

Maiden Castle, Geoffrey of Monmouth and Hārūn al-Rašīd

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Introduction

Most place-names in Britain consist of descriptive phrases created by speakers of Celtic languages, of English, or of Scandinavian, to apply to topographical or ecological features, to habitation-sites, or to modifications of the landscape made by farmers or overlords. Most of them, therefore, if not exactly trite, are dull in the sense of being descriptively true of the places they denote and therefore, from one perspective, etymologically unsurprising. That is often taken as a guiding principle by place-name scholars: if a proposed solution to an etymologically problematic name is exotic, it is viewed with suspicion, and even the claimed presence of an element not previously discovered in a name may provoke doubts. There are small categories of exceptions to this. The map occasionally shows place-names copied from elsewhere, including abroad, such as *Brighton* in Cornwall, *Etruria* in Staffordshire, *Jericho* and *Blenheim* in Oxfordshire, *St John's Jerusalem* in Kent, *Portobello* in Edinburgh and *Pimlico* in London; in the case of *Westward Ho!* in Devon, the copying is from the title-page of Charles Kingsley's novel, complete with the exclamation mark. Some names for inhabited places are simple reapplications of the names of people or of inns: *Fitzwilliam* (Yorkshire, West Riding), *Telford* (Shropshire), *Macduff* (Banffshire), *Peterlee* (County Durham); *Three Cocks* (Breconshire), *New Invention* and *Craven Arms* (Shropshire), *Blue Anchor* (Somerset), *Saracen's Head* (Lincolnshire). Place-names in England, at least, do not often show signs of the namer's judgement or evaluation of the site; *Nantwich* (Cheshire; Middle English for 'the famous Wich') is a rarity of a type normally found only among the post-Conquest French name-types exemplified by *Belmont* 'beautiful hill' or *Malpas* 'bad ford or passage'. Apparent exotica may be the fruits of linguistic rationalization or regular change; *Ljóðhús* 'song

house' is what the Vikings made of the obscure name they found in use by the inhabitants of the Hebridean island of Lewis, and *Good Easter* in Essex is the more or less expected outcome in Modern English of the Old English name meaning 'Godgiefu's [place called] Sheepfold (OE *eowestre*)'.¹

It is against such a background that the claims I make below need to be set. I argue there is a category of names whose immediate source is literary, and whose more remote history is even more exotic. It is rare indeed that one is able to increase the stock of untypically glamorous place-names by adding a whole new type, or rather, in this case, a small set of sub-types, with thirty or so members.

The present work is about the origin of the English place-name type *Maiden Castle* (and some close relatives), which recurs frequently, but with an uneven distribution, in various parts of Britain, and is recorded from the twelfth century onwards. It is one of a range of name-types apparently including the word *maiden*. Scholars would not normally recommend singling out a particular set of facts from a larger pattern and devising a special unrelated explanation for them. In the case I want to present, though, it seems legitimate to do this for two reasons. First, it has not been securely established that all the names fitting the larger pattern really are comparable: no-one has produced a satisfactory unifying account of all those English names whose first element is *maiden*.² Second, I believe that a single account can be given of the

¹ The claims in this paragraph can be checked in such sources as K. Cameron, *English Place Names*, new edn (London, 1996); V. Watts, *The Cambridge Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Cambridge, 2004; hereafter *CDEPN*); W. F. H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names*, new edn (Edinburgh, 2001); and the county volumes of the Survey of English Place-Names listed in appendix 2 of this article.

² See C. A. Hough, 'Place-name evidence relating to the interpretation of Old English legal terminology', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 27 (1996), 19–48. This study assembles all the data known in 1996 and discusses the problems of their interpretation. Much of this data is derived from the volumes of the Survey of English Place-Names (1923–; see n. 1), which are cited in the present article, after the first mention, using the abbreviation *PN* + the conventional abbreviation of the name of the relevant English county. Still more *maidens* have been unearthed through the kindness of scholars who are acknowledged below. Hough's article

name-type *Maiden Castle* and some closely-related ones which makes sense from the perspectives of historical geography, cultural history and onomastics. My account is not completely watertight—it depends on a proposition whose truth or falsity cannot be known for sure, and small pieces of the jigsaw are missing—but I think it models the geographical, chronological and cultural profile of the name well, and it seems justified to engage in constructive speculation to fill in the gaps. The article has as a more general sub-text the idea that literature has had an impact on medieval place-naming in Britain, and perhaps elsewhere. A problem needing to be addressed from time to time is the fact that such names—in many regions, as we shall see—are prone to attract an extra layer of folkloric explanation.

The use of striking expressions as place-names in popular literary works may encourage their application in the real world. How many houses called *Bleak House*, *Shangri-La*, *Rivendell* and *Toad Hall* have there been? (In the *Ordnance Survey gazetteer* (2nd edn), there are fifteen *Bleak Houses*, I suspect the tip of the iceberg. As for the others, I have met them all personally, for instance in Cleethorpes, Cuckfield and Brighton respectively, and the last is also the present name of the former poor-house in Wivenhoe.³) A study of *Coldharbour* suggested that a particular single instance of the name could have been a source of copycat naming when the conditions were appropriate,⁴ and whilst there exist a significant number of literary mentions of this name from the period of its multiplication (the 1590s onwards), the author refrained from suggesting that literature definitely could be the vehicle for its

updates the summary state of the art report given in A. H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, 2 vols, English Place-Name Society, 25–26 (Cambridge, 1956; hereafter *EPNE*), 2, 31–32. For *castle*, see D. N. Parsons and T. Styles, *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names (Brace-Cæster)* (Nottingham, 2000; hereafter *VEPN*], pp. 145–48, s.v. *castel*; this supersedes the entry in *EPNE* 1, 81–82, which incorrectly claims that there was a British word **castello-* giving rise to Welsh and Cornish words which are in fact borrowings from Norman French, or arguably Latin.

³ See also J. Miles, *Owl's Hoot: How People Name their Houses* (London, 2000), pp. 71–77.

⁴ R. Coates, 'Coldharbour—for the last time?', *Nomina*, 8 (1984), 73–78.

spread; this was because conversation about the place itself is more likely to have been the vehicle. However, in the case of the recurrent minor name *Mockbeggar* (*Hall*), where there is no evidence of a real place being so called before it appears in literature, the probabilities are inverted. There may well be a literary source, namely a mention in John Taylor the Water-Poet's *The Water-Cormorant* (1622), or possibly in one of a couple of slightly earlier works by less self-advertising figures of the Jacobean period such as Thomas Gainsford or Edward Sharpham.⁵

Armed with these instances from the (early-)modern period to show that there has been literary impact on minor place-naming, I shall suggest that the proximate source of *Maiden Castle* is to be found in medieval literature, and also that it has an interesting and exotic remote source. I shall back this up by suggesting that at least one further English place-name, a lost variant name of Caistor, Lincolnshire, is due to the same literary source (as the recurrent minor name *Troy Town* has previously been shown to be), and, briefly, that the popularity of a further name-type, *Beaurepaire*, can be ascribed to a different but comparable medieval literary source.

⁵ Gainsford, in *The Rich Cabinet Furnished with Varietie of Excellent Descriptions* (London, 1616), gives an understanding of the term *mock-beggar* in an elaborate simile for an impoverished gentleman, but Taylor actually uses it in a place-name cawed out by jackdaws, *Mockbegger Manour*. Sharpham is the first who is known for certain to have used the word in the relevant sense, in a little-known play, *Cupids Whirligig* (London, 1607), but I have no reason to believe this was influential. There is a mistaken usage of John Florio's in the 1590s which testifies to the word's earlier existence if not to its meaning. For the relevant quotations, see *OED-2*, s.v. *mock*, 5. These considerations suggest to me that Taylor's work was the vehicle for the spread of the place-name. Seven instances still remain in the *OS Gazetteer*, six of them in the south-east of England, strongly hinting that it emanated from London, where Taylor was a prominent waterman. Gainsford is also a possible source, since he was a well-known newsbook editor in the early 1620s; on his life and work see Nicholas Brownlees, 'Thomas Gainsford and the Creation of Newspaper Discourse (1622–24)', paper read to the ninth conference of *Storia della Lingua Inglese* (1999). Abstract available online at University of Bergamo website, dinamico.unibg.it/anglistica/slin/9th-conf-abstracts.htm (visited 18/10/2004).

I shall conclude the article by considering two ideas with very different types of significance: (1) that the history of the name *Maiden Castle* illuminates the source of one of the most significant and enduring topoi in western literature, and (2) that the most important Latin base-word in the story, for which no satisfactory etymology has so far been established, could be a borrowing from a Semitic (Afroasiatic) language, and that it in its turn is the source of the most important Semitic word in the story.

Maiden Castle

The name-type has not so far received a completely satisfactory explanation, although it has been much discussed and sometimes treated as if properly explained (but with some openness of interpretation). It is not enough to give an etymological analysis. As we shall see, at that level its origin is obvious: it is ‘castle of the maidens’, in Middle English. We must also try to discover why the name was in fashion at the time it was in fashion, and what motivated its application to the places it names. Despite the current inconclusive state of scholarship on the problem, I believe that all the elements necessary for an acceptable formal interpretation and a culturally satisfying explanation have already been mentioned in scholarly literature, and that they only need to be arranged and brought into causal connection with each other for the story behind its origin to become clear.

Let us clear the ground by disposing of a philological analysis which is definitely wrong. It has been suggested that the first element is of Celtic origin, and amounts to something like Romano-British **Magodūnum*, which might be understood as meaning ‘market fort’ (cf. the Celtic element **-magos* ‘place’, taken as implying ‘market’, as seen in the Romano-British name *Noviomagus* ‘Chichester’). I am not sure who is responsible for this opinion. (I confess to having expected to find it in William Barnes’s *Notes on Ancient Britain and the Britons*, but although he often mentions Maiden Castle, the Dorset hillfort, in this work he nowhere offers an etymology.)⁶ The **Magodūnum*

⁶ W. Barnes, *Notes on Ancient Britain and the Britons* (London, 1858). On p. 139, however, he tells us what *Maiden Castle* was not, etymologically. But for a

solution is formally possible, and it has been seized on by amateur commentators.⁷ The theory is also alluded to on Edinburgh City Council's web-site: "This name [i.e. *Maiden Castle* as a name for Edinburgh Castle Rock] was probably a corruption of a Gaelic or Brythonic name sounding like 'Maiden' but meaning something else."⁸ The true significance of the Edinburgh name transcends the philological error, as we shall see. The name-form **Magodūnum* has also been claimed to underlie *Mauzun*, *Medan*, *Mehun* and *Meung* in the départements of Puy-de-Dôme, Seine-et-Oise, Cher and Loiret respectively, France,⁹ and also *Meduno* in Friulia, Italy, there interpreted simply as 'luogo fortificato ["fortified place"]'.¹⁰

The **Magodūnum* theory falls down in important respects. Firstly, the common name-type *Maiden Castle* is not recorded for certain before the twelfth century anywhere, making underground survival of its first element since the fifth, sixth or seventh quite unlikely. Secondly, it turns up mainly in English-language contexts, i.e. in places where English is likely to have been the dominant language at the time almost all of the relevant names were bestowed (with one possible exception in Wales). Thirdly, no archaeological or documentary evidence of anything that could be called a trading-place has been found associated with any of the sites; many are very remote, and not a few are quite insignificant and have yielded no archaeological finds at all. Fourthly, it is surprising that there are no proven Continental Celtic instances of

suggestion about an Irish cognate, see K. Meyer, 'Mtir. *Mag-dūn* n. Zur Keltischen Wortkunde, V', in *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1914), pp. 630–42.

⁷ See, e.g., an ambiguous passage in W. Addison, *Understanding English Place-Names* (London, 1978), p. 27, and many touristic and New-Age web-sites.

⁸ www.geo.ed.ac.uk/home/tour/edincrest.html (no date; visited 18/05/2005). The coat of arms has a maiden as its supporter dexter.

⁹ A. Dauzat and C. Rostaing, *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de lieux en France*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1978), pp. 443, 445; for the second of these also R. Soullignac, *Les Calètes dans la région de Fécamp: du deuxième siècle avant Jésus-Christ au neuvième siècle* (Fécamp, 1980), p. 22.

¹⁰ A. Di Spere, 'Meduno', *Lenghe.net: il portâl de lenghe furlane*, at www.lenghe.net/read_art.php?art_id=667 (20/09/2004; visited 03/10/2004).

**Magodūnum* if it was abundant in Britain,¹¹ and fifthly its very abundance makes it unlikely that it belongs with the fairly sparse known Celtic names in England where there is little evidence of duplication, let alone of the apparent survival rate in the region of twenty that I shall illustrate shortly. (Of course it is possible that there was just one original Celtic name and all the others are transferred applications of that dating from different periods; let the reader evaluate this after considering the alternative set out below.) Sixthly, there is no independent *Maiden* as a place-name; this would have been the expected reflex of **Magodūnum*. Only the third and sixth of these points are close to a knock-down argument against the **Magodūnum* solution, but all six taken together make a formidable array. It is fairly clear why this doomed possibility might have been proposed in the first place: the most prominent instance of the name is that of the great fort at Winterborne St Martin outside Dorchester (Dorset; Ordnance Survey N[ational] G[rid] R[eference] SY 6688), which is by far the best-known, biggest and most “town”-like of all the places denoted; William Barnes called it “[the Britons’] original hill-city”.¹² Its heyday can be placed archaeologically in the Celtic Iron Age in southern England.¹³ But as we shall see, the name is a latecomer in Winterborne St Martin, and the Celtic analysis is unconvincing even for this place, not least because we probably know its actual (Romano-)British name: *Durnovaria*. Rivet and Smith cite a speculation of William J. Watson (though the reference they give, “Watson 1926: 488”, is in error) that *Durnovaria* originally denoted Maiden Castle,¹⁴ but the etymology

¹¹ The claims about names in France mentioned in the text are based on reconstructions from medieval documentary forms of the type <Magdunum>, whose latinity might be questioned, not on secure documentary evidence of their existence in Gaul in the Roman period.

¹² W. Barnes, ‘A dissertation on the Dorset dialect of the English Language’, in *Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect, with a Dissertation and Glossary*, 1st edn (London, 1844).

¹³ R. E. M. Wheeler, *Maiden Castle, Dorset* (Oxford, 1943; for the Society of Antiquaries).

¹⁴ A. L. F. Rivet and C. Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London, 1979; hereafter *PNRB*), p. 345.

which they offer instead of his rules out that possibility since they believe the obscure second element may be a word denoting water and is therefore best taken as referring to the site of the adjacent Roman city of Dorchester, by the river Frome. Recently, however, Andrew Breeze has correctly drawn attention to the weakness of the evidence for the “water”-word they rely on, and he suggests that the second element is really a word related to Welsh *gwar* ‘nape of the neck; place just above and behind something, upper part, brink, verge, margin’.¹⁵ If that is so, and it is not certain, then as Breeze notes there is no objection to the name’s originally denoting Maiden Castle and migrating, with the centre of population itself, to the riverside. Wachter suggests instead that the hillfort was the *Doúinion/Dunium* in Ptolemy’s *Geography*,¹⁶ but there is no strong evidence in favour of this, and *Dunium* is now more widely believed to have been the fort at Hod Hill in Stourpaine, also in Dorset.¹⁷ The continuing popularity of the theory is no doubt due to the use of the name *Mai Dun* for a fictionalized Maiden Castle just outside Casterbridge in Thomas Hardy’s novel about its mayor¹⁸ and previously in a short story first entitled “Ancient Earthworks and What Two Enthusiastic Scientists Found Therein”, serialized in the *Detroit Post* in 1885. I have not been able to ascertain where Hardy got the idea from (see above), but it must have been current in and on the edge of academic circles in the 1880s.¹⁹ Those

¹⁵ A. Breeze, ‘Durnovaria, the Roman name of Dorchester’, *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*, 35 (2001), 69–72.

¹⁶ J. Wachter, *The Towns of Roman Britain*, 2nd edn (London, 1995), p. 323; Ptolemy, *Geography*, 2.3.13, presented in *PNRB*, p. 144.

¹⁷ *PNRB*, pp. 145, 344; A. D. Mills, *The Place-Names of Dorset*, vols 1–3 [ongoing], English Place-Name Society, 52, 53, 59/60 (Nottingham, 1977– ; hereafter *PN Do*), II, 117.

¹⁸ T. Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (London, 1886), e.g. ch. 43.

¹⁹ This short story later appeared in the *English Illustrated Magazine* (December 1893, 281–88), and then again under the title ‘A Tryst at an Ancient Earthwork’ in the collection *A Changed Man, and Other Tales* (1913). John Ireland also published a symphonic rhapsody called *Mai Dun* in 1920–21, drawing atmospherically on the Dorset Maiden Castle as portrayed by Hardy. A still earlier, but undated, poem by Hardy in *Wessex Poems* (1898), ‘The Alarm’, calls the place

who adhere to this theory generally interpret *Mai Dun* as ‘great hill’, presumably thinking of words with the root **mag-* in various languages such as Latin *magnus*. Scottish amateurs may refer to Gaelic *maith dún*, supposedly also ‘large fort’ (actually ‘good’, but equally bad). Other completely untenable ideas about ancestral forms and their interpretation may be found in popular books and electronic resources, and it is unnecessary to dispose of them here.

There are eleven places called *Maiden Castle* in the *Ordnance Survey Gazetteer of Britain*:²⁰ three independent of each other in Cumbria (NGRs NY 185054, NY 441223 and NY 871132), and one each in the modern counties or regions of Cheshire, Dorset, Dyfed, Fife, Grampian, North Yorkshire, Strathclyde and Tayside. There is also one in the city of Durham on current maps, and further instances can be found in North Yorkshire at Grinton and in Cumbria at Lowside Quarter. One near Falkirk (Central) and a further one in Fife (at Collessie, Ladybank) are mentioned in *PN Cu*,²¹ and the first has been recovered from *RCAHMS*.²² Five others, in Edinburgh (the second most famous) and Lasswade (both Lothian), Markinch (Fife—perhaps the third most famous), near Dollar (Clackmannanshire) and at Kirkby Thore (Cumbria), are lost from most medium-scale modern maps. That makes twenty-one known examples in all. Here is the full list, with references to

“grim *Mai-Don*”. John Cowper Powys wrote a novel *Maiden Castle* (published in an expurgated form in 1936), which perpetuated literary interest in the place into the 1930s but abandoned the onomastic fantasy of Hardy, though Powys allowed one of his characters—a conservative critic of modern archaeology—to use the invented scholarly name, and allowed others to play with it after it is introduced. Indulging the “maiden” theme to the hilt, Powys’s hero “mingled the curves of [Mona’s] ’lurin’ figure with the valla and fossae of Maiden Castle”. See *John Cowper Powys, Maiden Castle*, edited by I. Hughes (Cardiff, 1990), pp. 230, 475.

²⁰ *CDEPN*, p. 393, says fourteen, but three are duplicates or names reapplied from adjacent features.

²¹ *PN Cu* 256. Readers are reminded that the full list of EPNS volumes cited in this article is given in appendix 2.

²² The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), *Stirlingshire: An Inventory of the Ancient Monuments* (Edinburgh, 1963). The RCAHMS’s updated archaeological records are now available online under the name of *Canmore*, through www.rcahms.gov.uk (visited frequently).

volumes of the Survey of English Place-Names (in the form *PN* + county abbreviation; see appendix 2) and other sources, the NGR, and the type of place or object the name denotes (where known), arranged chronologically by the date of the earliest known mention of each:

- Maiden Castle in Saxton (*PN YWR* 4: 70–71), site not precisely located but in Hugh Smith’s well-substantiated view probably associated with the prehistoric linear earthwork complex including Becca Banks at nearby Aberford, SE 423382–431376 (*Maidencastell* 1173, *Maidanecastell* 1175 x 1186)
- *Maidene/Maydene Castel*, later *Maiden Castle* in various spellings, a lost name for Edinburgh Rock and/or Castle (Watson;²³ NT 271735); in this English rendering of the name, for the first time, *c.*1200 in Lawman’s *Brut* (MS. A, l. 1340; MS. B, l. 1262),²⁴ and with interesting antecedents; see further below on the significance of this
- Maidencastle in Watermillock (*PN Cu* 255–56; NY 451253), “ancient fort or encampment” (*Maydencastel* 1285)
- Maiden Castle in Stainmore, Brough (*PN We* 2: 71–72; NY 871132), denoting a Roman fortlet (name on record *Mayden castel* 1292 but it may not refer to this place; otherwise earliest reference *Mayden castel(l)* in Leland’s *Itinerary c.*1540²⁵)

²³ W. J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926), pp. 150, 341–42.

²⁴ Lawman [Layamon], *Brut* (MSS Otho and Caligula). Text available online through the website of the Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library, etext.lib.virginia.edu/ (visited 08/10/2004).

²⁵ *John Leland’s Itinerary*, edited by J. Chandler (Stroud, 1993): “Mayden Castell, where now is nothings but a hille diked” (XI, fo. 69b; Chandler 5/146–47). There is a more extended reference to, and description of, *Maiden Castel* in VII, fo. 116 (Chandler 4/25–33): “There is a place an viii. mile plaine west from Bowis [Bowes, Co. Durham] a thorough-fare in Richemontshire [Richmondshire in Yorkshire], cawllid Maiden Castel, where is a greate rounde hepe a 60. foote in compace of rude stones, sum smawl, some bygge, and be set in formam pyramidis: and yn the toppe of them al ys set one stone in conum, beyng a yard and a half in lengthh.”

There is then a gap till early-modern times, but it is impossible to say whether or not this is due to the hazard of the survival and publication of records.

- Maiden Castle on Duniface Hill, Markinch (Fife; *RCAHMS-Canmore* record;²⁶ NO 3495 0152), a “medieval hill-mote” traditionally associated with Macduff, Thane of Fife, and sometimes called the *Castle of Kennoway* because it is close to that village; Hector Boece²⁷ describes it as surrounded by seven ramparts and ditches and as the remains of the place where for a long time lived the descendants of the “illustrious” Macduff; it is alluded to also in a reference to “ane hous standand at the west fuyt of the Madyn Castell” (1556)
- Maiden Castle in Eskdale (*PN Cu* 392; NY 185054); no ancient earthwork is known here; recorded 1587, but the name is currently applied to a cairn at NY 185054
- Maiden Castle at Falkland (Fife; NO 221068; mentioned *PN Cu* 256), prehistoric fort on Lomond Hills; *Madincastell* 1602, *Maiden Castle* 1757²⁸
- Maiden Castle in Winterborne St Martin (*PN Do* 1: 377; ST 6688), the famous Iron Age hillfort referred to above, probably the original bearer of the name *Durnovaria* that later attached to the Roman town of Dorchester, some two miles north-east (first record 1607 *Maiden-castle* in Camden’s *Britannia*;²⁹ *Castle Way*, alluding to it, does not appear in the record till 1615; Mills³⁰ analyses medieval Dorchester local names of the type *Burledon* as

²⁶ RCAHMS, *Eleventh Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Fife [etc.]* (Edinburgh, 1933), monument no. 421.

²⁷ Hector Boece [Boethius], *Scotorum Historiæ a Prima Gentis Origine* (Paris, 1526), book 10, fo. ccv, verso.

²⁸ See also Lieut.-Col. [given-name not known] Miller, ‘An Inquiry Respecting the Site of the Battle of Mons Grampius [sic]’, *Archæologia Scotica*, 4 (1857), 19–52, *Maiden Castle* on pp. 34–35.

²⁹ W. Camden, *Britannia* (London, 1607), hypertext edition by D. F. Sutton, available at www.philological.bham.ac.uk/cambrit, posted 14/06/2004 (visited 26/10/2004). [The Dorset chapter is at /dorsetlat.html.]

³⁰ *PN Do* 1, 361.

containing an earlier reference to the earthwork using the OE/ME word *burg*, and if that is right it confirms that the current name is an invention probably of about Camden's time)

- Maiden Castle in Bickerton, Malpas (*PN Ch* 4: 4–5; SJ 497528), an Iron Age hillfort (1710 *the Maiden Tower*, therefore a late renaming to conform to the more general pattern)³¹
- *Maiden Castle* (lost) in Kirkby Thore; the village is the site of the Roman fort Bravoniacum (*PN We* 2: 119), but the name *Maiden Castle* attached to a site at Low Abbey (1823; NY 651272); cf. also in same township *Maborough Castle* (on which type of name see below), an old entrenchment east of Whelp Castle (i.e. Bravoniacum itself), the relation, if any, between these two being unknown; probably also alluded to locally in the modern name of the Roman road *Maiden Way* (Margary no. 84,³² the modern A65; see below)
- (The) Maiden Castle at Lasswade (Midlothian, sometimes rather loosely described as at Roslin; NT 2867 6440; *RCAHMS*),³³ possible motte and bailey, but uncertain; no early forms known but apparently recorded with this name since at least 1845
- Maiden Castle at Collessie (Fife; mentioned *PN Cu* 256; NO 276128), no early forms known but it had this name in the nineteenth century; not now believed to be a significant antiquity: “probably a plantation bank or stock enclosure”, information from Dr K. A. Steer (*RCAHMS*) to OS 1 November 1956, from record in *RCAHMS-Canmore*;³⁴ it, or a similar feature close by,³⁵ was

³¹ J. Milln and J. Taylor, ‘Maiden Castle, Bickerton: research and repair of a hillfort’, *Cheshire History*, 37 (1997–98), 5–10.

³² I. D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain*, 3rd edn (London, 1973), pp. 393–94.

³³ *RCAHMS, Tenth Report with Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the Counties of Midlothian and West Lothian* (Edinburgh, 1929), no. 148; in Roslin “on the banks of the [North] Esk”, according to D. MacRitchie, ‘Notes on the words *men* and *maiden* in British topography’, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 32 (1898), 158–66 (p. 161).

³⁴ *RCAHMS, Fife*, monument no. 112 (see n. 26).

³⁵ F. H. Groome, *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland: a Survey of Scottish Topography, Statistical, Biographical and Historical*, new edn (London (etc.), 1894–95),

also previously known by the enigmatic name *Agabatha* (perhaps Gaelic *ag/aig a' bhàthach* 'at/near the byre')

- Maiden Castle in Durham city³⁶ (NZ 283418), earthwork, connection with Roman site of Old Durham possible, but the most recent excavators judge it to be medieval;³⁷ no really early forms known but mapped as such c.1860
- The Maiden Castle (lost?), near Dollar (Clackmannanshire; NN 969006); this place is on the OS 6'' map of 1866. It is recorded by Sir John Rhÿs in his *Celtic Folklore* as follows:

Glendevon is a parish and village in the Ochils in County Perth, about five miles from Dollar as you come up Glen Queich and down to Gloomhill. Glen Queich is a narrowish glen between two grassy hills; at the top of the glen is a round hill of no great height, but very neat in shape, the grass of which is always short and trim, and the ferns on the shoulder of a very marked green. This, as you come up the glen, seems entirely to block the way. It is called the 'Maiden Castle'. Only when you came quite close do you see the path winding round the foot of it. A little further on is a fine spring bordered with flat stones in the middle of a neat, turf spot, called 'Maiden's Well'.³⁸

This is a more than a little confusing. The place is nearer to Dollar than to Glendevon; and Glen Quey is meant, not Glen Queich, which is a short distance away to the north-east. The hill itself is currently mapped as *Hillfoot Hill*, as it was in 1866, and on its eastern flank is Castleton Farm, which may or may not carry a reference to Maiden Castle. On the 1866 map, *Maiden Castle* appears to denote (or to be associated with) a line of crags

p. 35. Available online at www.electricscotland.com/history/gazetteer/index.htm (created 10/2004; visited 18/11/2004).

³⁶ V. Watts, *A Dictionary of County Durham Place-Names* (Nottingham, 2002), p. 75.

³⁷ M. G. Jarrett, 'Excavations at Maiden Castle, Durham, in 1956', *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*, 11 (1958–65), 124–27.

³⁸ Sir John Rhÿs, *Celtic Folklore*, 1 (Oxford, 1901), p. 156.

in the glen, and not the adjacent hill at all. The crags are on the Perthshire bank of the burn which forms the county boundary. Rhÿs's interest in the place relates to fairies, and they may have been responsible for deluding him.

- Maiden Castle at Falkirk (Stirlingshire; mentioned *PN Cu* 256, *RCAHMS*³⁹ no. 188; NS 8625 7982), no early forms known; this monument was a probable motte of uncertain age, associated with a gap in the Antonine Wall followed by a Roman road, obliterated in 1894
- Maiden Castle at Campsie (Dunbartonshire; NS 643784), motte and bailey; no early forms known,⁴⁰ but mentioned in *PSAS* 32
- Maiden Castle in Arbroath and St Vigeans parish (Angus; NO 668420), promontory fort; no early forms known but it had this name in 1899⁴¹

I have found no mentions dating from before 1900 of the following sites:

- Maiden Castle near Trefgarn/Treffgarne (Pembrokeshire; SM 954249), apparently the name of a crag above a fort, but one might suspect the name has migrated from the fort; no early forms, but we may compare the record for a place which might be either Castell in Dinas parish or Dinas Island Castle in the same parish, which is recorded relatively early in Welsh in the translation-equivalent form *Castell y vorwin* (1583, 1587)⁴²

³⁹ RCAHMS, *Stirlingshire: an Inventory of the Ancient Monuments* (Edinburgh, 1963), monument no. 188.

⁴⁰ MacRitchie, 'Men and maiden', 165 (see n. 33). MacRitchie, on the same page, mentions a possible further example at Dunipace, Stirlingshire, which I have been unable to corroborate and I leave it out of account in this article. It is probably a mistake for Duniface Hill, sometimes called *Dunipace Hill*, Markinch, Fife (see n. 26).

⁴¹ D. Christison, 'The forts, "camps", and other field-works of Perth, Forfar and Kincardine', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 34 (1899–1900), 43–120 [Maiden Castle at St Vigeans/Arbroath on p. 59].

⁴² B. G. Charles, *The Place-Names of Pembrokeshire* (Aberystwyth, 1992), pp. 36, 663.

- Maiden Castle in Grinton, Swaledale (SE 022981; not mentioned in *PN YNR*), Iron Age enclosure uniquely with processional entrance; no early forms known
- Maiden Castle, field of uncertain date in Lowside Quarter (*PN Cu* 414; approx. NY 3527), referring to an unknown feature, no early forms known
- Maiden Castle in Garioch, near Oyne (Aberdeenshire; NJ 693244), currently believed to be the remains of a quarry, of uncertain date, no early forms known

We may doubtfully add:

- *Maydes Castle* (lost) in Aston Subedge (*PN Gl* 1: 233; approx. SP 1341), no feature known, 1667; the local name *The Lynches* (from 1772) suggests the previous existence of cultivation terraces on the steep slopes of The Edge here and in Weston Subedge, and some such works of the hand of man may be referred to by *Maydes Castle*—the slopes are now wooded

The reasons in favour of adding it will become more apparent later.

We must reckon with the possibility that the places called *Maiden Castle* took their names from a scattering of antecedents rather than direct from a single fountainhead. The third possibility, that they were all independently coined from the same linguistic material, will look so implausible in the light of the evidence marshalled below that it is not worth toying with. There is no direct evidence bearing on the question of multiple origin, and where the discussion is framed as presupposing a single source, that is for convenience only. The alternative possibility does not really affect the issue of the import of the name, as it seems likely that all the relevant names can be traced to that single source, and whether directly or indirectly is not the main concern of this paper. That said, it also seems very probable that some of the places acquired their name late; they include features in Scotland now archaeologically interpreted as a stock-enclosure or plantation bank and a quarry which, although of uncertain age, seem to have been named by fanciful antiquarians with some knowledge of the onomastic traditions of

Edinburgh, i.e. it is probable that they date from after the publication of Boece's *Scotorum historiae* in 1526,⁴³ for reasons that will emerge fully below. To be quite clear about the matter: the names probably did not all arise at the same period, and it is pretty obvious that some features must take their name from other features already bearing the same name; transfer or copying has taken place, not re-creation from current English words.

The *Maiden Castles* that have been on record longest are the ones at:

- Saxton (probably associated with the earthworks now called *Becca Banks*, *PN YWR* 4: 70): this was *Maidencastell* 1173,⁴⁴ *Maydanecastell* 1175 x 1186
- Edinburgh c.1200 (Lawman, MS *Otho Maydene Castel*, MS *Caligula Maidene Castel*)⁴⁵
- Watermillock (later called *Caer-Thannock* and the like, *PN Cu* 255–56): *Mayden Castel* 1285); this may also be the “castle of the Maidens in the King’s forest of Engilwode [i.e. Inglewood]” mentioned slightly earlier in a calendared inquisition *ad quod damnum* of 1268⁴⁶ which is not in *PN Cu*
- possibly Stainmore (*PN We* 2: 71), *Mayden castel* 1292

The slightly later spelling for the place in Saxton clearly contains the Middle English associative (genitive) plural of the word *maiden*, as does the mention in Lawman’s *Brut*. These are the forms that guarantee the proposed etymology. None of the other places, not even that in Dorset, appears in the record before the later sixteenth century. Of none of the other names can we be certain that the first element was originally in the plural, but the plurality of the earliest mentions will be taken as evidence that the original name-form was plural and that

⁴³ See n. 27.

⁴⁴ Wheeler, *Maiden Castle*, p. 9.

⁴⁵ Lawman, *Brut* (see n. 24).

⁴⁶ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland Preserved in Her Majesty’s Public Record Office, London*, 1: 1108–1272, edited by J. Bain (London, 1881), doc. 2487.

apparently singular forms are evidence for the later loss of the number-distinction (due to phonetic attrition) rather than for an alternative original form with a singular specifier.

The reasons for the existence, and the frequency, of the name *Maiden Castle* have been much debated, and scholarship has stabilized with competing theories coexisting.⁴⁷ It has been thought to mean ‘fortress so strong it could be defended even by girls’, ‘fortress never captured (i.e. “taken”, in the sexual metaphor) or not capturable, impregnable’⁴⁸ or even ‘place frequented by girls, lovers’ haunt’ (showing a presumption of androcentric toponym-creation). To the extent that these interpretations depend on *maiden* being an adjective, we can see that they are wrong, so the second appears to be ruled out. The first suggestion, especially, recalls Geoffrey of Monmouth’s phrase *Castellum Puellarum* ‘girls’ castle’, used of the earliest Edinburgh Castle on its Rock,⁴⁹ and we shall see that this name has a crucial role to play in the story. The second suggestion may be backed up by reference to the great late-twelfth-century fortress of Péronne in Picardy, which bore the epithet *La Pucelle* ‘The Virgin’, though its site was difficult to approach even before the building of the stone castle because of various lakes and ponds around it. The third suggestion, evoking clusters of unchaperoned young ladies just waiting for randy lads on some pretty remote British hillsides, seems not to deserve serious consideration in English toponymy, but, indulging a taste for promising a climax, I shall show that something like this really is the most likely source of the name in its original context. The suggestion seems to be due to Hugh Smith in connection with the place in Saxton (*PN YWR* 4: 71): “an embankment or old earthwork frequented by maidens because of its seclusion”, and he compares and contrasts an instance of *Knave(s) Castle* in Lower Slaughter, Gloucestershire (*PN YWR* 4: xi, *PN Gl* 1: 208), on record since 1392. As Hough notes, however, such male counterpart names are few indeed.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ *EPNE* 2, 31–32; Hough, ‘Place-name evidence’, 22–23; *CDEPN*, p. 393.

⁴⁸ For both, see also *OED-2*, *maiden sb. & adj.* 10.B.II.5.

⁴⁹ *Historia Regum Britannie (HRB)* 27; §2, 7; see more fully in n. 61.

⁵⁰ Hough, ‘Place-name evidence’, 24.

Curiously, John Dodgson (*PN Ch* 4: 5) paraphrases and elaborates on Smith's words whilst appearing to quote him, giving "old fortification offering a privacy where maidens may indulge their fancy". Both scholars give the impression that open-air sex is (or was, at least) a predominantly female fantasy. The matter is remarkable for Dodgson's addendum (*PN Ch* 4: xi), not cross-referenced from *PN Ch* 4: 5, which I quote in full:

Some authorities think Smith's explanation nonsense, but it is worth its place in the [English Place-Name] Society's volumes because it is a feasible figurative interpretation which happily invites the place-name student to the contemplation of folk-lore and etymology at the same time as it offers occasion for experiment and exercise in the field.

OED-2 gives a sense for *castle*, number 8, 'ancient earthworks', which appears only in proper names. This is theoretically incoherent, because proper names by definition bear no sense. It is entirely inferred from names such as *Maiden Castle* and has no independent lexical existence.

Some scholars (see e.g. *PN Cu* 256) have noted that the name is by no means purely English, nor even purely western European. They point to the Byzantine fortress in Greek Macedonia called *Gunaikó-kastro* (now *Palió* 'old' *Ginekókastro*; also known as *Avret Hissar* in Turkish).⁵¹ *Palió Ginekokastro* was erected by the emperor Andronikos III Palaiologos (1328–1341) and is now in ruins. It postdates by 200 years the earliest mention of a *Maiden Castle* in Britain, and its position in the history of toponymy will need careful evaluation. In Cilicia in Turkey proper (Içel province) is the tourist village named *Kızkalesi*, meaning 'girl [indeterminate number] castle', which takes its name from the conspicuous local castle, about whose name there is

⁵¹ This is what is said in certain web-resources, and in *PN Cu*. Since the phrase as given would mean 'Castle of the Genitals' (following A. D. Alderson and F. Iz, *The Concise Oxford Turkish Dictionary* (Oxford, 1959)), I presume either that it is in error for *Avrat Hisar* 'Woman or Wife Castle' (a translation of the Greek, with the specifying element number-neutral in both languages), or that the editors of *PN Cu* were having a private joke (which I find hard to believe).

a routine sort of local legend about a king's beautiful daughter, her incarceration, an admirer and her tragic death from a snakebite.⁵² This ruined building occupies an islet in a bay at what was known to the Greeks as *Kórykos*, and was linked to the mainland by a now-destroyed causeway, somewhat as Tyre in Lebanon still is. It was built by the Byzantine admiral Eustathios in 1104.⁵³ In Adana province, near Misis, is the Armenian or Crusader castle known as *Kızlar Kalesi*,⁵⁴ culturally of the same name-type but with the specifier in the plural form. I have not found out when either *Kızkalesi* or *Kızlar Kalesi* is first mentioned by its current name or by a translation-equivalent. (This area came under Turkish control sometime after the First Crusade.) There are also examples of Arabic *Qaşr al-Banāt*, of which the most famous and almost certainly the first is at al-Raqqah in modern Syria, on the road from Baghdad to Aleppo (Halab). This Arabic name too means something like 'Castle or Palace of the Maidens' (greater precision will come later), and, like one of the Turkish examples, two of the English ones, the Latin one in Geoffrey of Monmouth mentioned above, and a French one dependent on Geoffrey to be introduced below, it is distinctively plural in form.

Possible red herrings

There are three other translation-equivalent name(-type)s to consider, in French, Czech and German. I have not been able to ascertain the age of *Château des Pucelles* at Broyes, Picardy, France. *Dívčí Hrad* 'maiden (adj.) castle' is a castle and village in the Czech part of Silesia, 6.5km south-west of Osoblaha. The earliest known spelling of the name is *Devčice* (1267), which is interpreted as a derivative, with a

⁵² *Kız Kale* is a name routinely given in Turkish to castles that have been associated with the Greek poetic topos of a maiden defending castles against the infidel, often for twelve years (A. Bryer and D. Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, vol. I (Washington, D.C., 1985), p. 105, n. 48). It is hard to guess exactly how or even whether this Greek tradition relates to the general account presented in this article.

⁵³ *Turkey: a Phaidon Cultural Guide*, edited by M. Mehling (London, 1989), pp. 375–76.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

suffix *-ice*, of a male personal name *Devek*. There is also a thirteenth/fourteenth-century castle *Děvičky* high above Pavlov in the Mikulov region of South Moravia which is sometimes called *Dívčí Hrad* ‘maiden (adj.) castles’ (i.e. plural in form; German *Maidenburg*; probably a rendering of the Czech name). Both of these Czech names appear, therefore, to be folk-etymological alterations of earlier names.⁵⁵ German names for castles of the type *Frauenburg*, *-eck*, *-fels*, *-stein* ‘castle(-rock) of the (high-born) lady or ladies’, seem to have, according to Bach,⁵⁶ a different import from names in *maiden* and to fit a different pattern, one traceable to the *roman courtois* tradition; this is, however, linked interestingly with the story to be told below, and ultimately the traditions involving maidens and ladies may be unified. Bach asserts that few such names allude to the Virgin Mary, *Unsere Liebe Frau*.

An explanation

Qaṣr al-Banāt at al-Raqqah is the key to the story of *Maiden Castle*. It is a structure created in the early ninth century during the caliphate of the famous Hārūn al-Rašīd (786–809 C.E.), and its exact nature has

⁵⁵ L. Hosák and R. Šrámek, *Místní jména na Morave a ve Slezsku*, vol. 1 (Prague, 1970), pp. 290 and 178 respectively. The authors say in their explanation of the latter name that toponyms with the root **dev-* are based on personal names derived from Slavic **dev-* ‘maid’. Czech toponyms with the derived adjective *dívčí* ‘maiden’ can also be explained from an extended meaning of Old Czech *deva*, *dievka*, not only ‘maiden, virgin’, but also ‘nun’. Hosák and Šrámek also mention a legend of an ancient custom of walling maidens up to guarantee the impregnability of the castle. We can be confident this is not the explanation outside Moravia—nor probably even in Moravia. The first (thirteenth-century) German name of the castle was *haus Mayberch*, i.e. ‘house (on) *Maid* hill’, and the German name may be an interpretation of the name as it was in 1222, *Dewiczky* (cf. Czech *dievka*), which however evidently has to do with the name of the prominent crag on which it stands, *Děvín*. Some other castle-names appearing to contain the crucial element (e.g. *Dívčí Kámen* ‘Maiden Stone’) existed before the castles in question were built. Whether such German toponyms in **Maid* are translated from the Czech or have inspired the Czech is not clear, but the former seems more likely to me.

⁵⁶ A. Bach, *Deutsche Namenkunde*, 2, part 2 (Heidelberg, 1981), p. 232.

been the subject of academic debate. Western archaeologists originally, and predictably, described it as a fortress, as they have been prone to do with any massive structures such as the “hillforts” of Britain. But more recently it has been interpreted by Burns as a “recreational summer residence”,⁵⁷ whilst the most recent excavator Kassem Toueir “maintains that the structure is not a fortress at all, but rather a massive, and largely complete, victory platform—the only known structure of its kind in the history of Islamic architecture”.⁵⁸ In either case, it was not strictly a fortress.⁵⁹ But whether it was actually a

⁵⁷ R. Burns, *Monuments of Syria* (London, 1992), pp. 199–201.

⁵⁸ P. McD. Twair, ‘A career at Raqqa’, *Saudi Aramco World*, 46, 5 (1995), available at www.saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/199505/default.htm (visited 29/09/2004).

⁵⁹ For relatively recent literature on the site, see P. Verzone, “Il complesso di Qaşr el-Banāt,” in *Corsi di Cultura sull’Arte Ravennate e Bizantina*, 21 (1974), 249–57, available online at Politecnico di Torino website, www.archi.polito.it/dipartimenti/dicas/iniziativa/verzone/PDF/verzone_087_1974.pdf (visited 11/10/2004); M. al-Khalaf and K. Kohlmeier, ‘Untersuchungen zu ar-Raqqa—Nikephorion/Callinicum’, *Damaszener Mitteilungen*, 2 (1985), 123–33; M. Meinecke, ‘Raqqa on the Euphrates: recent excavations at the residence of Harun er-Rashid’, in *The Near East in Antiquity*, 2, edited by S. Kerner (Amman, 1991), pp. 17–32. Some restoration has fairly recently taken place (K. Toueir, ‘Der Qasr al-Banat in ar-Raqqa: Ausgrabung, Rekonstruktion, Wiederaufbau (1977–1982)’, *Damaszener Mitteilungen*, 2 (1985), 297–319). R. Hillenbrand (*Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh, 1994), pp. 418–19), was content to let Toueir’s excavations be completed before a full interpretation of the site could be offered; provisionally he had called it late-medieval, but he is alone in considering such a late date. It was known as *Kızlar Saray* in Turkish under the Ottomans (sometimes spelt *Kislar Saray* in contemporary western texts), which is a simple calque (cf. and contrast *Kızlar Kalesi*, above) using *saray* ‘palace’. It is interesting that precisely this variant name (or *Kızlar Sarayı*) attaches to the architectural feature in the Pontic citadel of Trebizond (modern Trabzon) which is called *Theodora’s Bedchamber* in the Byzantine and western tradition (Bryer and Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, p. 191); interesting, but beyond my power to explain, since Trebizond is well away from direct crusader influence. Dr Mustafa Shah advises me that ‘palace’ might be a better rendering of *qaşr* in English anyway, though ‘castle’ or ‘fortress’ has become somewhat traditional.

fortress or not, it was called by a name which could suggest that it was. *Qaṣr* frequently appears in the names of fortified sites across the Middle East, and those sites which are unfortified, such as *Qaṣr al-ʿAbd* ‘palace of the slave’, a Hellenistic structure at ʿIrāq al-Amīr near Amman, Jordan, destroyed by an earthquake in 362 C.E., seem to the writer to be in the minority. It may have come to be extended to unfortified places much as some magnates’ new houses in post-medieval Scotland and England were called *Castle* even though they were never fortified, for example Drumlanrig and Wardour “Castles”. According to some, al-Raqqah appears to have been Hārūn’s capital briefly until this function was restored to Baghdad. In any case, it was a place of the highest importance to the Caliphate.

There are other places now called *Qaṣr al-Banāt*. One is the site of the Greek settlement of Euhemereia at al-Fayyūm in the governorate of the same name, Egypt. I do not know whether this is independently named or alludes to Hārūn’s palace at al-Raqqah. There is another in al-Biqā’ (the Bekaa Valley), Lebanon, said to be a ruin “littered with classic masonry”, about which I have been able to find out nothing beyond the little in reminiscences by Bruce Condé,⁶⁰ and the same applies to the settlement-mound *Tall Qaṣr al-Banāt* in al-Daqahliyah governorate in Egypt. Most regrettably, I also do not know the age of the name *Qaṣr al-Bint Faraūn* ‘Pharaoh’s daughter’s palace’ applied to a well-known Roman-period temple (unfortified, of course) at Petra, Jordan, but it may be due to modern antiquarianism.

The sequence of events that best explains the facts at our disposal is as follows. Westerners came across the remains of Hārūn’s abandoned but still spectacular edifice during the First Crusade (1097–1100) and during the early years of the new Latin county of Edessa into which the site fell. It is not known when it first gained its current name *Qaṣr al-Banāt*, but I assume it is a genuine Arabic name and one which probably dates from Hārūn’s own time. The crusaders learned the evocative name, and apparently applied it in translation first to their castle in the bay at Korykos (Kızkalesi) in modern Turkey, only about 275 miles from al-Raqqah and in the adjacent Lesser Armenia

⁶⁰ B. Condé, *See Lebanon*, 2nd edn (Beirut, 1960), pp. 390–91.

(Cilicia), though there are no early references to the name before its appearance in Turkish (which I presume, without evidence, to be a calque on a name formulated in a western language or Greek, except as regards number-marking). They may also have applied the name in an explicitly plural variant form of the name at Kızlar Kalesi near Misis, but again direct evidence is lacking. Being transparent, the name passed into common usage in western aristocratic circles in translation, conventionally using *Castellum* (implying fortification) or the like for *Qaşr*, in any or all of the various crusader vernaculars. One such vernacular form, presumably French (whether Norman or Francien), was picked up from ex-Crusaders in his social circle by Geoffrey of Monmouth⁶¹ and rendered in Latin as *Castellum Puellarum*—a translation which was perhaps more evocatively accurate than strictly so. Or perhaps the name was already circulating in its Latin, written, form, but I have found no evidence of this. (*Castellum* was certainly in use in the Levant, witness the Arabic name *Qastel* of the Crusader fort Belvoir above the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee.⁶² It, or rather its vernacular equivalent(s), later became the normal word for an aristocratic retreat in other contexts not considered in this article, witness e.g. the fortified residences called *kašteli* on the Dalmatian coast, built from the sixteenth century onwards and concentrated between Trogir and Split, and witness the numerous villages in Crete called *Kasteli*. Both these usages can be traced to Venetian.)

It is easy enough, through lack of historical knowledge, to take a massive abandoned structure as having a primarily defensive purpose. As noted above, British archaeologists have been prone to use the term *fort*, e.g. in *hillfort*, to all structures in the landscape with a vallum, and

⁶¹ Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britannie* (hereafter *HRB*), edited by N. Wright, *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS 568* (Cambridge, 1985) and *The Historia Regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the First Variant Version: a Critical Edition* (Cambridge, 1988). [Paragraphed references (§§) are to L. Thorpe's English translation (Harmondsworth, 1966). Others, unless otherwise stated, are to sections in Wright's edition of the Burgerbibliothek MS, and page references are also to this edition.]

⁶² J. Prawer, *The Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (London, 1972), p. 291.

are only now toying with the possibility that some were e.g. stock-enclosures. The deserted Qaşr al-Banāt in about 1100 could easily have been perceived as a fort, and this perception must have both been encouraged by the *qaşr* in its name and dictated the translation of *qaşr* as ‘castle’, i.e. ‘fortified residence’, rather than as ‘palace’, and the application of the translated name to true castles such as those at Kızkalesi, Kızlar Kalesi and Palio Ginekokastro. The phonological near-coincidence of *qaşr* and *castrum*, whose stem is the morphological base of *castellum*, may also have proved significant, and we return to this relationship in Appendix 1 below. Why the structure at al-Raqqaḥ was so called cannot be decided for certain, but if Burns’ characterization of the place as a “recreational summer residence” is sound we may take it for granted that Hārūn’s harem would have been present there, and the name may be a compliment to his women or, more strongly and more plausibly, an allusion to the place’s main purpose, namely to enclose the Caliph’s concubines (in luxury). We need not take the English *maiden*, which eventually comes to represent *banāt*, literally in its modern sense; this will be a conventionalized translation of *bint*. Taking into account the whole long recorded history of Arabic, *bint* (plural *banāt*) apparently does not necessarily denote a sexually inexperienced woman, any more than do *párthenos* in Greek and *mægden* in Old English, with which Ælfric in his glossary equates *geong wifmann* ‘young woman’.⁶³ It derives from earlier **ibnatun* ‘daughter [non-prepausal form]’, and still means ‘daughter’, importantly without originally denoting a particular age or sexual status, and it has not everywhere acquired any such denotation, though that may often be conversationally implicated; the word for ‘virgin’ specifically is *bikr*, and for ‘young girl’ (irrespective of sexual status) *jariyah*. However, in the modern spoken dialects of Arabia the meaning ‘young girl, virgin’ has become dominant. So, whilst ‘Palace of the (Young) Womenfolk’ might have been a more defensible translation, taking the date and the submerged history of the place into account, what we got is *Castrum Puellarum* (perhaps a specifically Norman take on the

⁶³ *Aelfrics Grammatik und Glossar*, edited by J. Zupitza (Berlin, 1880; reprinted 1966 with a preface by H. Gneuss), p. 301.

essential functions of durable buildings), and the rest of the toponymic phenomena in Britain follow from that, as we shall see.⁶⁴

Continuing the speculative narrative: when he needed to mention Edinburgh Rock and/or Castle in *HRB* (which was completed probably in 1138),⁶⁵ Geoffrey applied this name, which had no alternative application in Britain, to what he understood to be a similar site, of which, ensconced in Oxford, he probably had no personal knowledge. Tatlock⁶⁶ suggests that the underlying reason for Geoffrey to show such inventiveness was that he knew neither the Brittonic nor the English name of Edinburgh; he was “usually fond of mentioning the contemporary names” when he did know them, but here he is silent about the name-forms in circulation in his own day, *Dun Edene* ‘Eidyn fort’ or *Edwinesburg* ‘[as if] Edwin’s burgh’. The fact that Geoffrey wrote “quod nunc Castellum Puellarum dicitur”⁶⁷ is no barrier to this idea; he is busy creating history, and any inference that this designation must have existed before his own literary work is not a necessary one. Edinburgh was in the news at this time; it was a seat of David I, and David’s armies had invaded northern England three times in 1135–38. If the name had already been current, and in particular if the cultivated David had been responsible for it, we would expect to find it in David’s (re-)foundation charter of 1143 x 1147, but it is not there. We shall see below that there is every reason to believe that Geoffrey

⁶⁴ The British serviceman in the Middle East during the two World Wars was near the mark in borrowing the modern word *bint* as a term for any woman (though especially a (potential) girlfriend). But the traveller Sir Richard Burton is the first to use the word in English, in his *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Meccah* (London, 1855; see *OED-2*, s.v.), in the phrase “the obstinate ‘bint’ of sixty years”.

⁶⁵ Wright, *Historia Regum Britannie*, p. xvi.

⁶⁶ J. S. P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Historia Regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions* (Berkeley, 1950), p. 13.

⁶⁷ *Castellum Puellarum* is sometimes quoted or indexed as *Castrum Puellarum*, and some later writers dependent on Geoffrey use that form too, but Geoffrey wrote *Castellum*, to judge by the two MSS edited by Wright (see n. 61), which are from two very different traditions.

invented a name for Caistor in Lincolnshire, even though he introduces the name as “Saxonice uero Thanccastre”,⁶⁸ which might be taken as implying its previous existence (though it might equally be read as “*Thanccastre*, as one would say in English”, a gloss on a Latin name). There is specious Brittonic history in *HRB* in the mentions “oppidum Paladur quod nunc Sephtesberia [Shaftesbury] dicitur”, “Kaerconan quod nunc Cununoeburg [Conisbrough] appellatur”, and “Nantgallim, Saxonice uero Galabroc [Walbrook]”;⁶⁹ there is specious Latin history in the repeated *Cla(u)diocestria* ‘Gloucester’.⁷⁰ Geoffrey was clearly adept at supplying name-histories, whether etymologies or pedigrees, where his narrative required them.

The apparently earliest records of *Castellum Puellarum* outside *HRB* are as follows:

(1) the death of Margaret, queen of Malcolm III, is recorded in the *Annals of Dunfermline* as taking place in *Castrum Puellarum* in 1093, but this is almost certainly a reinterpretation in the light of other knowledge by the *Annals*’ nineteenth-century compiler Ebenezer Henderson or by one or more of his sources.⁷¹ He does not specify which of several documents given a footnote mention is the relevant source, but it appears possible it is John of Fordun’s *Scotichronicon* v, c; [5, 100], a late-fourteenth-century chronicle; it is certainly not the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* MS E, annal 1093, also cited.⁷²

(2) in 1146 “an Assembly was held in the *Castrum Puellarum* where a compact was made regarding the Church of Eccles, between the Bishop of St Andrews and the Abbot of Dunfermline, ‘*coram rege David et Henrico filio ejus et baronibus eorum*’”.⁷³ If this can be taken at face value, it is the first post-Geoffreyan mention of the name, but it is obviously possible that this too is a later reworking of an original

⁶⁸ *HRB* 99; §6, 11.

⁶⁹ *HRB* 29, 123 and 76.

⁷⁰ *HRB* e.g. 4 and esp. 69.

⁷¹ E. Henderson, comp., *The Annals of Dunfermline and Vicinity, 1069–1878* (Glasgow, 1879).

⁷² *The Peterborough Chronicle*, edited by C. Clark (Oxford, 1959), 1093.

⁷³ *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, 1124–1707*, 1, edited by T. Thomson and C. Innes (London and Edinburgh, 1814), p. 56, app.

annal. The ostensibly next-earliest is in the *Chronicle of Holyrood*, annal 1154, where the editor Anderson gives in English *Maidens' Castle*.⁷⁴ The castle is not so called in David I's charter of 1143 x 1147,⁷⁵ but it is in one of William I "The Lion" dated 1171 x 1177 (*de Castello Puellarum*) and in a document of 1175.⁷⁶ Tatlock regards it as a common twelfth-century name for the Castle, and says it appears in the chronicle once attributed to Benedict of Peterborough;⁷⁷ Roger of Howden's chronicle, completed about 1201, refers to *Castellum Puellarum* under the years 1175 and 1186.⁷⁸ By the fourteenth century the name has disappeared from local records, as represented by the collection in *CDCE*.

If I am right so far, it means that Geoffrey's mention of the site of Edinburgh Castle probably alludes to the structure at al-Raqqah, or perhaps rather to its name and to a contemporary perception of its nature. It is hard to think that the allusion can be profound or revealing; rather, it casually displays an element of his geographical or merely toponymic knowledge. Geoffrey overdoses on allusion at this point in *HRB*. His king of Loegria ('England'), Ebraucus, founds "oppidum Montis Agned, quod nunc Castellum Puellarum dicitur[, ??] et Montem Dolorosum", 'the town of Mount Agned, which is now called the Girls'/Maidens' Castle[, ??] and the Dolorous Mountain'. Agned is one of Arthur's battle-sites, according to Nennius;⁷⁹ scholarship has not finally located it, despite many efforts, but Geoffrey was clearly prepared to believe it was Edinburgh. This demonstrates that Geoffrey's historical techniques included appropriating a place-name without a known home and applying it where his narrative demanded

⁷⁴ *A Scottish Chronicle Known as the Chronicle of Holyrood*, edited by M. O. Anderson (Edinburgh, 1938).

⁷⁵ *Edinburgh City, Charters and other Documents Relating to the City of Edinburgh, A.D. 1143–1540* (Edinburgh, 1871; hereafter *CDCE*), doc. 1

⁷⁶ *CDCE*, doc. 11; Bain, *Calendar* (see n. 46), doc. 141.

⁷⁷ Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, p. 12; 'Benedict of Peterborough', edition *ad libitum*, *De Vita et Gestis Henrici II et Ricardi I*, e.g. 1, 48.

⁷⁸ *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, edited by W. Stubbs (London, 1868–71).

⁷⁹ Nennius, *Historia Britonum*, edited by J. Morris (Chichester, 1980), §56.

something, exactly as I am suggesting for *Castellum Puellarum*, and exactly as he did with *Kaerpenhuelgoit* for Exeter.⁸⁰ For Edinburgh alone he has raided Nennius, crusaders' travellers' tales and perhaps the Gospels for an oblique allusion to Golgotha. Other examples of this toponymic kleptomania will be seen below when we examine *Thwangcaster*.

Blenner-Hassett discusses these names for Edinburgh and suggests, not wholly implausibly, that the *Mons Dolorosus* is simply Geoffrey's inadequate gloss on *Mons Agned* due to his fanciful association of the name with Welsh *angen* 'necessity, lack', which may or may not be the case.⁸¹ Breeze, on the other hand, suggests that *Agned* is really a transcription mistake for Old/Middle Welsh *agued* 'combat, death, straits',⁸² and if that were true Geoffrey's gloss would be a little less inadequate. References to the place under these names persist well into the Renaissance. David Buchanan regarded the English name as a corruption of *Myned [agned]*, i.e. a name including a version of Welsh *mynydd* 'mountain', though he gives an exquisitely learned etymological account starting with Greek and finishing with the common people of the region;⁸³ and the following lurid passage is from Girolamo Cardano's *De subtilitate*: "Mons dolorosus est in Calidonia regione Scotiæ, in quo noctu voces quasi hominum excruciatorum exaudiebantur" 'Mons Dolorosus is in the region of Scotland [called] Calidonia, in which, at night, voices as of tortured men used to be heard'⁸⁴

Wace, in *Brut*, his version of *HRB* written in Old French around 1170, puts "chastel .../ Qui des Pu(l)celes ad surnun" 'castle which has

⁸⁰ *HRB* 69; §4, 16.

⁸¹ R. Blenner-Hassett, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Mons Agned* and *Castellum Puellarum*', *Speculum*, 17 (1942), 250–54.

⁸² A. Breeze, 'Historia Brittonum and Arthur's Battle of *Mons Agned*', *Northern History*, 40 (2003), 167–70.

⁸³ G. Buchanan, *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* (1652), hypertext edition by D. F. Sutton, available at www.philological.bham.ac.uk/scothist/. Revised edn posted 08/03/2003 (visited 29/09/2004).

⁸⁴ G. Cardano, *De Subtilitate* (1663), p. 301, col. 1, available online at archimedes.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de (visited 29/09/2004).

the [additional] name “of the Maidens”,⁸⁵ and explicitly says that he does not know why it is so called. Lawman’s English version of the *Brut*, which reached the earlier of its known states around 1200, is the first literary text to express the crucial concept using the English name-form, *Maidene Castel*.⁸⁶ Blenner-Hassett concludes that there was “a nunnery or convent of anchoresses, located ... on Edinburgh Rock”,⁸⁷ a suggestion due to Skene,⁸⁸ who claimed that the Irish virgin St Monenna (Moninne) might have been responsible for its foundation, though the suggestion was based on earlier speculation. Watson reports this claim cautiously as a tradition, but then acknowledges that *puellae* is indeed likely to be used in the sense of ‘nuns’ here (as in Adomnán’s *Life of Columba*: “... in aliquo puellarum monasterio ...”), implying that he thinks there is a kernel of truth in the claim.⁸⁹ Watson says that “the name is first applied to the Castle in the reign of David I”, i.e. 1124–53, but regrettably does not say in which language this first mention is formulated nor in which year exactly it was applied; the general tenor of his preceding paragraph suggests that it must have been in the Latin form, *Castellum Puellarum*, the name by which it is often called “[i]n the early charters of Holyrood and elsewhere”.⁹⁰ The actual date, as will be realized, is crucial for the present work; Holyrood Abbey was founded in 1128. Watson clearly had not thought that Geoffrey of Monmouth’s writings lay behind this tradition.

Blenner-Hassett suggests that the Old Norse version of this crux, *Meyde Claustr*, was written by someone with access to knowledge

⁸⁵ Wace, *Brut*, ll. 1529 ff., as noted in *An Anglo-Norman Brut* (Royal 13.A.xxi), edited by A. Bell (Oxford, 1969), p. 171.

⁸⁶ Lawman: see n. 24.

⁸⁷ Blenner-Hassett, ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Mons Agned*’, 251.

⁸⁸ W. F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland: A History of Ancient Alban*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh, 1886–90), pp. 37–38.

⁸⁹ Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, pp. 150, 342; Adomnán of Iona: *Life of St Columba*, edited and translated by R. Sharpe (Harmondsworth, 1995), §2, 42 (Latin text available online at University of Cork, Corpus of Electronic Texts, www.ucc.ie/celt/published/L201040/text077.html (visited 08/10/2004)).

⁹⁰ Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, p. 341.

expressed in English, since the word for ‘maid, virgin’ in Old Norse (ON) is *mær*, gen. pl. *meýjar*, with no <d>.⁹¹ These *Breta sögur* ‘sagas of the Britons’, as they are known, are thought to have been translated in the thirteenth century, and survive only in two main MSS, *Hauksbók* from the 1330s or earlier,⁹² and a fragmentary thirteenth-century MS, so there is no chronological barrier to their author’s having had access to English-language *Bruts* or other relevant knowledge about English names, and having in effect treated the specifier in the English name as a proper name in itself. This Old Norse name offers no independent clue to the origin of the name in Edinburgh.

The success of *HRB* put this striking name, or name-type, into the public literary domain, and like others of Geoffrey’s names it had an impact on the way later writers referred to their places, as I shall suggest below in detail. It seems probable that, after Geoffrey, sites of a particular type recalling Edinburgh in various ways could be referred to using his literary topos ‘maidens’ castle’; the bulk of those sites were ancient fortifications or earthworks whose true origins were no longer known, or rocky eminences, as can be seen from the list given earlier.

Castrum Puellarum as an epithet for Edinburgh Castle continued to be used long afterwards, or at least remained in national consciousness, thanks to Geoffrey. It is found, for example, in John of Fordun’s *Scotichronicon* (5, 21) in the phrase “in castro puellarum”, in William Stewart’s later-sixteenth-century metrical Scots rendering of Boece’s *Scotorum historiae* (1526) as *The Madyn Castell* (l. 32956), and in the following passage in Buchanan’s history of Scotland *Res Scoticae* (1582: I, 92; see Scott 2003): “Edimburgum quorundam vel crassa ignorantia vel perversa diligentia qui nunc vallem dolorosam, nunc castram [sic] puellarum appellant eam arcem ...” ‘that citadel of Edinburgh is called, either through the gross ignorance or the perverted diligence of certain people, now the Sorrowful Valley, now the Castle of (the) Girls ...’, and this wording clearly depends on Geoffrey even

⁹¹ Blenner-Hassett, ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Mons Agned*’, 251, n. 3.

⁹² *Hauksbók*, edited by F. Jónsson (Copenhagen, 1892–96), pp. 231–302 (p. 247).

though it misrepresents one of his designations of the castle-site. Perhaps *vallum dolorosum* ‘sorrowful wall [i.e. fortification]’ was intended, or perhaps the writer was distracted by the biblical topos *vale of tears*.⁹³ Readers will recall The Maiden Castle near Dollar, Clackmannanshire (above); adjacent to Castle Campbell, the nearest habitation-site to The Maiden Castle, are the twin burns *Burn of Sorrow* and *Burn of Care*. These seem unlikely to be adjacent through coincidence, and one suspects that some literate laird knew Buchanan’s *Res scoticae*.

Even as late as the 1911 edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* we find a baroque reference to “the more generally received opinion that the Britons knew the fortress as Castelh Mynedh Agnedh (the hill of the plain), a designation once wrongly interpreted as the castle of the maidens (castrum puellarum), in allusion to the supposed fact that the Pictish princesses were lodged within it during their education”, ideas which Gray says were long ago scornfully dismissed as “idle stories ... devised by romantic French writers”, this being an echo of Buchanan’s “e fabellis gallicis”.⁹⁴ And these tales were perpetuated by Sir Walter Scott in *The Antiquary* with his allusion to “Pictish maidens of the blood-royal”.⁹⁵

Blenner-Hassett identifies another set of references from John of Fordun’s *Scotichronicon* (c.1383), translated by Skene as ‘Castle of the Virgins’, and suggests that *Castellum Puellarum* was “the technical and diplomatic name of Edinburgh Castle” and “merely [its] learned name”.⁹⁶ That may well be so, but there is not the slightest historical evidence for any educational establishment or for the nunnery of the

⁹³ ... *in valle lacrimarum*, Psalms 83:7 (Vulgate).

⁹⁴ W. F. Gray, *Short History of Edinburgh Castle* (Edinburgh, 1948), p. 10; G. Buchanan, *Rerum Scoticarum Historia*, 1 (1582), p. 92, hypertext edition by D. F. Sutton, available at www.philological.bham.ac.uk/scothist/ (revised edn posted 08/03/2003, visited 29/09/2004).

⁹⁵ Sir Walter Scott, *The Antiquary*, chapter 6, edition *ad libitum*.

⁹⁶ Blenner-Hassett, ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Mons Agned*’, p. 253; *John of Fordun’s Chronicle of the Scottish Nation*, edited by W. F. Skene (Edinburgh, 1871), e.g. p. 209.

sort suggested by Skene,⁹⁷ and they seem to be inventions. That reinforces the probability that Geoffrey was the only source of this “technical and diplomatic” name. Watson reports this tradition cautiously.⁹⁸

Further evidence for the concept as a literary topos is plentiful. There are frequent references in French, English, Latin and Dutch Arthurian (i.e. Geoffreyan) manuscripts to a *chastel as/aux/des puceles* ‘maids’ castle’ and the like, and mentions taken from an unpublished list made in the 1940s by Alma Blount are quoted in a footnote in Blenner-Hassett’s article.⁹⁹ A single key example may serve: in the *Queste du Saint-Graal*, there is an episode devoted to the adventure of Galaad at the castle of this name, which Galaad prefers to see as “accursed”.¹⁰⁰ Even if this example were from the original *Perceval*, this work dates from no earlier than 1180, and therefore no part of the Arthurian cycle initiated by Chrétien de Troyes can be the prime mover in the naming of *Maiden Castles* in Britain because, as we have seen, the earliest place-name references date from before 1180. It is of great interest that whilst Lawman, writing around 1200, is the first literary source of the syntactically English expression *Maiden Castle*, it was on record some thirty years earlier in administrative documents; it must have enthused practical onomasts out in the field before it inspired the final form of dependent literary works. The Arthurian MSS containing *chastel as/aux/des puceles* often have accompanying images of tournaments involving the combat of Galahad and the seven brothers in the *Queste del Saint Graal* (the second book of the anonymous Old French Vulgate Cycle, c.1230), for example the earliest known to me, with the rubric “si com galahas vint au castiel as puceles et li VII frere li vinrent à l’encontre tot arme et se lancierent à lui” (‘How Galahad came to the Maidens’ Castle and the seven brothers came to meet him all armed and threw themselves upon him’).

⁹⁷ Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, pp. 37–38.

⁹⁸ Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, p. 150.

⁹⁹ Blenner-Hassett, ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Mons Agned*’, 253, n. 14.

¹⁰⁰ *La Queste del Saint Graal*, by Walter Map, edited by F. J. Furnivall (London, 1864), ch. 34. (The Vulgate Cycle to which the *Queste* belongs is no longer attributed to Map.) See also Bell, *Anglo-Norman Brut*, p. 171, note to ll. 1157–58.

A stylized castle of medieval type is in the background.¹⁰¹

Such a name clearly evolved in an environment where French was taken for granted and was allowed to influence the users' English—clearly, since the name as it stands is grammatically English despite the French origin of the word *castle*.¹⁰² Whilst the literary culture of the early twelfth century in England was Latin (with Norman French on the point of developing for some purposes), there is no doubt English was widely understood and spoken even among the aristocracy, and it would be no surprise if a fully English version of the name developed among speakers of Middle English for whom *burgh* was a more natural designation of a fortress than *castle*. Cameron explicitly notes the possible equivalence of *Maiden Castle* and names amounting to *Maiden Burgh*, following *PN Cu* (256).¹⁰³ This name-type is found in various spellings in the following names:

- (*prope* 'near') *Maidenburge* (*PN C* 39), lost place in Cambridge, most probably a place on Castle Hill later known as *The Borough* (TL 443595), the site of the Roman town; late 12th, *Liber Eliensis*; see further below concerning this date
- *Maydeneburgh*, lost place in Colchester (TL 9925) alluded to later by *Maidenburgh Street* (*PN Ess* 371); mentioned in the surname of Robert de *Maydeneburgh* in 1248—if Robert's origins or residence were local, it would be natural to assume that his name referred to the Roman theatre, or rather to its remains, in modern Maidenburgh Street. This area of Colchester was later associated with St Helen(a), daughter of the legendary king Cole and mother of the first Christian emperor Constantine, whose "beauty was greater than that of any other young woman in the kingdom";¹⁰⁴ however, Geoffrey does not refer to a plurality of young women in this passage.

¹⁰¹ MS Bibl. nat. de France, Occid., Fr. 342, fo. 73 (1274).

¹⁰² *Castle* actually appears in English very early. The first known use is in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS E, annal 1075 (*Peterborough Chronicle*, edited by Clark, p. 5).

¹⁰³ Cameron, *English Place-Names*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ *HRB* 78; §5.6.

These two early names are both applied in urban, and specifically Roman, contexts. None but the most general suggestion can be made about how they might be connected with the *Maiden Castle* names. Clearly an alternative translation of *Castellum Puellarum* is probable, but no context is known linking Edinburgh with these cities. If there is an independent fountainhead for these names, we cannot identify it, nor, if it was one of these two, say which of them it might have been.

- Maidenbury, lost place (*PN C* 29) alluded to by such names as *Maidenberell* ‘hill’ (1493) in Kneesworth (*PN C* 314) and *Maidenberiweye* ‘way’ (1513) at an uncertain location (but cf. *PN C* lix for a possible identification with Melbourn Bury (*PN C* 59), suggested by the antiquarian T. C. Lethbridge); possibly to be regarded as copied from the Cambridge name, only some ten miles away
- Maidenborough, field in Whichford (*PN Wa* 380; SP 3134), alluding to an unknown feature; mentioned in the Tithe Award; probably not including *burg* but *beorg* ‘hill; barrow’, for which cf. *Maydenberrow* in Hook Norton (*PN O* 355–56; SP 3533), because it is *Maydeneberewe* in the earliest record of c.1270

The following names have also been adduced in comparison, all appearing to contain OE *mΣge* (variant **māge* in the Cumberland name), itself meaning ‘kinswoman, maiden’:

- Mawbray in Holme St Cuthbert (*PN Cu* 296; approx. NY 0846), Roman fort, 1175, c.1187
- Mayburgh in Yanwath, Barton (*PN We* 2: 205–06; NY 519284), “an ancient circular amphitheatre”, a henge monument, 1671
- Maborough Castle (lost) in Kirkby Thore (*PN We* 2: 119; approx. NY 6425), “an old entrenchment”, 1750
- Maybury in Woking (*PN Sr* 161; approx. TQ 0158), not found before 1885

I take these two types to be simply fully anglicized versions of *Maiden Castle*, sharing the same cultural burden (though the last is recorded

too late for high probability). The seventeenth-century *Maydes Castle* in Gloucestershire, mentioned above, may be out of the same stable, though it fits no pattern identified so far, and the genitive *-s* (singular or plural) on an originally feminine noun means that it must be of late origin in this precise form.

The various *Maiden Bowers*, or at least a subset of them, may well be folk-etymologized versions of *Maiden Burgh*, the change in form being due to the perceived greater appropriateness of bowers (OE/ME *būr*) to maidens than fortified places. This folk-etymology led in time to the availability of the sentimental concept evoked by the *Bower*-type to stimulate new and independent applications of the name, only some of which will be mentioned here because they cannot be shown conclusively to be relevant. The change may have been assisted by the existence of the word *bower-maiden* from at least as early as the *Arthour and Merlin* of the 1330s.¹⁰⁵ The justification for linking the *Maiden Bowers* to the other names under discussion would be that the most prominent one denotes, like key instances of *Maiden Castle* and *Maidenburgh*, an ancient fortification or similar antiquity; this is the one at Dunstable (Bd), which is the name of a hillfort, but for which, very regrettably, no early spellings have been published, implying that there may be none. Since the key evidence to establish a link is missing, the *Bower* names will be left out of the analysis.¹⁰⁶

We should probably also add:

- Maiden-hold in Crackenthorpe, Appleby St Michael (*PN We* 2: 102), 1777, not clear whether the name is still current, “one of the two Roman camps in the parish”; it is clearly possible

¹⁰⁵ *Arthour and Merlin, nach der Auchinleck-Hs.*, edited by E. Kölbing (Leipzig, 1890), l. 6486.

¹⁰⁶ The names which register in the *OS Gazetteer* and EPNS volumes are *Maiden Bower*: YNR, near Topcliffe south-west of Thirsk (not in *PN YNR*); Bd, at Dunstable (not in *PN BdHu*); Scilly (rock in open sea west of Bryher, NGR SV 810415); O (presently a wood at Steeple Barton (*PN O* 249), 1840; *Maidenbower*: Worth (*PN Sx* 284), 1795; *Maidens Bower*: Solihull (*PN Wa* 74), which may be an alteration of a different name found from the fourteenth century, see also n. 113; *Maiden's Bower Farm*: Knowsley (La; NGR SJ 431951).

semantically that this belongs to the *Maiden Castle* type (cf. *stronghold*), but its generic is unique among such names

The theory of a relation between the name-type *Maiden Burgh* and the reference to *Castellum Puellarum* by Geoffrey takes an apparent knock from the early mention of the place in Cambridge. *Liber Eliensis* refers to an event there in the tenth century using the expression *subtus Thernigefeld prope Maidenburge*. However, *Liber Eliensis* is known to have been completed after the death in 1169 of Nigel of Salisbury, the probable author of most of it,¹⁰⁷ and it is perfectly possible that the wording is due either to Nigel before his death or to his continuator in the light of their own local knowledge, rather than a reproduction of the wording of any tenth-century source.

Medbury in Elstow (*Meidebir* 1227) has also been mentioned (*PN BdHu* 71–72) in connection with the *Maiden*-names, but some of its spellings and its modern outcome seem to represent a compromise between a form in *mægden* and one in *mægð* (also meaning ‘maiden’ and therefore in principle relevant). It is also not recorded before the witching year of 1138. It is impossible to judge which form was original, and since there is formal ambiguity and doubt this name will not be considered among the set of *Maiden Castles*. There seem to be no defensive structures here, though that in itself does not disqualify it, as we have noted in other instances. The editors of *PN BdHu* (72) say: “Such names have arisen from particular incidents or ideas which are now lost beyond recovery”. They compare *Magdeburg* in Germany, but that is probably wrong, despite its frequent medieval rendering in the fancy Greek form *Parthenopolis*; *Magdeburg* has been recently argued by Korhammer to be ‘slaves’ castle’, perhaps amounting to ‘Slavs’ castle’,¹⁰⁸ and Hough¹⁰⁹ makes a tentative case that OE

¹⁰⁷ *Liber Eliensis: A History of the Isle of Ely from the Seventh to the Twelfth Century*, edited by J. Fairweather (Cambridge, forthcoming).

¹⁰⁸ M. Korhammer, ‘Old English *bolca* and *Mægþa land*—two problems, one solved’, in *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, edited by M. Korhammer (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 305–24 (esp. p. 323).

¹⁰⁹ Hough, ‘Place-name evidence’, 21–24.

mægden and its derivative *mægdenman* also had the meaning ‘slave’ (i.e. something akin to the later sense of *maid*), which may be relevant to certain English place-names. Udolph, on the other hand, favours an original meaning ‘big stronghold’, apparently not knowing of Korhammer’s account.¹¹⁰

The discussion of *Medbury* in *PN BdHu* includes examples of the wide range of other Old English, Middle English and Modern English names which include the element *maiden* or its ancestor. This should make us pause to ask whether *Maidenburgh* and *Maiden Castle* are not simply further examples of a structure, *Maiden + X*, which requires a more inclusive explanation. As I suggested in my preamble, I think the answer is no. It is true that there are a goodly number of early names of the type *Maiden + X*, but the sub-types of name we have examined so far are all of a very distinctive form which is culturally anomalous or even paradoxical in its association of females with strongholds. The paradox disappears when we project the name back into an early Muslim context where the stronghold can be seen as *for* the females. All the relevant names in Britain which can be associated with an identifiable built feature denote an abandoned ancient structure, taken, through lack of historical knowledge, as having primarily a defensive purpose, just such a feature as I have argued that the deserted Qaṣr al-Banāt must have been perceived to be by the First Crusaders. This is the first reason it makes sense to treat the names in *Castle*, *Burgh* and the like, arguably including *Maydes Castle* in Aston Subedge, as a unified set distinct from others sharing the element *Maiden*.

None of the names in Britain in this study date from before the middle of the twelfth century, and there is an identifiable spur to their creation at the appropriate time: the reference to *Castrum Puellarum* in Geoffrey’s hugely influential work (note the 250-odd surviving MSS). He is the first to mention a name with the same semantic content with reference to an arguably English context (the Scottish king David I’s mother was English and he had been brought up at the English court), even though he did so in Latin. The earliest administrative records

¹¹⁰ J. Udolph, ‘Magdeburg = “Mägdeburg”?’ , *Namenkundliche Informationen*, 20 (1999), 247–66.

follow within thirty to forty years of the completion of his work. This fact also suggests that the *Castle* and *Burgh* names are a homogeneous set of twenty-nine (possibly thirty-one) names of three closely-related sub-types, all co-translated from a common original and the first members of all sets first appearing within a few—and certainly no more than forty—years of each other. It suggests further that this set does not need to be crammed into a larger set of *Maiden*-names and names containing elements taken as equivalent to *maiden* which are comprehensively listed by Hough,¹¹¹ although the prior existence of such names may have made their acceptance into the English onomasticon easier. (As Hough notes, these may include other sub-types worthy of more detailed study, such as those where *mægden* is associated with a term meaning or implying water such as *ford*, *well*, *lode* and *bridge*.) Some are undoubtedly pre-Conquest in origin (e.g. *Maidwell PN Nth* 117 and *Maidencombe* in *Stokeinteignhead PN D* 460–61), and there are two relevant names in charter boundaries: (*of*) *mægidna brycge*, bounds attached to an untrustworthy document of the later eleventh century, ostensibly of 840 x 848 C.E., and (*on/of*) *mædena/mædæna coua*, an authentic twelfth-century document relating to 956 C.E.^{112,113}

It seems plausible that the Macedonian *Gunaikóastro* is also an allusion to the structure at al-Raqqah, its name-elements this time calqued into Greek with the impicature of youth lost in translation—

¹¹¹ Hough, 'Place-name evidence', 32–48.

¹¹² MS B.M. Cotton Tiberius A xiii, fo. 157 (*BCS* 428, *S* 1591); MS B.M. Add. 15350, fos 93^v–94 (*BCS* 948, *S* 585). *BCS* = *Cartularium Saxonicum: A Collection of Charters Relating to Anglo-Saxon History*, edited by W. de G. Birch, 3 vols + index (London, 1885–99); *S* = P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (London, 1968).

¹¹³ Other such names may refer to holdings by nuns or to institutions for other identifiable categories of women, as is certainly the case with names having manorial specifiers such as *Maiden Bradley* (W), probably *Maiden Newton* (A. D. Mills, *Dorset Place-Names*, new edn (Newbury, 1998), pp. 103–04), and possibly *Maiden Erlegh* in Earley (*PN Brk* 94) and *Madens Croft* in Solihull (Wa), recorded 1386, if these do not contain a surname. (The last is to be associated with the present, renamed, *Maidens Bower*, *PN Wa* 74; cf. n. 106.)

but note that the characteristic western word for a fort or castle, found borrowed in post-classical inscriptions and papyri (e.g. from Fayyūm) as *kástra/-on*,¹¹⁴ is one of its elements, suggesting that this allusion too may have its shallower roots in western Europe even if its deeper ones are in Syria. This element appeared in other place-names of the area such as *Gjirokastër* in Vlorë province, modern Albania, and previously in the Ottoman vilayet of Ioannina, which presumably contains a reference to the medieval castle there first recorded in 1336. The place is near the modern boundary with Greece, and the name is for Greek *Argurókastron* ‘silver fort’, modern *Argirókastro*. *Kástron* is a post-classical borrowing from Latin and the name in this form is presumably medieval, though the place is a much older foundation. Place-names containing it, such as *Palaíkastro* ‘old castle’ on Lesbos, are demonstrably post-classical, since we know the ancient name of some of the sites (in this case *Pýrrha*), and the site of a major Minoan city in eastern Crete is also referred to by the adjacent village-name *Palaíkastro*. In the latter case it is clear that the element *kástron* could be used of the ruins of any old monumental building, since the Minoan city (actually at Rousolakkos) was never fortified.¹¹⁵ It is curious that *castrum* was also taken up into the lexicon and toponomasticon of English (as *ceaster*, *cæster*), but not into any other Germanic languages, nor, apparently, into any Celtic languages, unless the name of Chesterblade (Somerset; NGR ST 6641) is taken as evidence for a Brittonic **kastr bleið* ‘fortification of a/the wolf’, applied to the prehistoric hillfort or the Roman villa there. This is not the standard

¹¹⁴ H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, edited by H. S. Jones, with E. A. Barber and others, *A Greek-English Lexicon: Supplement* (Oxford, 1968), p. 79.

¹¹⁵ Information on the Cretan city from the Hellenic Ministry of Culture web-site (visited 25/10/2004), www.culture.gr/2/21/211/21124a/e211xa07.html; thus also the cemetery-site in Arcadia called *Palaiókastro Gortýnias*, [/2/21/211/21105a/e211ea05.html](http://www.culture.gr/2/21/211/21105a/e211ea05.html). The element *kástron* continued in living toponomastic usage: cf. *Neókastro* ‘new castle’, the Turco-Venetian fort at Pylos, built in 1573, and indeed in ordinary lexical usage. It appears, in the regional form masculine *káistros*, in the names of two ruined fortified sites in Cyprus, one a Templar castle and the other a Neolithic structure (information from Dr Stavroula Varella), and in that of a place in Kırklareli province on the Black Sea coast of European Turkey.

account of the name,¹¹⁶ and it is tentatively suggested here for the first time.¹¹⁷

In English, as elsewhere, the reflex of *castrum/-a* principally denoted Roman towns and fortified places, but could also be used of unfortified Roman places such as Woodchester villa in Gloucestershire or unRoman fortified places such as the prehistoric Craster and Outchester in Northumberland.¹¹⁸ This phenomenon seems to be a thing of the later Empire, but its distribution still lacks an explanation: mainly in the Mediterranean region but also in Britain. In western Romance, it occurs as a place-name element in French and Occitan;¹¹⁹ *castra(s)* is what occurs in the *Latin* record of both regions, but it appears only uncompounded, i.e. as a free-standing generic, usually denoting a ruined Roman “camp”, and the word appears not to have survived as a lexeme in these languages. There is what purports to be a single instance of *castro* in Catalan territory (*Castroci* or *Castrossit* at Alta Ribagorça, prov. Huesca),¹²⁰ but its status as a Catalan name is unclear. The element seems to appear relatively freely in Spanish and yields a lexical word, and most instances in Galicia appear to denote hillforts or ruined towns. In other words, there are considerable affinities between the English, Spanish/Galician and eastern Mediterranean usages.

For the general plausibility of an effect on English toponymy caused by news from the First Crusade and its aftermath, note the often-reported fact that *Baldock*, first recorded in documents of the Knights Templar (1135–54), enshrines the Old French form of the name of the political and cultural centre of twelfth-century Islam, Baghdad (*Baldac*).¹²¹ The Templar documents referred to are contemporary with

¹¹⁶ For which see *CDEPN*, p. 131.

¹¹⁷ See more fully R. Coates, ‘Chesterblade, Somerset, with a reflection on the element *Chester*’ (forthcoming).

¹¹⁸ *VEPN*, 159.

¹¹⁹ Dauzat and Rostaing, *Dictionnaire étymologique*, p. 155.

¹²⁰ J. Coromines [Corominas], *Onomasticon Cataloniae* (Barcelona, 1995), pp. 330–31.

¹²¹ W. W. Skeat, *The Place-Names of Hertfordshire* (Hertford, 1904), p. 59; *PN Hrt* 120.

the first appearance of *HRB*.

Only two of the twenty-one *Maiden Castles* are south of a line from the Humber to the Dee. The distribution, with three in Fife, two in Midlothian, and one each in the former counties of Stirlingshire, Aberdeenshire, Dunbartonshire and Angus, one on the Perthshire/Clackmannanshire border, five in modern Cumbria and one in Durham (most of which cannot be proved to be medieval), suggests a significant relationship with Edinburgh, as though persons more likely to be familiar with Edinburgh and its Geoffreyan history were also more likely to deploy a name originally applied to a significant site in Edinburgh to one in their own localities. It cannot be an accident that the four northern English counties, Westmorland and Cumberland (which together make up most of the modern county of Cumbria), Northumberland and Durham, were confirmed to King David I of Scotland (reigned 1124–53) by Stephen of England (reigned 1135–54) by the terms of the second Treaty of Durham (1139). They remained in Scotland till David's successor Malcolm IV (by a curious twist of coincidence lumbered with the nickname "The Maiden" in recognition of his chastity—or did this originate as a joke identifying him as one of the *puellae* in the *castellum* at Edinburgh in Geoffrey's history?) was persuaded to hand them back to England by Henry II in 1157 in return for the earldom of Huntingdon. It is clearly possible that all these northern names, which account for fifteen of the twenty outside Edinburgh, were first applied in the first flush of literary excitement following Geoffrey's characterization of Edinburgh Castle as *Castellum Puellarum* and whilst all the relevant landscape features—actual defunct forts, or earthworks and rocky outcrops that could be viewed as resembling a defended site in function or form—were actually under the Scottish crown, though in view of the late first records of some it seems likelier that actually the rash spread in stages, as suggested above. Three others are not at a vast distance from the border agreed in 1139 (probably the year after the completion of *HRB*), especially one of the two in Yorkshire, that at Grinton about six miles from the Tees, the southern boundary of Durham, and arguably the other instances, that at Saxton in Yorkshire and the one in Cheshire, though the Cheshire one appears to be a late analogical reformation of *Maiden*

Tower, whatever the source of that might be—it is formally unique. The evidence of the dates of their first appearances in the record, where early, is consistent with onomastic influence from the north, though there is no ready answer to anyone who points out that the earliest reference of all outside Edinburgh is to the name which is furthest south in this northern group (discounting the questionable one in Cheshire), namely that at Saxton. Of course, as observed above, we should probably be speaking of the *naming-tradition* as beginning at this time, rather than of (all) the *names' being bestowed* then. Rather vexingly, the name at Saxton is the earliest-mentioned of all, never in Scottish territory, and the most distant of the northern group from Edinburgh. We may be forced to consider that it could represent a tradition independent of Edinburgh though still dependent on Geoffrey. It predates the first English mention of the Edinburgh *Maiden Castle* by twenty-odd years. However, since the Becca Banks earthworks straddle the Great North Road, and since they are “considered to be some of the most impressive monuments in Yorkshire”,¹²² we may, if we choose, ascribe the name to impressed travellers from Edinburgh.

Such an intensely northern distribution also suggests very strongly that the application of the name to the great hillfort at Winterborne St Martin must be a later event, and this seems to be confirmed by the record; it is not found before 1607 (*PN Do* 1: 377). The same goes for the two places in Pembrokeshire, one found only from the 1580s and the other only recently,¹²³ and this suspicion is strongly supported by the fact that in the Welsh form of the name of whichever place is meant *morwyn* ‘maiden’ appears in the soft-mutated form of its singular instead of the plural *mor(w)ynion*; surely it is calqued on the post-medieval English form which has the overtly singular, or at any rate number-neutral, *maiden*. Trefgarn Rocks are conventionally taken as the dividing line between the Pembrokeshire Englishry to the south

¹²² T. Cox, ‘Celtic Britain: the Ancient Kingdom of Elmet’, *The Barwicker*, 39 (2003), available online at www.kessler-web.co.uk/History/FeaturesBritain/BritishElmet.htm (visited 30/11/2004).

¹²³ See n. 42.

and Welshry to the north,¹²⁴ although Dinas parish is firmly in Welsh territory and the Welsh name in this parish has a better claim to be taken as original. Pending the discovery of further evidence, it appears to me that Tudor antiquaries in the mould of William Harrison or Michael Drayton are most likely to have been responsible for naming these two or three. Without them, *Maiden Castle* is an entirely northern toponymic phenomenon.

The distribution of the eight *Maiden* or *May Burgh* names, minus the one which may include *beorg* and the one recorded only very late, is intriguing but inscrutable: three are in Cumbria (all with a descendant of *mΣge*), and the other three in East Anglia (all with *maiden*). The former group fits the political-geographical pattern of *Maiden Castle*, of course, and one is equally ancient; another story is required for the latter, two of which are recorded by 1250. Perhaps the source of the latter, urban, group is a single southern Geoffrey fan in a place likely to have a manuscript: a monastery or college. Hough notes that occasionally a place-name in *maiden* appears to have been translated into Latin using the word *puella*,¹²⁵ confirming the equivalence of the terms even if not securing the etymology of the relevant name.

From the same proximate source: Thwangcaster

Now let us examine the case of another place-name, this time unique, which I believe can be attributed to the influence of *HRB*. The town of Caistor in Lincolnshire sometimes appears in medieval and early-modern records with its name in the compound form *Thwangcastre* and the like, which has never penetrated ordinary usage. It appears at all periods in parallel with the simplex name, which always dominates numerically. Cameron's records for *Thwangcastre* go back ostensibly to 1190 (in a document transcribed in the thirteenth-century cartulary of Nun Coatham Priory). The first element is, he says,¹²⁶ "clearly from

¹²⁴ See J. E. Southall's linguistic map of 1892, reproduced in A. R. Thomas, 'The Welsh language', in *The Celtic Languages*, edited by D. MacAulay (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 251–345 (p. 254).

¹²⁵ Hough, 'Place-name evidence', 28, n. 21.

¹²⁶ *PN L 2*: 87.

þwang ‘a thong’ in some transferred topographical sense, though it is not clear what this is”. But there is a mention dating from about half a century earlier which makes it all too clear what explains the name, and it is not topography. *HRB* tells the story of the way Hengist obtained his first grant of English land from king Vortigern by asking for as much as could be encompassed by a single thong.¹²⁷ He produced the thong by cutting up a bull’s hide into a single strip and used it to mark out a site for his fortress which was thereafter called *Castrum Corrigie* in Latin, *Kaer-carrei* (variant *-correi*) in Welsh and *Thanceastre* in “Saxon”, all ostensibly meaning ‘town of a/the strap/thong [etc.]’. The spelling of the last item will prove to be important in due course; for the moment it is enough to note that Geoffrey’s association of the form *-carrei*¹²⁸ with the English pseudo-equivalent <Than-> must have been enough for later users of the latter name to bring the spelling into line with the supposed meaning which he gives by inserting the <w>; <Than-> is rare in later documents.

Where Geoffrey got all this from is a matter for speculation, but the Welsh name at least may have been borrowed from, or suggested by, that of Cirencester, which appears as *Cairceri* in Asser’s *Life of Alfred*.¹²⁹ Why he should have visited the story of Vortigern, Hengist and Rowena on a small town in Lincolnshire is a question that has not been asked before. It evidently suited him to place Hengist explicitly in Lindsey by the beginning of the relevant paragraph,¹³⁰ and we must assume (a) that, though he was a Welshman or Breton by birth, and a scholar in Oxford, he was proficient enough in English to equate the crucial words, and (b) that he intended *Thanceastre* to be understood as being in Lindsey. Whether he had Caistor—or any particular place—in mind is an open question, but that is how posterity took it, and Camden set his seal on it.¹³¹ Geoffrey also (mis-)identified Lichfield (*Kaerlui-*

¹²⁷ *HRB* 99; §6, 11.

¹²⁸ For full discussion of this form see P. Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic Historical Phonology* (Amsterdam, 1995), pp. 313–16.

¹²⁹ *HRB* §57.5; Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, p. 24, n. 89, also notes the Cirencester connection.

¹³⁰ *HRB* §6.11.

¹³¹ William Camden, *Britannia*, edited by R. Gough (London, 1806), 2, 338.

deoit, meaning *-coit*) with Lincoln.¹³² We shall see why in due course. But it seems to have been Geoffrey's literary imagination that was responsible for pulling these various name-forms together in a single narrative and suggesting a semantic connection between them which distorted the form stolen from Cirencester and had an impact on the later development of the English name. This pulling-together of unrelated names from disparate sources is a closely similar procedure to what we have observed for *Mons Agned* and *Castrum Puellarum* as applied to Edinburgh Castle.

Caistor is known from Anglo-Saxon coin inscriptions and a substantial number of twelfth-century documents, but in these, with the exception of the 1190 document, only by its present single-element name. It seems likely to me that Geoffrey's account was the first the world had heard of Thwan(g)caster, and the scribe of the Cistercian nuns at Coatham Priory in 1190 may well have been demonstrating nothing more than the erudition of their time (or their taste for a patriotic yarn). The continuing appeal of this story for its readers may be demonstrated in that backchannel of history called folk-custom. A peculiar ceremony took place annually at Caistor parish church until the bishop of Lincoln put a stop to it in 1847. Here is the version of it given in *White's Directory* of 1856:

Until it was discontinued in 1847, a singular ceremony took place annually in this church, by the performance of which certain lands in the parish of Broughton, near Brigg, were held. On Palm Sunday, a person from Broughton brought a large whip, called a gad whip, the stock of which was made of wood, tapered towards the top. He came to the north porch about the commencement of the first lesson, and cracked his whip at the door three times; after which, with ceremony, he wrapped the thong round the stock of the whip, and bound the whole together with whip cord, tying up with it some twigs of mountain ash; he then tied to the top of the whip-stock a small leathern purse, containing two shillings (originally 24 silver pennies), and took the whole upon his shoulder into the Hundon choir, or chapel, where he stood in front of the reading desk until the commencement of the second lesson;

¹³² *HRB* 143; §9.3.

he then waved the purse over the head of the clergyman, knelt down upon a cushion, and continued in that posture, with the purse suspended over the clergyman's head, till the end of the lesson, when he retired into the choir. After the service was concluded, he carried the whip and purse to the manor house of Hundon, where they were left.¹³³

Of course this is completely speculative, but it all seems to me like part of a dramatic reinvention of the customs of early Britain by an antiquarian who knew his Camden. I suspect that the whip and the thong are not unconnected, and that the latter in Geoffrey has suggested the former into its symbolic existence; indeed, White's actually uses the word *thong* of the business end of the famous gadwhip itself (which may be inspected online in case readers find the church locked).¹³⁴

It might seem more likely that Geoffrey would latch onto an existing place-name suitable for the development of a story than that he would invent one, and we have seen that that is what he did for Edinburgh. As already mentioned, he has invented an etymology for Conisbrough (YWR) and Shaftesbury (Do); he has invented Celtic supposed precursors of Germanic names. But there is no prior evidence of a *Thwan(g)caster* anywhere. It is a true, superficially plausible, invention. But the spelling of the name as it has come down to us in the best manuscript tradition is probably significant. The seemingly defective rendering of the thong-word,¹³⁵ <Than-> (vars. <Thanc->, <Thang-> in the earliest MSS, though <w> appears later), suggests that he has appropriated and maybe lightly disguised the name of Thanet, which is crucial in Nennius' account of Hengist's arrival in Britain, and which Geoffrey knew,¹³⁶ but which does not appear in the corresponding section of *HRB* dealing with the Saxons' first coming.¹³⁷

¹³³ Available at www.caistor.free-online.co.uk/whites1856.htm, lightly edited here; in particular *thong* is corrected from the evident error *throng* appearing in the online version.

¹³⁴ At www.caistor.free-online.co.uk/notes15.htm.

¹³⁵ *HRB* 99 in both texts edited by Wright (n. 61).

¹³⁶ *HRB* 101, 148; §§6.13; 9.5.

¹³⁷ *HRB* 99; §6.11.

Has he then transplanted some key events of the *adventus Saxonum* to Lindsey, and shipped in the Welsh names of Cirencester and Lichfield too, achieving a sort of linguistic and geographical cohesiveness relevant to his own day at the expense of his sources? If so, his reason for doing so is evident: he wanted preferment, and he is known to have batted on to Alexander, bishop of Lincoln 1123–48, whom he praises in the preface to the *Prophecies of Merlin*.¹³⁸ What better gift to your potential patron than evidence of events of great historical significance in his territory? If anyone still wants evidence that Geoffrey cannot be trusted as an academic historian, here is some more. Alexander was a patron of the Cistercians, donating his estate at Thame (O) to them and making Thame church a prebend of Lincoln in or after 1138, which could help to account for why the Cistercians of Coatham Priory apparently had a copy of *HRB* from which they drew their use of Geoffrey's invented name.

Pwang is a known place-name element, appearing in such names as *Netherthong*,¹³⁹ but we can be sure that the alternative name of Caistor does not provide serious evidence for it.

Chrétien de Troyes and *Beaurepaire*

There is a further case, quite comparable with that of *Maiden Castle*, of a name-type most instances of which are plausibly explained as inspired by medieval literature. Both have to do with the spread of a pre-existing structural type, in the one case exotic, in the other merely rare (though perhaps exotic from a purely English perspective), and both *chevaleresque*. The name *Beaurepaire* (Old French *bel repaire*, 'beautiful retreat') has previously been mentioned¹⁴⁰ in the same breath as the castle of that name belonging to Blancheflor in Chrétien de Troyes' romance *Perceval (Li contes del graal)*, which must have been circulating in France and the Norman domains from the late 1180s or early 1190s onwards. But no-one, so far as I know, has taken the step of suggesting that its appearance in England, no earlier than 1231 in

¹³⁸ *HRB* 110; §§7.1–7.2; cf. Wright, *Burgerbib. MS*: xi, xvi.

¹³⁹ *PN YWR* 2, 286–87; *EPNE* 2, 221.

¹⁴⁰ Watts, *Durham*, p. 6, under *Bearpark*.

any recorded instance, is the result of Norman magnates' using for one of their own domains a name that had become famous in literature. The chronology clearly suggests that this may have been the case. We may propose that Chrétien took his castle-name from an instance of the well-established French type *beau* + *X* (as in *Beaumont*, *Beaulieu*, *Beauregard*, all on record before 1150). The earliest instances of *Beaurepaire* are in commune Vivoin (départ. Sarthe; partially in Latin *Pulchrum Repaire* c.1010) and commune Somain (départ. Nord; *Belrepaire* 1166). A rash of others appears after the mid-1180s, like the earliest two all in the region in which the langue d'oïl was spoken (in fact all but that at Vivoin are in Normandy, Picardy or Artois), and they may therefore plausibly be ascribed to the influence of Chrétien:

Beaurepaire, commune Roubaix (Nord) : *Beaurepaire* 1186
Beaurepaire, cne Doullens (Somme) : *Bello reditus* 1208
Beaurepaire, cne Rouen (Seine-Maritime) : *Belrepaire* 1218
Beaurepaire, cne Infreville (Eure) : *Beaurepaire* 1218
Belper, parish (Derbyshire) : *Beurepeir* 1231
Beaurepaire, cne Charly (Aisne) : *Beaurepeire* 1234
Beaurepaire, cne (Seine-Maritime) : *Belrepaire* c.1240
Bearpark, Witton Gilbert (County Durham) : *Beaurepeyr* 1267
and others subsequently in England

Chrétien was active at the court of Marie de Champagne. The connection between Champagne and the specially fertile Norman soil on both sides of the English Channel into which the name fell could have been provided by the fact that Marie's mother was Eleanor of Aquitaine, queen of Henry II and therefore Duchess of Normandy till her death in 1204. This pattern, the explosive spread of a name-type with a few previous attestations, is like that of *Coldharbour*, mentioned above, and differs from that of *Maiden Castle* only in that the latter was entirely new-fangled as a name (though not as a structural type).

More from Geoffrey

We should also note the recurrent name *Troy Town*. Although this has

been shown convincingly to denote the site of a maze,¹⁴¹ the source of the allusion is to Troy as the home of the founders of Britain, as set out by Geoffrey in *HRB*.¹⁴² The supposed involvement of Troy in British history is also responsible for the alternative maze-name type *Julian Bower* and the like, which alludes to the legendary son of Æneas the Trojan, though he is not in *HRB*. It is a matter of taste whether we also lay the various *Arthur's Seats* and *Arthur's O'on* ['Oven'] at Geoffrey's door; a good proportion of the relevant names in the *OS Gazetteer*, whose histories I have not pursued for this article, are in Scotland and Cumbria, as with *Maiden Castle*.¹⁴³

To the best of my knowledge, *Rhydychen* as the Welsh name for the city where Geoffrey lived and worked in the 1130s, Oxford—a transparent calque on the English name (Welsh *rhyd* 'ford', *ychen* 'oxen')—is not found before Geoffrey's *magnum opus*¹⁴⁴ where it appears gratuitously in the name of "Boso *Ridocesis* [sic], id est Oxenefordie", the man later referred to as *Boso de Uado Boum* or *de Ridichen* "que lingua Saxonum Oxeneford nuncupatur" who re-emerges yet again later.¹⁴⁵ Geoffrey the inventor has therefore apparently had an impact on the Welsh toponymic landscape as well as the English one.¹⁴⁶

However strong or weak might be the case for these names in this tailpiece and others, there is no room to doubt now that Geoffrey has made a significant contribution to our toponymy, and there is a strong

¹⁴¹ W. M. S. Russell and C. Russell, 'English turf mazes, Troy and the Labyrinth', *Folklore*, 102 (1991), 77–88 (esp. 79–81); G. S. Tyack, 'Mazes', in *Ecclesiastical Curiosities*, edited by W. Andrews (London, 1899), 186–205, esp. pp. 200–01.

¹⁴² *HRB* 6–22; §§1, 3–18.

¹⁴³ The interesting alteration of the Brittonic name *Arfderydd* to *Arthuret* (*PN Cu* 51–52) also belongs here. For this, the term *folk-etymology* hardly seems appropriate; the alteration is due to the literate classes and it would be pleasant to introduce the term *clerk-etymology* for this phenomenon.

¹⁴⁴ *HRB* 156; §9,12.

¹⁴⁵ *HRB* 166, 168; §§10,4, 10,6.

¹⁴⁶ Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain*, p. 27, n. 102, regards *Boso*, as if "Ox-o", as a further pun on the name of the town, though it was really a common Norman given-name of Germanic origin.

case to be made that *Maiden Castle* is the most significant of all.

Finally, I should like to suggest (1) that the entire literature of courtly love, which results from the intertwining of the notions of *court or castle* and *love for (not readily accessible) women*, derives from the potent and exotic image of a palace perceived as a castle for the Caliph's women, i.e. *Qaṣr al-Banāt*, imported from the Levant and in due course profoundly christianized, as if iconically for the intended christianization of the eastern Mediterranean lands themselves by the First Crusaders at the same period;¹⁴⁷ and (2) that Geoffrey of Monmouth is the storyteller who lets this hound out of the trap.

Appendix 1: some further philological considerations

Since so much in this article has hinged on the relations between users of Romance and Semitic languages, I should like to end by reviewing the etymology of Latin *castrum*, whose stem is the base of the *castellum* which has featured largely. The relation between these words must be one affectively akin to diminutivization, and the formation must be Italic **kastr-lom*, with postconsonantal assimilation of [rl] > [ll], then epenthesis of [e], following Leumann.¹⁴⁸ It has been shown that *castrum/castellum* can denote a class of buildings overlapping with what *qaṣr* can denote. But what, if any, is the relation between the two words? Could the Latin word be borrowed from Semitic, or the Semitic word from Latin? Chance resemblance, although never eliminable completely, is hard to countenance in this case.

The only certain relatives of *castrum* are closely similar words in the adjacent Italic dialects Oscan (*castrous*, nominative plural) and Umbrian (*castruo*, *kastruvuf* accusative plural), both meaning 'fundus, country estate'. No wholly satisfactory origin has been proposed for this group. Walde and Hofmann set out the alternatives that have been proposed through a century of scholarship—some of which appear desperate—involving semantically and/or phonologically difficult relations with such words as *caput* 'head', *capo* 'capon', *castrare* 'to castrate', and the root meaning 'to weave' seen, allegedly, in *cassis* 'net, web', and they appear to favour identity with a

¹⁴⁷ This idea is consistent with the Greek poetic topos mentioned in n. 52: the castle-name has in both cases been appropriated and turned back against its Muslim source.

¹⁴⁸ M. Leumann, *Lateinische Laut- und Formenlehre* (Munich, 1977), §282.B.1; more generally on the phonology involved, §282.F).

hypothetical form **kastrom*, a noun denoting an cutting instrument held to underlie *castrare*, though the semantics of the metaphor they envisage is hard to fathom.¹⁴⁹ Ernout and Meillet also favour a connection with *castrare* in a dubious generalized meaning ‘separate’, therefore something like ‘private estate’, for which however the term *fundus* was perfectly serviceable and normal.¹⁵⁰ A radically different possibility first suggested by Cuny,¹⁵¹ and dismissed without explanation by Walde and Hofmann, is that, like *atrium*, it is a borrowing from a Punic word which Cuny writes as *Ha^Tšar*, from the root *Hā^Tšēr*, ‘courtyard’ (“et aussi pagus, uilla, locus saepto munitus” ‘and also “a country district, villa, place enclosed by a hedge”’). The divergent development envisaged by Cuny is explained by treating *atrium* as a direct borrowing, but *castrum* as mediated by Celtic, where the Punic root appears as Irish *cathair*, Welsh *cader*. The Celtic suggestion is philologically highly dubious (the source of the latter word at least is generally accepted as being Latin *catedra*), but surely we can consider instead whether there might have been a Punic equivalent of Arabic *qaṣr*. On the face of it, *qaṣr* appears to be a genuine Semitic word. It allows the regular diminutive *quṣayr*. It has a typical Semitic noun paradigm with nonlinear expression of morphosyntactic features, including the plural *quṣūr*. *Quṣūr* is used of the Umayyad-period (661–750 C.E.) desert palace complexes (see further below) and of the abodes given by God to the blessed in Paradise,¹⁵² and supposedly in the name of Luxor, Egypt, asserted in some non-philological sources (including current official ones) to be for **al-uqṣūr*, related in an unexplained way to *quṣūr*, from two Roman installations there. But this formation would appear to be based on the shape of the superlative construct, **aqṣūr*, i.e. an adjectival form, and the story seems incoherent, a late attempt at rationalizing the name.

Of course, the morphological facts cited do not represent final proof of its native status; it could simply be a fully nativized loanword. But if such a form had been available as its source, *castrum* would be easy to explain: the common Semitic uvular (“emphatic”) plosive [q] is replaced by Latin’s nearest equivalent “back” oral plosive [k], and the pharyngealized

¹⁴⁹ A. Walde and J. B. Hofmann, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 5th edn, 3 vols (Heidelberg, 1982), I, 180.

¹⁵⁰ A. Ernout and A. Meillet, edited by J. André, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, 4th edn (Paris, 1979), p. 104.

¹⁵¹ A. Cuny, ‘Questions gréco-orientales VIII: lat. *ātrium*’, *Revue des Études anciennes*, 8 (1916), 12–18.

¹⁵² *Qur’ān* (c.620 C.E.), sura 25:10.

(“emphatic”) [ʃ] by the nearest equivalent in a language without contrastive pharyngealization, plain [s]. Latin had no native consonant sequence *[sr]; this combination inherited from Proto-Indo-European had become *[βr], later [br], intervocally,¹⁵³ and a borrowing with this sequence would have needed to be latinized. A phonetically simple solution would be an epenthetic [t] easing the transition from [s] to [r] and already phonotactically admissible (cf. *lustrum*, *ostrea*, *rostrum*). It might also be possible to view the related but different usage of *qaṣr* and its plural form *quṣūr* as the model for the partially distinct applications of the singular and plural forms in Latin. If the root of *qaṣr* is truly the source of *castrum*, the creation of *Maiden Castle* was not the first time the West had looked to the East for its linguistic material in the architectural field, and there is a probably unsought historical appropriateness in the medieval use of the terms *castrum* and *castellum* to render the *qaṣr* of Hārūn al-Raṣīd’s palace at al-Raqqah.

It has been proposed¹⁵⁴ that the ancient name of the island of Pantellaria, in the Mediterranean between the site of Carthage and Sicily, derives from such a Semitic root. The forms in which it appears in antiquity are *Kos(s)uros*, *Kossura*, *Cosyros*, *-us*, *-a*, and it is not unreasonable to consider the idea that they represent a form phonologically, if not morphologically, analogous to modern Arabic *quṣūr*. These might, then, be evidence for the existence of the root **qṣr* in Punic, although according to Deroy and Mulon “cette hypothèse est gratuite”. However—and this is the key point—even if the idea is true, it does not undermine the possible case for a Punic origin of *castrum/-a* because (1) even the most similar pair, *Cosyra* and *castra*, may derive from different states of the root, and (2) the history of the area requires the Romans to have first heard this name filtered through Greek, and a form like *Cosyra* used in Latin is certainly not a direct Latin reflex of a Punic word or name.

If the philological argument just given could be sustained, a possible cultural history of the term could be as follows. The Punic word was borrowed into Latin as *castrum* early in the history of Rome’s contact with Carthage. In this singular form, it is most often found in place-names, whilst the lexical concept ‘military camp’ is expressed mainly by the plural form *castra*. Among the fifty-odd place-names in *Castrum* or *Castra* mentioned in

¹⁵³ Leumann, §207.

¹⁵⁴ As reported by L. Deroy and M. Mulon, *Dictionnaire de noms de lieux* (Paris, 1992), p. 367.

Pauly and Wissowa's *Realencyklopädie*,¹⁵⁵ the apparently second-oldest is *Castrum album* in Hispania Citerior, recorded by Livy as playing a role in the campaigns against Mago and Hasdrubal the Carthaginians.¹⁵⁶ Three others, in Apulia, Campania and Bruttium, have names explicitly associating the place with Hannibal (*Castra Hannibalis*). These might be taken as supporting the view that the earliest use of *castrum/castra* was in a context shared with speakers of Punic, though of course this association could be due to the accidental fact that Rome's earliest documented relations with non-Cisalpine powers were with Carthage, and the word might really have been in existence before that. However, the lack of a convincing Indo-European etymology should not be forgotten; it raises the probability of a source in an unrelated language. By the time of the Empire, of course, the word was well embedded in Latin and could be applied anywhere.

The oldest recorded name including this element appears to be *Castrum Novum* in Picenum, now Giulianova near Pescara, colonized in 284 B.C.E., i.e. before the Punic wars which began in 264 B.C.E. This is not a problem, since the earliest productive contacts between Carthage and Rome go back much earlier; the first treaty between them dates from 509 B.C.E., the year of the creation of the Republic, and there are embassies and renewals from time to time for the next 200 years, showing continuing contact.¹⁵⁷

Light of a different and perhaps faint sort on whether a form **qašr* or the like existed in Punic is offered by the text of one of the Golden Lamellae of Pyrgi, a document excavated by Massimo Pallottino in 1964 which records, bilingually in Punic¹⁵⁸ and Etruscan, a royal dedication of a temple of Ishtar.¹⁵⁹ These plates were discovered in Pyrgi, the port of the city of Caere

¹⁵⁵ *Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, 3: Barbarus—Claudius*, edited by A. Pauly, rev. edn by Georg Wissowa (Stuttgart, 1899), *s.nn.*

¹⁵⁶ Titus Livius, *Ab urbe condita*, edited by R. S. Conway and others (Oxford, 1914–65; hereafter *AUC*), 24, 41, 3.

¹⁵⁷ On the nature of such contact, see J. N. Adams, *Bilingualism and the Latin Language* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 201.

¹⁵⁸ Or rather Phoenician: *ibid.*, p. 202.

¹⁵⁹ For the text and discussion, see A. J. Pfiffig, *Uni-Hera-Astarte. Studien zu den Goldblechen von S. Severa/Pyrgi mit etruskischer und punischer Inschrift* (Vienna, 1965, for the Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften); Massimo Pallottino, *Testimonia Linguae Etruscae*, 2nd edn (Florence, 1968), no. 874; G. Bonfante and L. Bonfante, *The Etruscan Language: an Introduction* (Manchester, 1983), p. 53; for the background, G. Colonna and M. P. Baglione, 'Il Santuario

in Etruria, and the Phoenician text gives what appears to be the name of Caere (whether in some oblique case-form is unknown) as <kyšry/>, the consonantal skeleton possibly to be vocalized as /kajšr(a)j/. The Latin name-form which continues it has undergone regular medial consonant cluster assimilation.¹⁶⁰ This highlights the dilemma powerfully: is this name a geographically “Italian” relative of *castrum* rendered into Phoenician/Punic, or might it suggest that a Phoenician/Punic word akin to *qašr* appears in the name, or a description, of an Etruscan city?

Clearly the highest probability is that <kyšry/> represents the contemporary form of the local name of the Etruscan city, not an imported Semitic name, and the diphthong in the city-name raises the probability of an accidental resemblance to the consonantal skeleton of *castrum*. There is no other hard evidence bearing on a Semitic source for relevant Latin words. Furthermore, there are hints that borrowing in the reverse direction is what really happened. Scerrato notes that the desert-edge Umayyad palaces referred to above “[stem] from the *castras* [sic] of the Roman-Byzantine frontiers in their external aspects”,¹⁶¹ and if that is so it is obviously possible that the name-element got into Arabic (or got back into Semitic) through this route: from the word used in the later Roman Empire for a particular kind of large and opulent villa-like building.

Etrusco di Pyrgi’, in *Scavi e Ricerche Archeologiche dell’Università di Roma “La Sapienza”*, edited by L. D. Troccoli (Rome, 1998), pp. 125–35.

¹⁶⁰ The Etruscan name of Caere is widely given as <Cisra> (following Pfiffig, *Uni-Hera-Astarte*, p. 13), even in authoritative sources, but this form must be considered aberrant in the light of the Phoenician version of the name and the other early spellings <Caisrie> and <Caisra>. It must have had /ai/ in the first syllable. These other spellings show a remarkable similarity to the cognomen *Caesar*, whose origin has traditionally been thought to be bound up with the Latin word *caesaries* ‘a head of hair’. That has a well-attested Indo-European root, but there is still no completely satisfactory explanation of its form and none at all of the nature of the link between its root and *Caesar*, from which it appears to be affixally derived (Walde and Hofmann, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, I, 133). A connection between *Caesar* and *Caere* should be considered instead; the ancient city, at the modern village of Cerveteri, is in Etruria some twenty-eight miles north-west of Rome. For the little it is worth, Livy (*AUC* 9.36.2–3) also reports a man educated at Caere whom some identified as one *Caeso*.

¹⁶¹ U. Scerrato, *Monuments of Civilization: Islam* (London, 1976 [Italian edition 1972]), p. 26.

The origin of *castrum* is still undecidable philologically, then, but there is a distinct possibility that the word originated outside Latin. It is certain that it was used to describe buildings of a kind including those which, in the eastern Empire, had a similar function to those which came to be called *qaṣr*, and it therefore seems inescapable that the Arabic word is at least a semantic borrowing of *castrum/-a* from eastern Latin. That *castrum* could be applied to non-military buildings in this area as well as to sites with a military purpose is shown by the various Greek villages with names in *-kástron* alluding to unfortified sites, including the Minoan city at Palaikastro in eastern Crete, and in its turn *qaṣr* came to be used by incoming Arabic-speakers to denote non-military buildings from the Roman era such as those at ‘Irāq al-Amīr and Petra mentioned in the main text above. It is this Arabic toponomastic tradition which allows the word to be used of the large and new unfortified Umayyad desert palaces, the courts of Muslim Heaven and Qaṣr al-Banāt. The rest is history—*Historia regum Britannie*.

Appendix 2: Volumes of the Survey of English Place-Names (EPNS)

PN BdHu = A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire*, EPNS, 3 (Cambridge, 1926).

PN Bk = A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Buckinghamshire*, EPNS, 2 (Cambridge, 1925).

PN Brk = M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Berkshire*, 3 vols, EPNS, 49–51 (Cambridge, 1973–76).

PN C = P. H. Reaney, *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*, EPNS, 19 (Cambridge, 1943).

PN Ch = J. McN. Dodgson, *The Place-Names of Cheshire*, 5 vols, EPNS, 44–48, 54, 74 (Cambridge and Nottingham, 1970–97).

PN Cu = A. M. Armstrong, A. Mawer, F. M. Stenton and B. Dickins, *The Place-Names of Cumberland*, 3 vols, EPNS, 20–22 (Cambridge, 1950–52).

PN D = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Devon*, 2 vols, EPNS, 8–9 (Cambridge, 1931–32).

PN Db = K. Cameron, *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*, 3 vols, EPNS, 27–29 (Cambridge, 1959).

PN Do = A. D. Mills, *The Place-Names of Dorset*, vols 1–3 (ongoing), EPNS, 52, 53, 59/60 (Nottingham, 1977–).

PN Ess = P. H. Reaney, *The Place-Names of Essex*, EPNS, 12 (Cambridge, 1935).

PN Hrt = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Hertfordshire*, EPNS, 15 (Cambridge, 1938).

PN L = K. Cameron, *The Place-Names of Lincolnshire*, vols 1–6 (ongoing but suspended), EPNS, 58, 64–66, 71, 73, 77 (Nottingham, 1985–2001).

- PN Mx* = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, with the collaboration of S. J. Madge, *The Place-Names of Middlesex apart from the City of London*, EPNS, 18 (Cambridge, 1942).
- PN Nt* = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Nottinghamshire*, EPNS, 17 (Cambridge, 1940).
- PN Nth* = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Northamptonshire*, EPNS, 10 (Cambridge, 1933).
- PN O* = M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire*, 2 vols, EPNS, 23–24 (Cambridge, 1953–54).
- PN Sx* = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Sussex*, 2 vols, EPNS, 6–7 (Cambridge, 1929–30).
- PN Wa* = J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, in collaboration with F. T. S. Houghton, *The Place-Names of Warwickshire*, EPNS, 13 (Cambridge, 1936).
- PN We* = A. H. Smith, *The Place-Names of Westmorland*, 2 vols, EPNS, 42–43 (Cambridge, 1966).
- PN YNR* = A. H. Smith, *The Place-Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire*, EPNS, 5 (Cambridge, 1928).
- PN YWR* = A. H. Smith, *The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire*, 8 vols, EPNS, 30–37 (Cambridge, 1961–63).

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