catherine St (1758) Cu; Catherine-Flatt (1704) We; f.n. Clariceflate (1285–90) We; ?Dina Gill (1859) We; ?Dolly new close (1845) We; ?Dolly Wood We; ?Dollywaggon Pike (Dolly Waggon Pike 1839) We; f.n. Dora’s Field We; Dorothy Bridge (1825) We; ?f.n. Elice croft (1841) We; f.n. Ellen head (1836) We; f.n. Ellen holme (Ellin- 1714) We; f.n. Elsie Meadow (19th) We; ?f.n. Elsy bank & lane (1836) We; f.n. Fanny pickle (1841) We; ?Gillingbrigg (Jillian Brigspike 1603) Cu; f.n. Hannah bower (1836) We; Hannah Close (1809) Cu; Hannah Crag (1859) We; Hannah’s Well We; ?Hannakin (Anykinsyke 1659) La; ?f.n. Ibby croft (1843) We; f.n. Isabell share (1724) Cu; ?f.n. Isla crag (1847) We; f.n. Jane & open Lakah (Lakay 1701) We; f.n. Jannet garth (1839) We; Jeanie Brewster’s Well (1859) We; Jenny Crag Well (6") Cu; ?Jenny Dam (?Jinney orchard 1836) We; f.n. Jenny holme (1707) We; f.n. Jenny well (1814) We; Jenny Well (1841) We; Jennyhill (Jinny Hill 1757) Cu; ?f.n. Jennyng hill (1604) We; f.n. Joansike (1603) Cu; ?Julian Holme (Julianholm 1365) Cu; f.n. Katy parrock We; f.n. ?Lil(l)y bed & garth (1836) We; ?Lily Mere (1865) We; ?Lily Wood (Lilly Wood 1857) We; f.n. Lucy Park head (1687; Lucyparke maner 1394) Cu; Lusty Close (Lucye Close 1590) Cu; ?Lyllye Dubbz (1582) We; Mab Well (1712) We; ?f.n. Mabby mire (1843) We; Mabil Cross (Mabilecross 1228) Cu; Madge Gill (1836) We; f.n. Madge Mire (1886) Cu; ?f.n. Magglands Gapp (1687) Cu; f.n. Margarett Tarne (1578) Cu; Margate Cross (Margaret Cross 1859) We; f.n. Margery hole (1799) We; f.n. Mariery Close (Miory close 1530, Margerie Close 1608) Cu; f.n. Marjerry rane (1839) We; Mary Bank We;
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f.n. Mary croft (1842) We; f.n. Mary dale (1839) We; f.n. Mary lands (1841) We; f.n. Mary mire (1835) We; f.n. Marydykes (1859) Cu; f.n. Marylands (1839) We; f.n. Maud ridding (Moldridding 1693) Cu; Maud’s Pool (Mawdespole 1523) We; f.n. Maud’s Slack Sike (Maudslakke 1613) We; f.n. Maudlin acre (1709) Cu; Maudsike (molde sike, malde sike 1578) Cu; ?Maudy Lane (1859) We; Maulds Meaburn (Mai-, Mayburne Hy I, c.1200; -Mauld(is), -Maulds c.1210) We; Mawdesley (de Madesle 1219) La; f.n. Meg Hill (c.1840) Cu; Meg’s Well (6") Cu; Megbeck Well (1857) We; f.n. Meggarth (1656) Cu; ?f.n. Morden Close (Mawky coss al. Carlton close 1578) Cu; Nan Bielde Pass (Nan Bield 1823) We; f.n. Nan Crook (1734) Cu; f.n. Nan garth (1843) We; Nannypie Lane (1857) We; Old Molly’s Well La; ?f.n. Paint Ann (1836) We; ?Pavey Ark (1780) We; Peg Huck Well (1859) We; ?Peg Slack (1859) We; ?Peg Sleddale (1843) We; ?Pegbank Lane (Peg bank 1843) We; Peggy Tarn (Peggy tarn & brow 1836) We; Peggy’s Bridge Cu; ?f.n. Peykyttoc (c.1165) Cu; f.n. Potpurnall (1584[1647]) Cu; ?f.n. Sally gate (1840) We; ?Sally Hill (1774) Cu; f.n. Sara crofie (Seray Crofie 1538) Cu; Sarah Beck & Gill (1857) We; ?f.n. Sibb tarn (1580) We; ?f.n. Sibby Close (1690) Cu; ?f.n. Sibhagg (c.1584) We; f.n. Sible Croft (1300–15) We; Stangana (Stangana Moss 1837) We; f.n. Sue Craft (1744) Cu; Till’s Hole (Tillzhole 1578) We; f.n. Winnie Seymour Cu

2. Dedications
f.n. Abbs Well (1759) We; f.n. Abbs Well (1838) We; f.n. Agnes Well (1601) Cu; f.n. Annas Cross (1859) We; f.n. Annas Well, -banke (1614) We; Annat Walls (Annattwalles 1631) Cu; Anne’s Well (Anniewell 1694) We; Annet-well (c.1690) We; f.n. Annottwell (1540) Cu; Bridekirk (Bridekirk(e) c.1210) Cu; f.n. Crosflat, sicum de Maydane Cross (c.1210) Cu; Diana’s Temple (1857) We; f.n. fons sancte Helene (c.1225) Cu; f.n. fontem Susanne (c.1210) Cu; f.n. fontis Sanctæ Elenæ (c.1233) Cu; Islekirk Hall (Hermitorium Sce’ Hylde ... 1215) Cu; Kirkbridge (Chirchbebrid 1163) Cu; f.n. le Ladies Lands (le Lady Lande 1605) Cu; f.n. Lady acre (1843) We; Lady Beck (1859) We; f.n. the Lady Holme (c.1500) Cu; f.n. Lady Holme (als. St Mary Holme 1777) We; Lady Lands (1822) Cu; Lady Well (1777) We; f.n. Lady Well (1859) We; Lady Well We; f.n. Lady-Well (1777) We; f.n. le Ladybandes [sic] (1634) Cu; f.n. Ladylands Ford (1786) Cu; Ladylands Lane (6") Cu; le Ladyswell (1528) We; f.n. le Leuedy crosse
(1332) We; Mary-Keld (or S. Mary’s well) (1705) Cu; St Anne’s Hospital
(‘the hospital of St Anne of Appleby’ 1661) We; St Bees Head (Berk 1261;
saincte bees hade 1523) Cu; St Bridget Beckermet (Bechermet c.1130, St
Bridget’s Beckermet 1642) Cu; St Catherine’s (St Katheren Brow 1646)
We; f.n. St Ellen the Old (1794) Cu; St Helens (capella Sancte Elene 1342)
Cu; St Helens (Sct Elyus chap. 1577) La; f.n. Saint Helen’s Cu; st.n. St
Helen’s St (Sanct Elyns gaitt 1540) Cu; St Helen’s Well (1703) We; St
Mary’s Chapel (‘the chapel (Chapell) of Marieholm(e)’ 1334) We; St
Mary’s Church (‘the chapel of St. Mary’ 1186–1200) We; St Mary’s
Church (Mallerstang Chapel 1656) We; St Mary’s Holme (Marieholm(e)
1334) We; St Mary’s Holme (Sancte Maryholme 1537) Cu; f.n. St Mary’s
Well (1777) We; St Mary’s Well (1777) We; Thanet Well (n.d.) Cu

3. Others
Barrow Wife Hill (1851) La; f.n. Benson wife close (1735) We; Bracken
Wife Knotts We; f.n. Bride Mead (1605) Cu; f.n. Bride’s meadow (1836)
We; Bull Pot of the Witches (Bullpot 1823) We; Carling Gill (Carlingill
1614) We; Carling Knott Cu; Carling Stone (6”) Cu; Carlingwha (Carling
whaw 1710) We; f.n. Carrington hole (1770) We; Catlowdy (Kackledy
1275) Cu; Countess Pillar (Countess(’s) Pillar 1787) We; f.n. Countesses
land (1840) We; Curling Steps (Karlingheved 1186–1200) We; f.n.
Daughter (1843) We; Deadwin Clough (Dedequenclogh 1324) La;
Fishcarling Head (1770) We; Fisher’s Wife’s Rake Cu; f.n. Gowen wife
close (1843) We; Hodge Wife Gill La; f.n. Kerlingsik (c.1250) Cu; f.n.
slosh (1843) We; f.n. Kitty Went Head (?1737) Cu; Kyttycrag (1847) We;
f.n. Ladies (1843; ?Lady ings 1690) We; Ladies Table (1867) Cu; f.n. Lady
crooks (1841) We; f.n. Lady Fitts (1844) We; f.n. Lady Flatt (1748) Cu;
Lady Hall (Ladye hall 1604) Cu; f.n. Lady Hills Quarry (1794) Cu; f.n.
Lady ing We; f.n. Lady Lowther’s Well (1859) We; f.n. Lady mosse
(1605) Cu; Lady Sike (1859) We; Lady Syke (Lady Sikes in Cartmel 1728/9)
La; Lady Wood (1847) We; f.n. Lady’s-leap (1784) Cu; Lady’s Pillar (1777)
We; Lady’s Rake (1794) Cu; Lady’s Seat (1859) We; f.n. Ladybank (1699)
We; f.n. Ladye mosse (1589) Cu; f.n. Ladye Scale (1586) Cu; f.n. the ladye
side browe (1589) Cu; Ladyford (le Lady Forud 1507) We; f.n. Ladyside
(1691) We; Ladyside Pike (1867) Cu; f.n. Levedibuthes (c.1210) Cu; Long
Meg and her Daughters (Meg with hir daughters ... long meg 1601) Cu;
Lovelady Shield (*Loveladyesheild* 1632) Cu; f.n. Maiden acre (1841) We; Maiden Holme (1859) We; Maiden Moor (1839) Cu; f.n. Maiden reign (1841) We; Maiden Way (*Maydengathe* c.1179) We; st.n. *Maiden Lane* oth. *Lovers Lane* (1802) Cu; Maiden Way (1859) We; Maidenhill (*Maidenhill* 1821) Cu; f.n. *Maidinrig* (c.1240) We; f.n. Madam Banks (1886) Cu; ?May Crag (1867) Cu; f.n. Mother Brows (1809) Cu; Nunclose (*le Nunneclose* 1338) Cu; f.n. *the Nunfiled* (1686) Cu; Nunfield (*Nunfield* 1794) Cu; Nunnery Beck We; Nunsclough (*Nunsclough* c.1560) Cu; Nunwick Hall (*Nunwick Hall* 1816) Cu; f.n. Old wife moss (1842) We; Old Woman Playing the Organ We; Pembroke House We; Portinscale (*Porqueneschal* c.1160) Cu; st.n. Queen St (1758) Cu; Queen’s Hames (*quernshamis* 1367) Cu; f.n. *Quinnefel* (c.1245) Cu; Raswraget (*Roswrageth* c.1169) Cu; Rigmaden Fm (*Rig(g)maiden* 1255) We; f.n. Rowley wife (1836) We; f.n. *Shepherd wife* (1838) We; f.n. Widdy wife wood (1836) We; ?Widow Hause (1867) Cu; Willie Wife Moor (*Willy-wife-moore* c.1692) We; f.n. Willy wife close (1836) We; f.n. Wilson wife close (1836) We