The University of
Nottingham
School of English

Examine the value of place-names as evidence for the history, landscape and, especially, language(s) of your chosen area.

Gemma Langford

Overview

This study concerns the names of forty historic parishes which lie immediately to either side of Watling Street where it passes through the county of Northamptonshire (Fig. 1). The location of the sample, lying as it does on a major Roman road, might lead to expectations of considerable Latin influence in the place-names of the area. Such influence however is fairly limited and is restricted to the generics of the market town of Tow*cester* and Watling *Street* itself.

In the Anglo-Saxon and Viking periods, Watling Street marked the traditional boundary between the Scandinavian controlled Danelaw in the north and east and the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex to the south and west. Accordingly it would be expected

Figure 1 The historic county and parishes of Northamptonshire showing the location of the corpus

that although Old English (OE) names would be found throughout the county, Old Norse (ON) names would be contained solely to the north of this theoretical boundary. There are at least eight ON or partially ON settlement names in the corpus; four of these, however, lie in the traditionally Anglo-Saxon territory south of this line, suggesting a more complicated pattern of Scandinavian settlement than historical sources might suggest.

As is the pattern throughout the county as a whole however, the place-names of the corpus are overwhelmingly OE in origin. I shall therefore consider the pre-English, Scandinavian and post-Conquest influences on the nomenclature of the area before offering a more detailed and typological study of the OE place-names in the corpus.

British Presence

Evidence for a pre-English presence in the nomenclature of the area is extremely limited. *Crick* is the only example of a Celtic derived settlement name in the corpus and is one of perhaps only three Celtic names found throughout the whole of Northamptonshire. This is to be expected in a Midland county, a district which lies some distance from the traditional areas of continued Celtic habitation of Wales, Cornwall and Scotland.
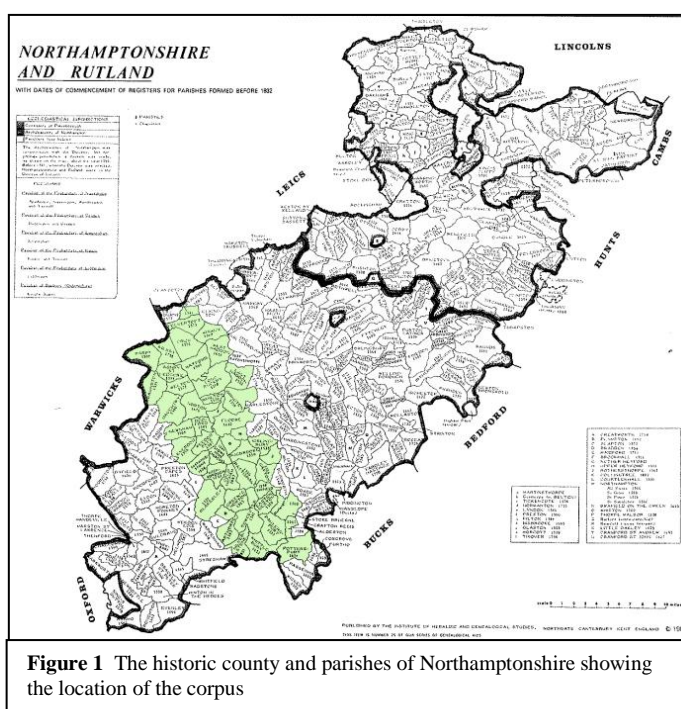
Typically Celtic settlement names are derived from the landscape features in their immediate environment; topographical elements are transferred to habitation sites without the addition of specific 'habitative' elements.[1] This appears to have been the case with the simplex Crick. The modern name is thought to originate from Primitive Welsh 'crüg', which has been variously interpreted as meaning: 'rock', 'cliff', 'hill', 'mount' and 'tumulus'. There is, however, some uncertainty about exactly where the landscape feature that lends its name to the village lies.

Although NthPN observes that Crick is sited on a ridge, I think the somewhat tentative alternative explanation — that the name instead refers to *Crack's Hill*, which lies to the north-east of the modern village — more likely (Fig. 2). PNNth objects to this interpretation on the grounds that the hill is not topographically adjacent to the village and is unlikely to have had its name transferred to a settlement which is not in its immediate vicinity. Gelling's refined definition of '*crūc*', however, as a 'natural hill with an abrupt outline which makes a specially striking visual impact' convinces me that Crack's Hill *is* the source of the settlement name, since it offers a perfect description of this particular

Figure 2 *Crack's Hill* in relation to *Crick* village

feature.[2] As can be seen from the photograph (Fig. 3), the hill's profile is certainly 'striking', rising abruptly from an otherwise gently undulating landscape and even NthPN describes the hill as being 'exceptional in this county'.[3]

Figure 3 *Crack's Hill* from Yelvertoft Road 06-04-2013

It is perhaps because of the 'exceptional' nature of the feature that it describes that this Celtic-derived name survives when other pre-English names have disappeared without trace. Northamptonshire lies in 'Area 1' of Jackson's Celtic survivals map, where frequently only the names of major rivers or very significant settlement sites, already well-established in the knowledge of the wider population, survive.[4] Crick, however, is hardly a settlement of great significance. Whilst clusters of Celtic-derived place-names elsewhere might suggest the survival of enclaves of Celtic-speaking Britons in otherwise predominantly Anglo-Saxon landscapes,[5] it is unlikely to be the case that a British population survived beyond the earliest years of Anglo-Saxon settlement in the isolated *Crick*. It is much more likely that following limited early contact with the indigenous population the Anglo-Saxons borrowed the term

---

[1] Kenneth Cameron, *English Place-names* (London: B T Batsford, 1996), p. 36
[2] Margaret Gelling and Ann Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names* (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000), p. 159
[3] J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *English Place-name Society, Vol. X: The Place-Names of Northamptonshire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933), p. 69 (Henceforth *PNNth*)
[4] K. H. Jackson, reproduced in Kenneth Cameron, *English Place-names* (London: B T Batsford, 1996), p. 46
[5] Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2010), p. 92

into their own language. Gelling suggests that the motivation behind this might have been a perceived semantic gap in the Anglo-Saxons' own vocabulary of hill names.[6] The term which had only a general meaning in its original language gained a specialised sense when borrowed into the vocabulary of the Anglo-Saxons. Place-names then can offer hints as to how early communities and languages interacted.

Roman Occupation

Given its close proximity to a major Roman road it might be expected that the corpus would show considerable evidence of Roman occupation. Apart from 'Watling Street' itself, however, Latin influence is seen only in the name 'Towcester', which lies directly on the former Roman route. It must be noted, however, that this relative scarcity of surviving Latin elements is the pattern witnessed throughout the country as a whole.[7] These two names are therefore in themselves clear evidence of Roman activity in the area.

OE *strǣt* 'street' is an Anglicization of Latin *via strata* and was amongst the few Latin words borrowed into the primitive-Germanic languages on the Continent. In OE it became the standard term for paved roads, especially those of Roman origin.[8] The first element 'Watling' is the OE folk-name *Wæclinga*, and so the whole translates as 'the Roman road associated with the family or followers of a man called *Wæcel'. The fact that *strǣt* was already productive in the language of the Anglo-Saxons before they arrived in Britain, alongside the fact that Watling Street's prototheme is also OE, suggests that the name is not (as it might initially appear) an adoption of an earlier Roman name for the route.

The same is true of Towcester, which similarly combines a Latin derived generic, *castra,* OE *ceaster*, with what is assumed to be an OE specific, **tof,* 'slow, dilatory'.[9] The whole translates as 'Roman fortification on the River Tove'. The fort to which the name refers was the garrison town of Lactodurum, but it is clear that the modern name owes no linguistic debt to this earlier one. Lactodurum is believed to be a compound of **lacto*, 'milk' (which Rivet and Smith suggest is a pre-existing, Celtic, figurative name for the river: 'milky-water' rather than, as Jackson suggests, reference to any dairy industry at the site)[10] and *durum*, the Latin term for 'walled town or enclosed town with gateways.'[11] It might be tempting to speculate that 'Towcester' was a semantic translation of Lactodurum, but like *strǣt*, OE c*easter* was only productive in the years after Roman presence in Britain had declined.[12] Neither etymology offers evidence for direct interaction between Latin and English-speaking populations in the area; instead it seems that Anglo-Saxons encountered Roman civilisation in the area as ruins.

Further evidence of Anglo-Saxon perception of a former Roman presence is supplied by 'Floore'. This is an OE simplex name rather than a Latin borrowing, but the name may have referred to the 'variegated floor' or tessellated pavement of a Roman villa[13] similar to that unearthed in the neighbouring parish of Nether Heyford.[14] It must be noted, though, that no such remains have yet been uncovered and other explanations unrelated to Roman remains such as 'threshing-floor' are equally possible.[15]

Scandinavian Settlement

---

[6] Gelling and Cole, p. 159
[7] A. D. Mills, 'The chronology and language of English Place-Names', *Oxford Dictionary of British Place-Names* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2003) <http://books.google.co.uk/books>
[8] A. H. Smith, 'strǣt', *English Place-name Elements vols. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 162
[9] Eilert Ekwall, *The Concise Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), p. 478
[10] A. Rivett, and C. Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London: Book Club Associates, 1981), p. 382
[11] K. H. Jackson, quoted in Gelling, p. 42
[12] Gelling, *Signposts*, pp. 152-53
[13] Ibid., p. 156
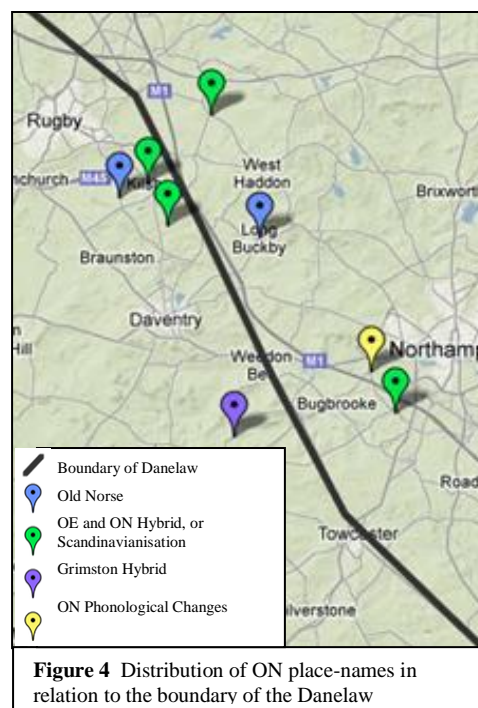[14] *PNNth*, p. 82
[15] Ibid.

Between the ninth and eleventh centuries England was extensively settled by Scandinavians. Settlers in the Midlands are historically presumed to be Danish, and the ON elements which recur throughout Northamptonshire confirm this historical picture: *By* and *thorp* names particularly, of which there are at least four in the corpus, are distinctly Danish rather than Norwegian. Whilst the place-name evidence for the origins of the Scandinavian settlers may fit the historical record, the distribution of ON settlement-names is more complicated.

Historically Watling Street marked the boundary between the Scandinavian controlled territories in the North-East and the English held kingdom of Wessex in the South-West. Accordingly 'we may presume that the county west of Watling Street was never in effective occupation by the Vikings'.[16] Place-name evidence, however, suggests a slightly different reality to that supposed by the historical record. Of the eight ON derived and influenced names in the corpus, half (Ashby St Ledgers, Kilsby, Barby and Farthingstone, which has an Anglo-Scandinavian personal-name as specific) lie to the south of the boundary, in supposedly Scandinavian-free territory (Fig. 4). On closer inspection, however, several of the seemingly ON names reveal themselves not in fact to be ON, but rather Scandinavianisations of earlier OE names. Ashby, for example, is a common name in the Danelaw and there are four others in the county,[17] yet whilst the final element –*by* is unmistakeably

Figure 4 Distribution of ON place-names in relation to the boundary of the Danelaw

Scandinavian the first element appears to be English *asc* rather than ON *askr*. Ekwall argues that the most likely explanation for this spelling is that the common Ashton became Scandinavianized, with –*by* replacing –*tun*[18] and indeed in the later years of the Anglo-Saxon period the ON –*by* was borrowed into and became productive in OE. The characteristically ON initial 'K' in Kislingbury and Kilsby are also clear examples of the phonological and orthographical Scandinavianisation of OE forms.

The only settlement which is truly problematic to the historical division of North and South is Barby. This is a wholly ON name, with an ON personal-name as specific, suggesting that the site was in fact not only held but inhabited by a Scandinavian. The place names of the corpus in general, however, suggest that although the linguistic influence of ON had a lasting effect on the nomenclature of the region, its influence was largely the result of gradual dialectal shifts rather than the imposition of extensive Scandinavian settlement.

Norman Conquest

The French language in the years following conquest had a profound impact on the English language as a whole but very little influence on the country's already well-established place-names. This was due in part to the fact that the Norman presence in Britain was almost exclusively aristocratic. French was a superstrate language spoken only at the highest levels of society and as such its influence on minor names was minimal. French,

---

[16] Ibid., p. xxi
[17] Ekwall, p. xxii
[18] Ibid., p. xxiii

however, did have a considerable impact via its addition of manorial affixes to already existing names.

Villages such as Greens Norton and Paulerspury bear testament to the French aristocratic families, the Grene and Pavelli[19] families, which once held them. Greens Norton in fact underwent several changes of name in the centuries following the Norman invasion. Name changes, however, take time to fossilise, and when the eponymous Henry *Grene* held the manor in 1369 the parish was still known by the earlier name *Norton Davy* (perhaps after David, who held the manor in the thirteenth century).[20] In fact both names were still in use as late as 1580, when the village was recorded in the *Feet of Fines* as '*Davye al. Grenes Norton*'[21] long after either ceased to hold the manor.

Unlike the compounding of OE and ON personal names with place-names, manorial affixes reflect land ownership or rights to revenue rather than direct occupation of a site and it was not only aristocratic dynasties that could hold land. Religious houses in the Norman homelands often received revenues from and in time gave their names to English settlement. Weedon Beck is named for the Abbey of Bec-Hellouin in Normandy which received a moiety of the manor in a charter from Henry II.[22] The affix serves to distinguish the village from the nearby and similarly named Weedon Lois.

Ultimately this was the purpose of manorial affixes, to enable sites of the same name to be differentiated from one another. This was a necessity following the new Norman administration's bureaucratic reorganisation. The country was now administered more centrally and districts now covered greater areas than the previous system of 'hundreds', 'wapentakes' and 'shires' employed by the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians. Names which had previously been distinct in their local areas became less so when entered in national registers.

For this same reason many Middle English affixes began to appear at this time and continued to develop into the Early Modern Period. East and West Haddon, which previously lay in separate hundreds (Nobottle Grove[23] and Guilsborough[24]), gained their affixes in the twelfth century, as did Upper and Nether Heyford[25] and Potterspury[26] (to distinguish it from the adjacent Paulerspury). Potterspury's affix is a reference to the substantial pottery industry that was located here throughout the medieval period and which survived well into the Early Modern age. Consistent with the place-name evidence multiple kilns and substantial amounts of the potters' wares have been unearthed in the parish.[27]

Clay Coton's affix, which distinguishes it from the more than twenty other 'cots' in the county,[28] makes reference to its clayey soil and, indeed, archaeological evidence reveals that this site was also a centre for pottery making.[29] It is appropriate therefore that a specialised site would be known for the natural resources which fuelled its industry.

Cold Higham is an example of a place-name whose affix was fossilised much later. Formerly known as Little Higham, the first attestation of its present affix is in 1541: 'Colehigham'.[30] OE *cald* most likely refers to the village's exposed position on top of its hill,

---

[19] *PNNth*, p. 103
[20] Ibid., p. 42
[21] Ibid.
[22] R.M. Serjeantson and W.R.D. Adkins, eds., 'Alien houses: The priories of Weedon Beck and Weedon Pinkney (Weedon Lois)', *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 2* (1906), pp. 182-85 <www.british-history.ac.uk> [date of access 07-05-2013]
[23] *PNNth*, p. 83
[24] Ibid., p. 71
[25] Ibid., p. 85
[26] Ibid., p. 105
[27] E.M. Jope and R.J. Ivens, 'A Later Medieval Pottery Kiln at Potterspury', *Nortamptonshire Archaeology* (1995) 26, pp. 141-48 (p. 142)
[28] *PNNth*, p. 249
[29] Jope and Ivens, p. 141
[30] *PNNth*, p. 91

and indeed the place is cold. When I visited snow still lay on the ground several days after it had thawed throughout the rest of the county. This can just be made out in the photograph, as can the village's exposed position on the hilltop (Fig. 5).
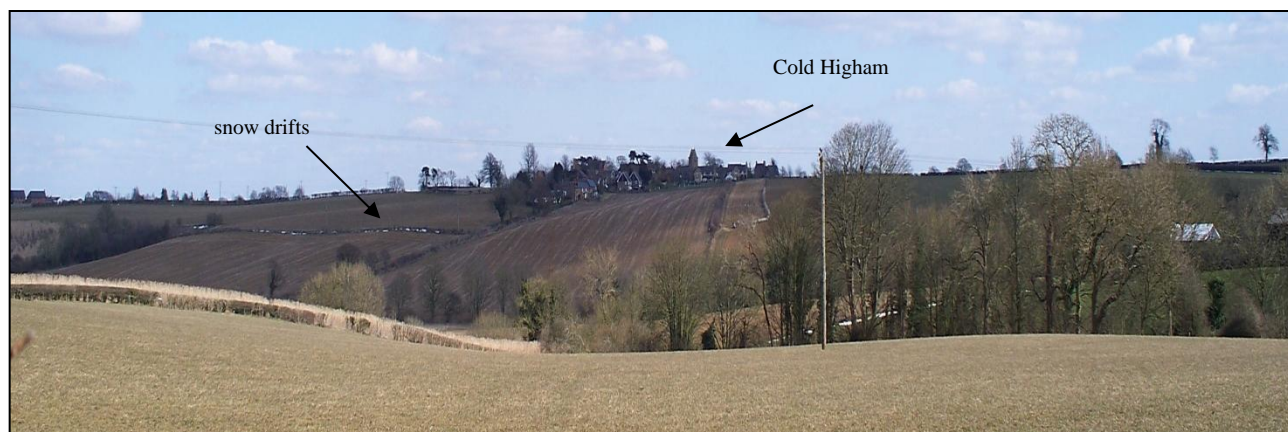

Figure 5   Cold Higham village from Banbury Lane   06-04-2013

Old English
Linguistic Change

Despite the influences that the previously discussed languages have had on its nomenclature, the vast majority of place-names in the corpus are ultimately OE in origin. Yet even names that have always been OE often have undergone considerable linguistic change, not surprisingly given that almost a millennium has passed since many of their first attestations. Easton Neston, for example, might appear to include the cardinal compass point 'East', but its earliest record reveals that the name is a compound of the dithematic personal name *Aþelstān* or *Ēadstān* (with genitival inflection –*s*) and OE *tūn*. Even as early as 1086, however, it seems that the name's original sense was becoming lost. Domesday Book records the name both as 'Adestanestone' and without the initial 'Ad–', and by 1610 the name had become two separate words 'Eston Nesson'.[31] His mis-division of elements clearly shows that the name, once a descriptive label, had ceased to be meaningful to the speech community that employed it.

Another name that has undergone considerable linguistic change is Yelvertoft. Domesday Book records three different versions of the name and throughout its history there has been considerable variation in its written form. In one source or another it has been recorded with the initial C, Ch, G, H, I, J, ȝ, Z and Y.[32] It seems then that the phonological unfamiliarity of this name caused particular difficulty amongst Norman scribes. The hesitancy with which the name is first recorded, however, also suggests that this was a name in transition. 'Celvrecot' clearly contains OE *cot*, but 'Givertost' (which also appears in DB) may already include a form of ON *toft* which replaced the earlier generic. The case of Yelvertoft then offers insight into the gradual change of names and how long it can take for these linguistic changes to become fossilised.

Habitative-names

The most common OE place-name element is *tūn*. It was productive throughout the whole of the Anglo-Saxon period and during that time it had many different meanings ranging between 'enclosed plot on which a house is built', 'farmstead', 'manor' and PDE 'town'. It is difficult therefore to know exactly what type of settlement each name in –*ton*

---

[31] Ibid., p. 98
[32] Ibid*.,* p. 77

originally denoted. In the names of the corpus, *tūn* is most commonly compounded with OE personal-names. Braunstone, Gayton, Silverstone, Brington, Alderton and Easton Neston all belong to this group. Other qualifiers, however, are OE *wella*, 'spring, stream' in Welton, which is thought to be the proliferation of springs in the parish (of which there are six) and *hwēol*, 'wheel', in Whilton, which is thought to refer to either a waterwheel or wheel-shaped hill.[33] As can be seen on the map (Fig. 6), both explanations are plausible. Even today there is a watermill in the vicinity of the modern village and whilst I do not suggest that this indicates continuous occupation of this specific site by a mill, it does suggest that in Anglo-Saxon times the stream would also have been capable of turning a wheel. As to the other possible

Figure 6 The 'wheel-shaped' hill at Whilton and the village in relation to the present day watermill

etymology, the hill as shown on the map appears to be quite 'wheel-shaped' and, having visited this hill, I can confirm that its roundness is also apparent on the ground. I find the latter explanation the more compelling. '*Tūn* on a wheel-shaped hill' is a more distinctive and therefore more useful label than '*tūn* with a waterwheel' since there were already more than six thousand waterwheels in the country by the time of the Domesday Book.[34]

Hām, denoting 'homestead, village, manor or estate', is also a common habitative term and is the generic of Cold Higham and Newnham. *Hām* is believed to be 'characteristic of the earliest stages of English name-giving'[35] and to have become unproductive after c.800AD, becoming obsolete as the Anglo-Saxons made inroads into the West.[36] As already discussed, the Anglo-Saxons are known to have utilised the infrastructure of Roman roads to penetrate into the country. It is therefore to be expected that a considerable number of the names in this corpus of 'roadside' parishes would be particularly early.

Whilst *tūn* names often denote major settlement sites the specific of Norton presupposes that it lies *north* of a more significant settlement. This is probably Dodford 'with which its bounds march'.[37] The same is true of Newnham, the (once) 'newness' of which is defined in relation to another more established settlement. Similarly OE *þrop*, the generic of Rothersthorpe and Abthorpe, which has the same sense as the cognate ON *þorp* (discussed above) and always denotes secondary or satellite settlements. These particular examples, however, do not offer any indication of the 'mother' sites upon which each was dependent. The concept of secondary sites suggests that a process of expansion and colonisation was occurring during this period. This can offer some clues as to the chronology of settlement as well as to the social organisation of an area.

The quasi-habitative names Stowe and Tiffield, which both denote meeting places, also offer information about social organisation. Stowe as a simplex often refers to a site of religious significance and Gelling describes it as 'performing a special function in the life of a wide area',[38] suggesting that it formed a focal point for the local community. This focus

---

[33] Ibid., p. 31

[34] Anon., 'Life in the 11ᵗʰ Century', *The Domesday Book online* <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk> [date of access 09/04/13]

[35] Gelling and Cole, p. 48

[36] A. H .Smith, *English Place-name Elements vols. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 227

[37] *PNNth*, p. 27

[38] Margaret Gelling, 'Some Meanings of stōw', in S. M. Pearce (ed.) *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: BAR, 1982), pp.187-96 (p. 187)

may well have been religious and Stowe's ME affix 'nine churches' would support an interpretation of early Christian worship. Tiffield is more ambiguous. It is thought that it means meeting place in a field, but this would be an unusual site for a gathering, since meeting places are usually marked by a significant feature, such as a mound or tree.

Topographical-names

As well as offering insight into the interactions between historic populations and their respective languages, place-names can also offer hints as to how past populations interacted with and perceived their landscapes, landscapes that may today have altered beyond recognition. Topographical-names indicate which features of the landscape were of greatest significance to earlier occupants. The most salient feature of the village of Bradden, for example, is its situation in the 'broad' Tove valley.

For a relatively flat county, the names of the corpus contain a high proportion of names with 'hill' generics. This bias towards hill-names over other topographical-names is, however, the pattern throughout the country. Hills, however small, are often the most noticeable features in a landscape and even more so in areas where they are generally scarce. As Gelling explains, there is 'usually an inverse relationship between what is plentiful in the landscape and the objects selected as defining features'.[39] OE *hyll* is the most common hill-name throughout the country,[40] as in Pattishall '*Pætti*'s hill'. Beorg (the generic of Litchborough) is also common. The hill-name most frequently occurring in the corpus, however, is OE *dūn*, which Gelling defines specifically as 'a low eminence with a good area of flattish summit which offers an excellent settlement-site'.[41] A *dūn*'s intrinsic suitability for settlement may well be the reason why names in '–*don*' are so prevalent throughout the country as a whole; there are simply a lot of villages situated on this type of hill. East and West Haddon, Everdon and Weedon Beck all contribute to this number. Haddon once referred to heath-land or heather, although none remains today as all the land is either built upon or turned to farming. Likewise, no *eofor*, 'wild-boar', today roam Everdon Hill, whose name perhaps once served as a warning to travellers or as an advertisement to hunters.

Besides hill-names, other topographical-names in the corpus include those that refer to rivers or crossings. Bugbrooke ('the brook of a man called Bucca or where bucks graze') is the only settlement-name in the corpus with a water-derived generic. According to Gelling's rule of negative correlation between the number of features and number of names, this scarcity of water elements indicates that there was no scarcity of water in the area. There are, however, several 'ford' names which suggest that crossing water was more of a concern than sourcing it.

Whilst Dodford is simply a compound of personal-name *Dodda* and *ford* (although we might speculate that this is a particularly early name, since monothematic personal names were less common in the later years of the Anglo-Saxon period),[42] Upper and Nether Heyford and Watford may offer some insight into human activity at the time of naming. The specific of Heyford is *hēg,* 'hay', which probably indicates that the ford was primarily and habitually employed during the hay harvest.[43] We can infer from the fact that hay was being produced and transported, presumably for fodder, that livestock were kept in the area. The specific of Watford refers either to the suitability of the ford for crossing by foot (*wæd* 'wading'-*ford)* or to the fact that, like Heyford, Watford had a particular or seasonal use for

---

[39] Gelling and Cole, p. 1
[40] Cameron, p. 180
[41] Gelling and Cole, p. 21
[42] Peter R. Kitson, 'How Anglo-Saxon Names Work', *Nomina: Journal of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland,* 25 (2002), pp. 91-131 (p. 96)
[43] *PNNth*, p. 85

hunting parties (*wāþ,* hunting'-*ford*). From these names then we may infer a little about the Anglo-Saxon lifestyle, the activities that occupied their year.

Whilst water-features are relatively unchanging, and hills even more so, there are some features referenced in OE place-names which are drastically altered or which have long since disappeared from the modern landscape altogether. The *trēow*, 'tree', of Daventry, is obviously no longer existent, but the *lēah,* 'woodland clearing', of Blakesley (or at least the wood which once surrounded it) is perhaps still evident, albeit in a much reduced form. As can be seen on the map (Fig. 7), marching the parish is a settlement named Woodend and adjacent is Plumpton Wood. These two names confirm that
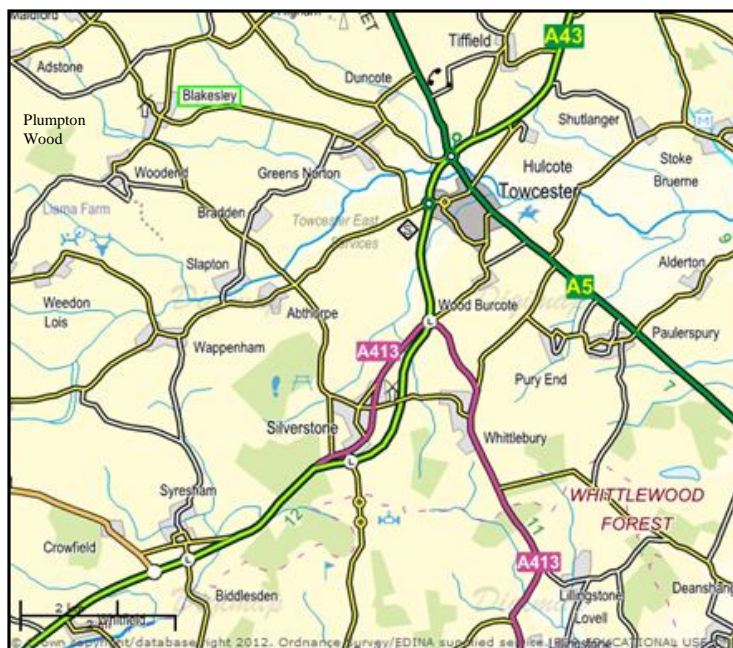

Figure 7 Blakesley in relation to surviving woodland and Whittlewood Forest

this area was once much more heavily wooded and are perhaps remnants of a Whittlewood Forest which extended considerably further during the Anglo-Saxon period than it does today.

Conclusion

The study of place-names can be a hugely informative and useful approach in the historical study of an area. Place-names are texts like any other and yet they offer a unique perspective of the world which they describe. They preserve vocabulary that does not occur in any other source; in fact, they preserve languages that have all but disappeared. The discipline stimulates and encourages interdisciplinary approaches to study, allowing geographical, historical and archaeological research to communicate, drive and complement one another. I hope in this project I have demonstrated just some of the directions in which the study of place-names can be taken.

A note on illustrations
All photographs are my own.

Figure 1. 'The historic county and parishes of Northamptonshire showing the location of the corpus', is adapted from: Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies, 'Northampton and Rutland- 25' (Canterbury, 1983)

Figure 4. 'Distribution of ON place-names in relation to the boundary of the Danelaw' was produced using Google Maps (2013) [accessed 14-05-13]

All Ordnance Survey maps are sourced from and created with: Ordnance Survey online, <http://digimap.edina.ac.uk> (2012).

Bibliography
anon. 'Life in the 11th Century', *The Domesday Book online*, <www.domesdaybook.co.uk> (2013) [date of access 09/04/13]

Cameron, Kenneth, *English Place-names* (London: B T Batsford, 1996)

-------, *Place-Name Evidence for the Anglo-Saxon Invasion and Scandinavian Settlements: Eight Studies Collected by Kenneth Cameron,* (1975)

Ekwall, Eilert, *The Concise Dictionary of English Place-Names* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960)

Gelling, Margaret and Cole, Ann, *The Landscape of Place-Names* (Stamford: Shaun Tyas, 2000)

Gelling, Margaret, *Signposts to the Past: Place-Names and the History of England* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2010)

-------, 'Some Meanings of stōw', in S. M. Pearce (ed.) *The Early Church in Western Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: BAR, 1982), pp.187-196

Gover, J. E. B., Mawer, A. and Stenton, F. M., *English Place-name Society, Vol. X: The Place-Names of Northamptonshire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933)

Jope, E.M. and Ivens, R.J., 'A Later Medieval Pottery Kiln at Potterspury', *Nortamptonshire Archaeology*, 26 (1995), pp. 141-48

Kitson, Peter R., 'How Anglo-Saxon Names Work', *Nomina: Journal of the Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland,* 25 (2002), pp. 91-131

Mills, A. D., *A Dictionary of British Place-Names* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003)

Riden, Philip and Insley, Charles, eds., *Victoria County Survey, Vol. 5: A History of the County of Northampton-The Hundred of Cleyley* <www.british-history.ac.uk> (2002)

Rivett, A. and Smith, C., *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London: Book Club Associates, 1981)

Serjeantson, R.M. and Adkins, W.R.D., eds., 'Alien houses: The priories of Weedon Beck and Weedon Pinkney (Weedon Lois)', *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 2* (1906), <www.british-history.ac.uk>, pp. 182-185

Smith, A. H., *English Place-name Elements vols. 1 and 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956)

Appendix

All names are taken from Mills with consultation of Ekwall and EPNS PNNth. Specific reference to individual texts appears where opinion differs.

Abthorpe Nth. [Towcester Hundred]
> *Torp* 1086 (DB), *Abetrop* 1190 P. 'Outlying farmstead or hamlet of a man called Abba', OE pers. n + OE *þrop* or ON *þorp*. The pers. n. of a former holder was added at a later date.

Alderton Nth. [Cleyley Hundred]
> *Aldritone* 1086 (DB) 'Estate or farm associated with a man, or the followers of a man, called Ealdhere' OE pers. n. + *ing* + *tūn*.

Ashby St. Ledgers Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
> *Ascebi* 1086 (DB), *Esseby Sancti Leodegarii* c. 1230 Wells R. Either: 'Farmstead or village where ash-trees grow' or 'Farmstead or village belonging to a man called Aski'. OE *æsc* + ON *bý*. Gover argues that since in no source does the name occur with the distinctively Scandinavian form *ask-*, it is most likely that the settlement was originally named: *Ashton*, OE *æsc* + *tūn*, (a name very common in this county) and as a result of Scandinavian influence in the area its generic was replaced by the semantically similar ON *-bý*. (EPNS, p. xxii-xxiii). The dedication of the church is to St. Leger (*Leodegarius*).

Barby Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
> *Berchebi* 1086 (DB) 'Farmstead or village on the hill(s)' OScand *berg* + *bý*.

Blakesley Nth. [Green's Norton Hundred]
> *Blaculveslei*, *-lea*, *Baculveslea* (sic), *Blachesleuue* 1086 (DB) Most likely 'Woodland clearing of a man called *Blæcwulf* OE pers. n. + *lēah*, although the name is not on record and *blæc* is an element rarely found in pers. ns. Could perhaps instead mean: 'the wood of the black wolf'.

Bradden Nth. [Green's Norton Hundred]
> *Braden(e)* 1086 (DB) 'Broad/wide valley'. OE *brād* + *denu*.

Braunstone Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
> *Brantestun* 956 BCS 978, 'Farmstead of a man called *Brant* OE pers. n. + *tūn*.

Brington Nth. [Nobottle Grove Hundred]
> *Brinintone* 1086 (DB) 'Estate associated with a man called Brȳni or the estate of Brȳni's people.' OE pers. n. + ing + *tūn*.

Bugbrooke Nth. [Nobottle Grove Hundred]
> *Buchebroc* 1086 (DB) 'The brook of a man called Bucca or where bucks (male deer or he-goats) graze.' OE pers. n. or *bucca* + *brōc*.

Clay Coton Nth. [Guilsborough Hundred]
> *Cotes* (1175 P), *Cotes juxta Lilleburne* (1285 Ass), *Cleycotes* (1284 FA), 'At the cottages in the clayey district'. OE *cot* (dat. pl. *cotum*).
> Cot(t)on is a very common name in this county and the affix *clæg* which was probably added to distinguish it from the adjacent Coton.

Cold Higham Nth. [Towcester Hundred]
> *Hecham* 1086 (DB), *Heigham juxta Patteshull* 1362 (IpmR), *Little Hygham* 1401 (Cl), *Colehigham* 1541 (Statutes). 'High homestead or enclosure'. OE *hēah* + *hām*. Affix is OE *cald* 'cold, exposed'. The earlier affix *Little* is probably in relation to the more significant Higham Ferrers.

Crick Nth. [Guilsborough Hundred]

Crec 1086 (DB) 'a rock, cliff, hill'. The exact linguistic root is uncertain but it is believed to be the primitive form of the modern Welsh *crûg*: Celtic **creig,* Brit. *crūc* or OW *creic.*

Crack's Hill was known as *Crick Hill* in 1839 (cf. a list of field-names of Crick made in that year by John West of Little Bowden). The form *Crackshill* or *Craxhill* seems to be of later date.

Daventry Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Daventrei 1086 (DB) 'Tree of a man called *Dafa'. OE pers. n. (gen. *–n*) + *trēow.* The pers. n. is unattested in English but it is believed to be the cognate of OHG *Dabo, Tabo, Tabicho.* Ekwall suggests it may be related to Goth *gadaban* 'to fit and/or OE *gedafen* 'fitting'. Gover to OE *dafan* 'to suit'.

Dodford Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Doddanford 944 (BCS 92), 'Ford of a man called Dodda'. OE pers. n. + *ford.*

Easton Neston Nth. [Cleyley Hundred]
Adestanestone, Estanestone 1086 (DB), Eston Nesson 1610 (Camden). 'Estate or farm of a man called Æþelstān or Ēadstān.' OE pers. n. + *tūn.*

Everdon Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
eferdun 944 (BCS 792), 'Hill frequented by wild boars.' OE *eofor* + *tūn.*

Farthingstone Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Fordinestone 1086 (DB). 'The farmstead of a man called Farþegn.' Anglo-Scand pers. n. + *tūn.* Although Ekwall contests this on the basis that this pers. n. would not consistently produce forms with 'd'. He instead suggests: *Fearndūningatūn; '*the village of the FARNDON ('bracken hill') people.' OE *fearn* + *dūn* + *inga* + *tūn.*

Floore Nth. [Nobottle Grove Hundred]
Flore, Flore 1086 (DB). 'floor, ground'. 'OE *flōr'.* The exact sense is doubtful, it is perhaps a reference to a Roman tessellated pavement but no remains have yet been unearthed in the parish. Alternatively it could refer to a 'threshing-floor'.

Gayton Nth. [Towcester Hundred]
Gaiton(e) 1162 (DB). 'The farmstead of a man called *Gǣga'. OE pers. n. + *tūn.*

Green's Norton Nth. [Green's Norton Hundred]
Norton(e) 1086 (DB), *Norton Davy* 1329 (Cl), *Norton-near-Toucestre* 1325 (Cl), *Grenesnorton* 1464 (FF), 'OE *north* + *tūn'.* Probably 'north' of Towcester. Manorial affix of the Grene family who held the manor in the 13-14th centuries.

Haddon, East and West Nth. [Nobottle Grove Hundred] [Guilsborough Hundred]
East Haddon *Ed(d)one, Hadone* 1086 (DB), Esthaddon 1220 (Fees), **West Haddon** *Ed(d)one* 1086 (DB), *Westhaddon* (12th NS). 'Heath hill or heather-covered hill'. OE *hǣþ* + *dūn.*

Heyford, Upper and Nether Nth. [Nobottle Grove Hundred]
Haiford, Heiforde 1086 (DB), Little (12th Survey), *Superiore et Inferiore* 1220 (Fees), *Nether-* 1240 (FF), *Over-* 1253 (FF), *Great* 1283 (Cl), 'Hay ford, ford used chiefly during the hay harvest.' OE *hēg* + *ford.* Alternatively 'ford by the enclosure or hedge'. OE *(ge)hæg* or *hege* + *ford.*

Kilsby Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Kildesbig 1043 (17th KCD 916). 'Farmsteam of the young (noble)man or of a man called Cild.' OE *cild* or pers. n. (with Scand, *k-*) + OScand *bý.*

Kislingbury Nth. [Nobottle Grove Hundred]

Ceselingeberie, Cifelingeberie 1086 (DB), 'The stronghold of the dwellers on the gravel, or of the family or followers of a man called *Cysel(a).' OE *cild* or pers. n. + *burh.* **Cysel* is a derivative of *Cūsa* and Ekwall suggests that this is more likely explanation since OE *ceosol* should have given *Chesling-* or *Chisling-bury.* The initial *k-* in the modern form is the result of Scandinavianisation.

Litchborough Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Leceberge 1086 (DB), Probably 'Hill with an enclosure' OE **lycce* + *beorg* but 'Body-hill, or hill of the bodies' is also a possibility. OE *līc, līca* + *beorg.*

Long Buckby Nth, [Guilsborough Hundred]
Buchebi 1086 (DB), *Longe Bugby* 1565 (Recov), 'Farmstead or village of a man called Bukki or Bucca' or 'village of the bucks (male deer or he-goats)' OE or OScand pers. n., or OScand *bukkr* + *bý.* The affix refers to the length of the village.

Newnham Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
(æt) Niwanham 1021-3 (KCD 736), '(at) the new homestead or enclosure.' OE *nīwe* (dat. *–an*) + *hām*

Norton Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Norton(e) 1086 (DB), 'North farmstead or village.' OE *north* + *tūn.* Probably 'north' of Dodford with which its bounds march.

Pattishall Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Pascelle 1086 (DB), 'Hill of a man called *Pætti.' OE pers. n. + *hyll.* **Pætti* would be a derivative of *P(e)tta.*

Paulerspury Nth. [Cleyley Hundred]
Pirie 1086 (DB), *West Pyria* 12th (Survey), *Pirye Pavely* c.1280 (AD iv), *Paueleyespirye 1319 (FF).* Originally '(place at) the pear-tree.' OE *pirige.* The manorial affix from the *de Pavelli* family, who held the manor from 1086, distinguishes it from the adjacent Potterspury.

Potterspury Nth. [Cleyley Hundred]
Perie 1086 (DB), *Estperie* 1229 (Cl), *Potterispirye* 1287 (Ass). Originally '(place at) the pear-tree.' The affix *Potters-* 'of the potters,' distinguishes it from the adjacent Paulerspury.

Rothersthorpe Nth. [Wymersley Hundred]
Torp 1086 (DB), *Trop Advoacti* 1220 (Fees), *Retherestorp* 1231(Ch) 'Outlying farm or hamlet of the counsellor or advocate, or of a man called Rethær'. OScand *thorp* with later addition of either: *rǣdere* the precursor of ME *redere*, after the earlier Latin affix *advoacti* (Ekwall) or an OScand pers. name cognate with OWScand *Hreiðarr,* ODan *Rethær* and OSw *Redhar* (Gover). The 'advocatus' of *Betton* (Béthun, France) held the manor in 1194.

Silverstone Nth. [Green's Norton Hundred]
*Suluestone (*942 BCS 773), 'Farmstead of a man called Sægwulf or Sifewulf'. OE pers. n. + *tūn.*

Stowe Nine Church Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
(æt) Stowe 956 (c.1200)*, Stowe Nichurche* 1386 (Pat), *Stowe with the Nyne Churche* 1418, 'Assembly-place, holy place, church'. OE *stow* with later addition of ME *nine churches*: the nine churches to which the lord of the manor had a right of presentation.

Tiffield Nth. [Towcester Hundred]
Tifeld(e), -y- 1086 (DB), Possibly 'Open land with or near a meeting-place'. OE **tīg* + *feld.* Ekwall contests this claiming that the two are unlikely to be combined, citing OE *ti(w)* the name of a god as an alternative.

Towcester Nth. [Towcester Hundred]

Tofecaster 921 (ASC), 'Roman fort of the River Tove'. OE river n. + *ceaster*.

River Tove. *Toue* 1219 (FF). Ekwall takes this to be a name of Germanic origin from a lost **tof*, 'slow, dilatory,' (cognate with MDu *toeven*, LLG *toven* 'to linger') and to have reference to its winding course.

Watford Nth. [Guilsborough Hundred]
Watford 1086 (DB), Possibly 'Ford used when hunting.' OE *wāþ+ ford*. but two alternatives are offered. Ekwall suggests the name was originally OScand *vað*, or a Scandinavianized from of OE *gewæd*, which both mean 'ford.' Added to this later was the tautological explanator *ford*. Gover suggests OE *wæd –ford* 'a ford which can be crossed by wading.'

Watling Street (Roman road from Dover to Wroxeter)
 Wætlingastræt 880 (Laws). Forms found in Northamptonshire: *Wæclinga stræt* 944 (BCS 792). 'The Roman road associated with the family or followers of a man called *Wæcel'. OE pers. n. + *-inga-* + *strǣt*. The first element is identical to the early name of St. Albans. The name very likely meant: 'the road to St. Albans' before it was extended to the whole length.

Weedon Beck Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
weoduninga gemære 944 (BCS 792), *Northwedon* 1289 (Cl), *Wedone Beke* 1379 (Cl), *Wedon in the Strete* 1440 (Pat). 'Hill with a heathen temple or sacred place'. OE *wēoh + dūn*. Manorial affix is from its possession by the Abbey of *Bec-Hellouin* (Normandy) in the 12th century. In regards the later affix: *Strete*, part of the parish is still sometimes referred to as *Road Weedon*.

Welton Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Waletime, Weleintone 1086 (DB), 'Farmstead by a spring or stream'. OE *wella + tūn*.

Whilton Nth. [Fawsley Hundred]
Woltone 1086 (DB), 'Farmstead with a water-wheel, or a round hill.' OE *hwēol + tūn*.

Yelvertoft Nth. [Guilsborough Hundred]
Celvrecot, Gelvrecote, Givertost 1086 (DB), *Gelvertoft(e) (*12th Survey), *Chelvertoft* 1206 (Cur), *Jelvertoft Zelvertoft* 1314 (Ipm), *ʒelver-* 1315 (Cl), *Jellerthopt* 1321 (AS iii), *Helurtofte* 1328 (AD iii), *Gilverestoft* 1388 (Pat), *Yellowtoft* 1517 (DBE), 'Homestead of a man called *Gelfrith or *Gelferð'. OE pers. n. + OScand *toft*. The second element probably replacing OE *cot* 'cottage' which would account for the hesitation in DB.