



JOURNAL OF THE ENGLISH PLACE-NAME SOCIETY

Volume 12 (1980)

ISSN 1351–3095

The meaning and significance of Old English *wahl* in English place-names

Kenneth Cameron (pp. 1–46)

This article is from the *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, an annual peer-reviewed journal issued free to members of the Society. The *Journal* welcomes contributions of articles and notes on subjects of relevance to English place-names.

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ABBREVIATIONS OF COUNTIES AND EPNS COUNTY SURVEYS

Co	Cornwall
Ha	Hampshire
He	Herefordshire
K	Kent
La	Lancashire
Nb	Northumberland
Sf	Suffolk
So	Somerset
Wt	Isle of Wight
CPNE	<i>Cornish Place-Name Elements.</i>
EPNE	<i>English Place-Name Elements, Parts 1 and 2.</i>
PN BdHu	<i>The Place-Names of Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire.</i>
PN Brk	<i>The Place-Names of Berkshire, Parts 1, 2 and 3.</i>
PN Bu	<i>The Place-Names of Buckinghamshire.</i>
PN Ca	<i>The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely.</i>
PN Ch	<i>The Place-Names of Cheshire, Parts 1–5.</i>
PN Cu	<i>The Place-Names of Cumberland, Parts 1, 2 and 3.</i>
PN D	<i>The Place-Names of Devon, Parts 1 and 2.</i>
PN Db	<i>The Place-Names of Derbyshire, Parts 1, 2 and 3.</i>
PN Do	<i>The Place-Names of Dorset, Parts 1–4.</i>
PN Du	<i>The Place-Names of County Durham, Part 1.</i>
PN Ess	<i>The Place-Names of Essex.</i>
PN ERY	<i>The Place-Names of the East Riding of Yorkshire and York.</i>
PN Gl	<i>The Place-Names of Gloucestershire, Parts 1–4.</i>
PN Hrt	<i>The Place-Names of Hertfordshire.</i>
PN Le	<i>The Place-Names of Leicestershire, Parts 1–7.</i>
PN Li	<i>The Place-Names of Lincolnshire, Parts 1–7.</i>
PN Mx	<i>The Place-Names of Middlesex (apart from the City of London).</i>
PN Nf	<i>The Place-Names of Norfolk, Parts 1–3.</i>
PN Nt	<i>The Place-Names of Nottinghamshire.</i>
PN NRY	<i>The Place-Names of the North Riding of Yorkshire.</i>
PN Nth	<i>The Place-Names of Northamptonshire.</i>
PN O	<i>The Place-Names of Oxfordshire, Parts 1 and 2.</i>
PN R	<i>The Place-Names of Rutland.</i>
PN Sa	<i>The Place-Names of Shropshire, Parts 1–9.</i>
PN Sr	<i>The Place-Names of Surrey.</i>
PN St	<i>The Place-Names of Staffordshire, Part 1.</i>
PN Sx	<i>The Place-Names of Sussex, Parts 1 and 2.</i>
PN W	<i>The Place-Names of Wiltshire.</i>
PN Wa	<i>The Place-Names of Warwickshire.</i>
PN We	<i>The Place-Names of Westmorland, Parts 1 and 2.</i>
PN Wo	<i>The Place-Names of Worcestershire.</i>
PN WRY	<i>The Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Parts 1–8.</i>

The Meaning and Significance of Old English

walh in English Place-Names^{*}

I make no apology for attempting to unravel the problem of the meaning and significance in English place-names of Old English *walh*, genitive singular *wales*, nominative plural *walas*, genitive plural *wala* (using the Anglian forms of the word, the West Saxon being *wealh*, etc.) in an O'Donnell Lecture. After all, I have the precedent of Professor Eilert Ekwall, who in 1924, said "It is highly desirable that a systematic investigation of such names should be undertaken",¹ and also in particular of what has been called the "inspired rhetoric" of Professor J.R.R. Tolkien before me.² In the first O'Donnell lecture, Tolkien spent some time commenting on this word and its likely meanings.³ He pointed out⁴ that the word *w(e)alh* was no doubt brought from the continent by the English settlers, and that it was a common Germanic term for a man of Celtic speech. Etymologically, Old English *walh* is a Germanic formation from the name of the Celtic tribe known in Latin sources as *Volcae*, or so it is believed, and Tolkien argued that, in the Germanic languages in which it occurs, it was also applied to Latin speakers.

He went on to discuss the development in the meaning of the word from 'Celt, Welshman' to 'slave, serf', noting in passing that though it seems to have borne the sense 'foreigner' (hence its occurrence in a compound noun like *walh-hnutu* "walnut", literally 'foreign nut'), it was never applied to foreigners of Germanic speech or aliens

like the Lapps, Finns, etc.. He believed that the development to 'slave, serf' most probably involved a recognition that particular slaves were Welsh speaking.

At this point, Tolkien broke off, commenting "I do not deal with the question of place-names, such as Walton, Walcot, and Walworth", and in this he may well have been wise, for there are two basic problems. One involves the actual etymologies of modern Wal- names, and a second deciding, after a corpus of place-names derived from *walh* itself has been assembled, which of them denote Welshmen and which denote slaves.

Now, according to Zachrisson⁵, *walh* is hardly even to be considered in English place-names. He said, "it may be safely concluded that the majority if not all places called Walton and Walcot contain OE. *weall*, not *weala*"⁶, and even when he thought *walh* possible, he believed the sense to be chiefly 'serf' and categorically stated "place-names compounded with Wal- do not afford any proof of the survival of British villages in England"⁷.

In his discussion of Old English *walh* in *English Place-Name Elements*⁸, Hugh Smith commented "In p.ns. the choice of meaning lies between 'Briton, Welshman' and 'serf' and in many cases it is an impossible one", but he proceeded to favour "in the majority of names" the later developed meaning 'slave, serf', commenting that few of the names in Wal- bear the mark of great antiquity. Then somewhat perversely he included names containing *walas*, the plural of *walh*, on his *British Names* map, therefore apparently favouring the earlier sense, so one cannot be absolutely sure where Smith stood, though on balance, his written word should, I suppose, take precedence over his "mapped". Ekwall similarly dis-

cussed the meaning of *walh* in place-names in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*⁹. He too considered it "impossible to say which sense should be assumed in each of the pl.ns. containing the word", but, then commented "as most serfs in early OE times would be Britons, the difference between the two senses would not be very marked".

The most recent discussion of the meaning of Old English *walh* is by Margaret Faulk in 1975¹⁰. Hers is a splendid paper, and in it she provides a very careful and detailed analysis of all the linguistic evidence for the use of the word in law codes, literature, personal names and briefly in place-names. It seems to me that there can be no doubt that 'a Briton' is the meaning of *walh* in the earlier Old English period, and, as Dr. Faulk argues, that a secondary development of meaning to 'slave' was a perfectly natural one, since in this period the majority of slaves would be Britons, either the descendants of those with this status in Roman Britain, or those reduced to slavery by the new settlers. At the same time, the meaning 'Celt, Briton' survived in the late 7th century in the West Saxon *Laws of Ine*, though the Britons mentioned there were men of lower social and legal status than Englishmen in equivalent positions. Further, as Dr. Faulk shows "strong distinctions were made on racial grounds not only between freemen but also between slaves", in this particular code¹¹. The *Laws of Ine* clearly demonstrate that there were both free and servile Welshmen, at least in parts of late 7th century Wessex, and that they were racially distinguished, though of lower social and legal status than their English counterparts, as I have just noted. Further, she believes that the *Walas* of Ine's laws were descended from the

original Romano-British inhabitants of southern England¹².

Now, it is certain that when the word *w(e)alh* is used of a slave in the *Laws of Ine* it denotes a Welshman rather than an Englishman. What Dr. Faull's excellent paper demonstrates also, however, is that it is impossible to decide when the two senses became separate, in other words when a *w(e)alh* need not denote a Welsh slave, but rather refers to any slave¹³. Lack of documentary evidence in the eighth and early ninth centuries is responsible for our lack of knowledge, but I think we can feel sure that this separation of meanings had taken place by the second half of the ninth century. Dr. Faull, however, believes that *walh* in the sense 'slave' was never widely adopted in Old English, for after all English had other words already for this concept, in particular Old English *þēow*¹⁴. We can, therefore, anticipate her conclusion that when the word *walh* appears in place-names, and can be shown to do so unambiguously from the recorded spellings, it denotes a Briton, a Welshman.

One further aspect of the use of *w(e)alh* in Old English must be mentioned. Dr. Faull has drawn attention to the fact that in texts from the later part of the period the word has apparently acquired certain pejorative overtones and derogatory connotations¹⁵. I cannot really believe that the *w(e)alas* who gave their name to some of the Waltons were like the *w(e)alh* of the Old English Riddle XII, who is described as not only 'dark-haired', but also 'stupid and drunk on dark nights', or had a pejorative connotation as in the 10th century translations of St Mathew xxiv, 50, in the comparison between the coming of the lord to a good and an evil servant. Although it is

true that a pejorative sense can be used alongside a non-derogatory one, it would seem more likely that place-names containing *w(e)alh* would have been given before the word had developed any derogatory overtones.

Before we turn to the problem of place-names, however, we must consider a further use of *w(e)alh* in Old English - its occurrences as a personal name in both simplex and compound forms. The simplex form *Walh* is on independent record from the late 7th and 8th centuries, and this theme occurs also as both first and second element of dithematic personal names, like *Cēnw(e)alh* and *W(e)alhhere*, while place-names suggest there was also a *W(e)alca* and a *W(e)al-aca* hypocoristic forms of compounds in *W(e)alh-*. As we shall see, *W(e)alh* itself, in the genitive singular, occurs in a few place-names too, where to me at any rate there seems little doubt that the form represents the personal name, and not the appellative. In its occurrence in personal names the meaning must be 'Briton, Welshman', and it is inconceivable that it can be otherwise, when it occurs in the seventh century in the names of four members of the royal Mercian house and of one member in each of the West Saxon and South Saxon royal houses. What is more I go along with Dr. Faull, too, when she argues that "as the *wealh* names are English formations borne by English people of rank at an early date, the use of this element should indicate that the holder had some Celtic blood, as might already be suspected on other grounds in at least the West Saxon royal house"¹⁶. Of course some of the compound names did subsequently become part of the corpus of Old English personal names, so that their appearance in later Old English sources, including place-names, cannot be

taken as any indication of the racial origins of their holders. Again, personally I have little doubt that *w(e)alh* was used originally in personal names to denote people of British stock or of mixed parentage. And, incidentally, it has always seemed to me to be more than sheer coincidence that *Cædwalla*, whose name is itself of Celtic origin, had a brother called *Mūl*, and *Mūl* can mean nothing other than 'the mule', that is 'the half-breed'.

In her short discussion of place-names derived from Old English *w(e)alh* Dr. Faull makes several important points, all leading to her conviction that in place-names the word denotes Britons, Welshmen, rather than slaves¹⁷. For example, she draws attention to the fact, which has long been appreciated, that there is hardly a single place-name derived from the common term for a slave, Old English *þeow*; that reference to other minority groups in the population are not uncommon in place-names; that virtually none of the *w(e)alh* names are actually recorded in Old English sources (though there are actually about a dozen) suggesting their lack of importance or size, a fact which she finds supported by the frequency with which *w(e)alh* is compounded for instance with Old English *cot* 'a cottage'; that such place-names are distributed fairly evenly throughout the country; and the hint that such settlements are on poorer soil or less fertile land than are the nearby English ones. In her outstanding book *Signposts to the Past*¹⁸, Dr. Margaret Gelling comments that "as regards the use of *walh* in place-names and personal names, Miss Faull's views coincide very closely with my own" but she goes on to say that "She (i.e. Dr. Faull) is rather more definite than I feel able to be about the likelihood of *walh* meaning 'Welshman' in

some examples of the place-names Walcot and Walton". I personally feel that on balance of probabilities, and one can do no more than balance the probabilities, I am with Dr. Faull and now I am delighted to say is Dr. Gelling too. I hope I can adduce additional evidence which supports such a view.

It is impossible today, and will remain impossible for very many years to come, to assemble a complete collection of place-names derived from Old English *w(e)alh*, and for a very simple reason. The English Place-Name Survey, although it has published fifty-two volumes to date, has still a good way to go to complete the whole coverage of the place-nomenclature of England. It is true that we probably already know all the major names derived from this element, but in almost every new county survey a lost example of a *w(e)alh* name turns up. Dr. Gelling, for instance, in her work on Berkshire has added a 'lost' Walton, in the parish of Old Windsor, to the collection, and we have every reason to believe that such 'new' finds will continue to appear¹⁹. However, as has already been suggested, *w(e)alh* names are pretty widely spread over the country as a whole, so that we shall, presumably, be filling in the picture, rather than radically altering the distribution patterns.

But, to compile a corpus of such names is itself not easy, for it has been known for years that not all our present-day names in Wal- are derived from Old English *w(e)alh*. A cursory glance at Ekwall's *Dictionary* will show immediately two other etymologies, and at least a third alternative is also possible²⁰. Some Waltons are derived from Old English *W(e)aldr̥tūn* 'the farmstead of village in a wood or on a wold'; others seem to be de-

rived from Old English *W(e)alltūn* 'the farmstead or village by a wall'. A third possibility is to be considered in the West Midlands, where Walton may be derived from Old English (West Mercian) *Wællētūn* 'the farmstead or village by a spring or stream'.

It seems to me, therefore, that one is inevitably forced back to the long-standing view that we can only accept as genuine examples those names which show post-Conquest forms in *Wale-*, reflecting Old English *W(e)ala-*, the genitive plural of *W(e)alh*, except for the few names, which I shall discuss shortly in which *w(e)alh* appears as first element in an uninflected form, or in the nominative plural *w(e)alas*. This is certainly the only sound phonological criterion on which to base our etymologies. It means that we must leave out a few examples of Walton, for instance, where the names are recorded only in late forms, which are inconclusive, unless there is other evidence of a telling kind which can be adduced.

So far as I know there are only three surviving place-names formed from the genitive plural of *w(e)alh* recorded in Old English forms. These are Walden in Hertfordshire, appearing in the form *on Wealadene* in an 11th century manumission (12, KCD 1354, not in Sawyer)²¹; Walworth in Surrey, recorded twice, as *Wealawyrð* in a spurious charter of 1001, though with a good Old English spelling (12, KCD 715, Sawyer 914) and as *Wealawurð* in a charter of the reign of Edward the Confessor (11, ASCharters XCV, Sawyer 1047); and Walford House in West Monkton, Somerset, recorded in a dubious or spurious charter, as *Wealaford* 682 (16, BCS 62, Sawyer 237) in the bounds of Quantock, again a good Old English form nonetheless. Walcot in Alkborough, Lincoln-

shire, and Walton upon Trent, Derbyshire, are also recorded in post-Conquest copies of Anglo-Saxon charters, but in both cases the first element is spelt *Wale-*, as Hugh Smith put it "obviously from late copies"²². In actual fact, the two charters in which the Lincolnshire Walcot is named are spurious. Comparable to the Derbyshire Walton, and from an authentic charter, is the form *on weale weg* 961 (13, BCS 1067, Sawyer 688) in the bounds of Burbage, Wiltshire, 'the road of the Welshmen', though this is probably a doubtful example. One or two lost names, however, retain Old English spelling as with *on weala brucge* 944 (c.1240, BCS 802, Sawyer 500) in the bounds of Brimpton, Berkshire, and which Dr. Gelling in her edition translates as 'the bridge of the Welshmen'²³. Another example of Old English *weala-* occurs in *to Wealagate* 672-4 (13, BCS 34, Sawyer 1165) 'the gate of the Welshmen', in the bounds of Chertsey, Surrey, in a charter in which the bounds themselves were added much later. In the same bounds is *to wealas hupe*, recorded later as *to wealeshupe*, 'the landing-place of W(e)alh' from the personal name *W(e)alh*, which I shall discuss later²⁴. Here, we have two related place-names in the same estate, whose name has as first element the Celtic personal name *Cerot*, and we shall see similar pairs and associations elsewhere in other of our Wal- names. A further example is *Wealagarstune* 945 (14, BCS 803, Sawyer 505), which has been identified with Woodgarston, in Wootton St Lawrence, Hampshire, where the remains of Roman buildings are recorded. The second element of this name is Old English *garstūn* 'a grassy enclosure, a paddock, a meadow'. Finally, there is *to wala crofte* 951-5 (15/16, BCS 1023, Sawyer 579) in the bounds of Old Swinford, Worcestershire, identified as being in the vicinity

of Wychbury hill-fort, and with a second element Old English *croft* 'a small enclosed field'²⁵. The occurrence of *w(e)alh* compounded with *croft* perhaps suggests that we are dealing with a later rather than an early place-name formation²⁶. As you will realise, however, for the most part, we are otherwise entirely dependent on post-Conquest *Wale*-spellings to indicate that the first element of *Wal*-place-names is indeed *w(e)alh*.

However, I have noticed another feature of the Old English forms of such names, and one which, so far as I am aware, has never been commented on before, though it was noted by Zachrisson. In his discussion of the Herefordshire Walford (some 2½ miles south of Ross, itself a name of Celtic origin, and four miles south-west of *Ariconium*, in an area of good land in the middle Wye valley), Ekwall in his *Dictionary* gives the etymology as *Wealh-ford* 'Welsh ford, ford of the Welsh' and comments "the word *wealh* being here used in the uninflected form"²⁷. This name is not recorded before Domesday Book, but Walter Hall in Boreham, Essex, appears as *into Walhfare* in a spurious charter of 1062 (13, KCD 813, Sawyer 1036) with well-evidenced later supporting forms however. The etymology is clearly an otherwise unrecorded Old English **w(e)alh-fær*, *w(e)alh* being in an uninflected form with the second element *fær* 'a passage, a ford', hence, following Ekwall's interpretation of Walford, 'Welsh passage or ford', 'passage or ford of the Welsh'. Reaney has shown²⁸ that this name came to denote a considerable district on either side of the Roman road from Chelmsford to Colchester and on both sides of the stream that it crosses, and that the name presumably originally referred to the passage over the

stream which was by way of the Roman road.

In the bounds of Woodchester, Gloucestershire, in a charter dated 716-45, (11, BCS 164, Sawyer 103) is *walhweg* with *walh* again compounded in uninflected form, this time with Old English *weg* 'way', hence 'Welsh way or road', 'way or road of the Welsh'²⁹. Just north of the present village of Woodchester are the remains of a large, late Roman villa, a clear instance of the correlation of a *w(e)alh* name and a Roman archaeological site³⁰. The fourth example of a compound name with uninflected *w(e)alh* occurs in the form *to wealh geate* in the bounds of Pershore, Worcestershire, bounds which include over twenty modern parishes, and found in a contemporary charter of 972 (BCS 1282, Sawyer 786). This must mean 'Welsh gate', or 'gate of the Welsh', (and is therefore comparable but not etymologically identical with the Chertsey boundary name I discussed earlier). According to Grundy, *wealh geat* is to be identified with a Well Gate, not marked on Ordnance Survey maps, some three and a half miles south of Pershore on the boundary between Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, and a quarter of a mile from the encampment, Babury Stone, on the top of Bredon Hill, Bredon itself being a hybrid Celtic-English name. Only a mile from *wealh geat* is Great Comberton, the first element of which is the Old English personal name *Cumbra*. This is a derivative of Old English **Cumbre*, itself a borrowing from Primitive Welsh **Cōmmri*, the Britons' own name for themselves. Scholars seem to be agreed that the use of this personal name must have had some reference to the ancestry of the person so-called. Further, about five miles from this boundary name, in Pershore parish itself is a Walcot, an unambiguous in-

stance of a name meaning 'the cottage of the Welshmen'. It is well worth noting here that Sir Allen Mawer commented that this name was "another example of the fairly common occurrence of Waltons and Walcots in the neighbourhood of important settlements"³¹. Already in 1927, he and Sir Frank Stenton were aware of this phenomenon, which Hugh Smith does not mention at all in his discussion of *walh* in *English Place-Name Elements*; and it recalls Ekwall's comment in 1924 "In an examination of the name-type it will be of importance to establish the situation of the places"³². There seems little doubt that here in south Worcestershire there must have been something of a real enclave of Welshmen, when three related place-names occur so close together, with a fourth only a few miles away. Already some little picture is beginning to emerge as one analyses the undisputed names in Wal-, the presence of Roman archaeological features in the neighbourhood of some; their proximity to important English settlements or estates like Boreham and Woodchester; their occurrence sometimes in pairs; and their proximity sometimes to places with Celtic names.

At the same time we seem to have a linguistic formation not properly previously noted, in which *w(e)alh* is compounded with *ford*, *fær*, *weg* and *geat*. Is it likely that these are *ad hoc* place-name formations, or is it not more likely that they are compound appellatives in Old English, unrecorded in other literary texts? It seems to me that Walford can hardly mean 'foreign ford' or 'slave ford', so that on balance of probabilities the meaning of the compound must be 'Welsh ford', or 'ford of the Welsh', as Ekwall suggested. No similar topographical formations

are recorded from Old English, but this is hardly surprising, since words meaning 'the ford, passage, way or gate of the Welsh' are hardly likely to appear in other literary texts of this period. I personally think it clear that place-names have once again added to our knowledge of the Old English vocabulary, and that in these names we have four compound Old English appellatives, and not four separate *ad hoc* place-name formations. Further, by their very nature they seem to me to support the contention that *w(e)alh* does denote 'a Briton, a Welshman', rather than 'a slave', for such compounds, if compound appellatives they really are, must surely have been formed in an earlier rather than a late part of the Anglo-Saxon period. The presence of Walford in Herefordshire in this group, however, clearly indicates that this name cannot have been given until the late 7th or early 8th century at earliest.

Of all the surviving names derived from *w(e)alh*, two, I think, must be separated from the rest. The first is Wales, the name of a township in the south of the West Riding of Yorkshire, on the boundary of Yorkshire and Derbyshire and therefore of Northumbria and Mercia, and probably also of that between Elmet and the *Pēcsatan*, and derived from the plural form 'the Welshmen'³³. Its situation on this major boundary certainly suggests that the name can hardly have been given before the second half of the 7th century at earliest. The second is Walreddon in Devonshire, which Ekwall suggested means 'the community of Britons', and which is situated very near the Cornish border and, which, therefore, cannot be earlier than the 8th century³⁴. In both these cases, and

Indeed, most probably in many other Wal- names, the reference must be to isolated groups of Britons or Welshmen, who formed a distinctive but unusual feature of the racial complex of the areas in which the names occur.

The rest of the Wal- place-names fit into one or other of two clearly defined groups, one in which the second element is a topographical term, or that of a natural feature, forming what Ekwall called a "nature-name", the second with a second element denoting a habitation, where someone lived

A list of examples in the first group is provided in the Corpus. I have included one Old English boundary name, four minor names and eight field-names, though Walland, Wallmead and Wallhurst are very doubtful indeed, since the early spellings for each of them form part of a family name, and all may well be what is often called 'manorial' in origin, so that we have really no idea how or where the names themselves originated³⁵.

The forms of one of the names in this list call for special mention. These are of the type *Walehemebroc*, now Wallon Brook, Warwickshire, and *Waleheme-* is a shortened form of *Walecoteheme-* 'the inhabitants of Walcote' so that the full name means 'the brook of the inhabitants of Walcote'³⁶. Old English *hame* seems frequently to have been used in naming places on a boundary and Wallon Brook forms at least the boundary between the parishes of Grandborough and Willoughby. The Walcote in question is, in fact, *Walcote End*, in Grandborough, a name lost during the last century, but recorded on the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map, and a certain *walh* place-name³⁷. Further, Walford in Somerset is one and a half miles from

the Celtic place-name Quantock; Walden in the North Riding is only just over a mile to the west of the Celtic-English hybrid name, Penhill³⁸, and Wallasey is adjacent to Lis-card³⁹, an example of what is sometimes referred to as a compound of the 'later Celtic type', so that one can hardly avoid connecting these pairs. In addition, it is likely that Wallasey cannot have been much before the mid 7th century. Here, again, the balance of probabilities leads me to the firm view that *walh* must denote Britons or Welshmen and not slaves.

Some of these names, like those derived from *denu*, *ēg* and *mōr*, must have referred to much more extensive areas than simply the sites of settlements. Indeed, Walmire in the North Riding is represented today by three small places known as North, Middle and South Walmire, and while Walden in the same county occurs as the name of a joint township Burton cum Walden, the name itself denotes not only Walden Dale, the valley of Walden Beck, but also the extensive moors on each side of the stream. It is also noteworthy that six or seven are the names of townships or parishes, a far higher proportion than is the case with the Waltons, Walworths and Walcots.

Dr. Faull has provided some comments on the situations of the Yorkshire names in this list⁴⁰. She notes that Walshaw is high on the side of the narrow Hebden Dale in the Pennines, that Walmire is at the far end of the Vale of York, that Walden and Walburn are in narrow valleys which run off the wider valleys of Wensleydale and Swaledale respectively, while Wapley House is to the south of Teesdale on the edge of the North Yorkshire moors. She

points out that while none is on the poorest soils, it seems that the English occupied the major valleys and allowed Britons to continue to occupy areas beyond their own settlements. The same would seem to be true of Saffron Walden in Essex, originally the name of the tributary valley of the R. Cam, with Little Walden situated higher up the same valley, and close to the minor Roman town at Great Chesterford, in an area well settled in the late Roman period. Similarly, the present-day extensive adjacent parishes of King's and St. Paul's Walden in Hertfordshire take their name from the long tributary valley of the R. Mimram, which branches from that of the Lea, both places themselves being situated high up the valley, close to Roman villa-sites on the Chilterns. *Wealagarstune*, identified with Woodgarston, is in Wootton St. Lawrence, Hampshire, where "other substantial buildings" are marked on the *Map of Roman Britain*, perhaps the site of a Roman villa, and the form *on weale weg* occurs in the bounds of Burbage, Wiltshire, just a mile from the Roman villa at Great Bedwyn, though this is really an uncertain example of a *walh* name⁴¹. Further, it can hardly be coincidental that the R. Walbrook flows through the centre of Roman London.

If we now turn to those compounds of *walh* which denote inhabited sites, four second elements are involved. As you will see, only a single example has been noted so far derived from Old English *ham* 'an enclosure' (though developed meanings of this word are at the moment the subject of keen debate). This is Walham in the parish of Longford, two miles from Wallsworth and only a similar distance north-west of Gloucester, itself of course a

Roman colonia.

The second, Old English *word* 'an enclosure' is much more common, and the most striking feature of this group is that almost half are the names of 'lost' settlements, while three of the surviving names are close to important early sites. The Surrey example is very near Southwark, a fact commented upon by Mawer in his discussion of the name; Wallover is in Challacombe on the borders of Exmoor in Devonshire; and the Hampshire example, no doubt not without significance, is in Andover, itself a name of Celtic origin, and is also close to the crossing of Roman roads, the possible site of the minor town of *Leucomagus*, in an area studded with Roman villas and other agricultural settlements. Further, one of the 'lost' names in Cambridgeshire was close to West Wickham, itself derived from Old English *wīcām*, identified by Dr. Gelling as belonging to a very early stratum of English name giving, with a small Roman rural settlement one mile south⁴². Walworth in Surrey, whose situation has been commented upon above, is at a point where two Roman roads meet opposite Roman London and Roman finds have also been noted there, while the Essex field-name surviving in the Tithe Award as *Walfords* is in Finchingfield, close to which are two villas, the surrounding area being rich in Roman occupation sites. The evidence clearly suggests that we are dealing with small and comparatively insignificant places, all close to much more important Anglo-Saxon centres or estates. Once more, we also have some evidence of proximity to places with Celtic names and to Roman archaeological remains, while the Devon example again suggests at earliest an 8th century date for its

formation.

Wal- names derived from Old English *cot* 'a cottage' are even more common, and I have included five recorded only as field-names and three others noted in the Sussex volumes, but for which no references or identifications are given.

All the surviving Walcot(e)s are the names of small places and each is near an important Anglo-Saxon site. Though the two Lincolnshire Walcots are modern parishes, they too are only small hamlets. Walcot near Billingham, for example, had a medieval chapel and that significantly enough belonged to the mother church at Billingham. We have already seen that a little distance from Walcot in Pershore is an Old English boundary name *to wealh geate*, and near Walcot in Charlbury is a field-name *Waledenehulle* recorded c.1272, a repetition of a pattern we have noticed before. There, a "villa enclosure" is marked on the *Map of Roman Britain*, and Professor Todd points out that there is a villa also some two and a half miles away at Ditchley, and a complex of agricultural sites around the minor town at Stonesfield, three miles to the south-east.

Dr. Margaret Gelling has suggested that the form *on wealcottes leahe* 968 (c.1200, BCS 1225, Sawyer 760) in the bounds of Oare may have been a detached piece of woodland belonging to Wawcott in Kintbury⁴³. Furthermore, Roman(o-British) archaeological features occur near Walcot in Alkborough, Lincolnshire, where Roman finds have been made as well as iron workings, and the place is about two miles north-west of the Roman villa at Winterton. Walcot Hall in Northamptonshire is less than a mile from the late

Roman villa at Barnack in an area of dense Roman settlement, and Walcot Lodge in the same county is in a parish where Roman finds are recorded and is just over two miles from the villas at Apethorpe and Cotterstock. The Norfolk Walcot is only a mile and a half from the Roman settlement and potteries at Ridlington; the Warwickshire example is two and a half miles from the Roman town of Alcester; Walcot in Wiltshire is in Swindon parish, where there is a Romano-British villa and stone quarries, and where numerous other finds have been made; while one of the Shropshire Walcots is three miles from the legionary fortress at Wroxeter as well as being near Wrockwardine, in part a Celtic name.

However, the most striking aspect of the distribution pattern of the Walcots is that two are in Shropshire, one indeed close to the Welsh border. Neither can have been given before the beginning of the 8th century, for the English language can hardly have been in the ascendancy here before 700, as Dr. Gelling has pointed out to me. The question, therefore, must be asked whether the Walcots and perhaps the Walworths in general, as groups, belong to the late 7th and 8th centuries. We have already noted Walreddon and Wallover, a *word* name, in Devonshire, and Walford in Herefordshire, where again an 8th century date would be perfectly possible, as well as Wales in Yorkshire and Wallasey in Cheshire which can hardly have been named before the mid 7th century. In an important paper in *Medieval Settlement*, W.J. Ford has already suggested that place-names with the prefix *walh*, as he puts it, could be comparatively late in date and be part of the process of name-giving

in composite estates; and he adds that they need not necessarily indicate the presence of Romano-British sites⁴⁴. We have seen that some certainly do seem to be associated with just such sites, but equally certainly the evidence of the Devonshire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and probably Cheshire names supports his argument that they were given at a comparatively late date. Whether this can be extended to include all the Walcots and Walworths is impossible to say, but such a hypothesis does seem at least worthy of consideration.

The commonest element compounded with the genitive plural of *walh* is Old English *tūn* 'a farmstead, a village'; and to my list could be added a few doubtful instances, including a number of field-names, which I have not put on the sheet. The Tithe Award *Walton* in Whittington, Gloucestershire, however, looks for all the world as though it is to be associated with the Enclosure Award *Walwell* in the adjacent parish of Withington, where there is a Roman villa in an area where there are numerous late Roman villas, so that the names seem almost to speak for themselves. Unfortunately, however, both *Walton* and *Walwell* have not been found in documents before the 19th century⁴⁵. Nonetheless, it should be noted, further, that in Whittington is Wycomb, a *wīchām* name, noted already, a possible second example of the presence of a *walh* place-name near one derived from *wīchām*, and here a Roman settlement, covering some twenty acres, has recently been discovered. I have, perhaps perversely, included Walsworth in Hertfordshire, even though there are no traces of the spelling *Wale-* in early sources. The name is not recorded first till 1296, when it appears as

Waltonesforde 'Walton's ford' or 'the ford near to or belonging to (a lost place) Walton'. It is situated close to the ancient English settlement of Hitchin, which is itself in origin an Anglo-Saxon tribal name. In Hitchin are two lost *Wal-* names, each recorded only in late sources by which time the medial *-e-* would in any case have disappeared, *-le Walwey* (1406) and *Walcott* (1608)⁴⁶. Though my philological criterion is not fulfilled, it seems to me that the presence of a *Walwey* and a *Walcott* with a *Waltonesforde* does suggest that Walsworth here is a genuine *walh* name. Furthermore, a Roman road passes through Hitchin parish; and it is only one mile north of a Roman villa, in an area of fairly dense Roman settlement.

Similarly the philological evidence for Walton Head in Kirkby Overblow, West Riding of Yorkshire, is not strong, for there are only a couple of spellings in medial *-e-*. Professor Glanville Jones, however, has convinced me that there can be little doubt of the matter⁴⁷. He has shown that Walton occupies a marginal site, so far as soil type is concerned, and stands somewhat isolated from neighbouring settlements. Nearby is the lost *Tidover*, which appears as *On Tid-danufri* in Eddius Stephanus' *Life of Bishop Wilfrid*. Eddi relates how Wilfrid at Tidover was approached by a woman to baptize her dead son, and in doing so Wilfrid brought the boy back to life. The bishop then ordered the woman to bring the lad when he was seven to him for the service of God. She, however, fled to hide her son, but they were found *sub aliis Bryttonum* 'among others of the Britons'. Clearly in the late 7th century, as the story shows, there was, at least, a recognisable British

settlement in the neighbourhood, and of course the situation of Walton here makes it an excellent candidate for just such a settlement.

One interesting feature of the Waltons is that, though many are the names of small places, several are those of modern parishes, suggesting, as does the use of *tūn* itself, that some were more significant settlements or estates than the Walcots. Only two of the latter are modern parishes and even then the sites of only small hamlets. Almost all the Waltons, nonetheless, stand in close relationship to more important neighbouring English sites, and, like Walton Head, frequently occupy more marginal situations as compared with their more important neighbours. Walton on the Naze in Essex is a particularly interesting case in point⁴⁸. The parish is today called Walton le Soken, but the Naze, which only survives in the name of the township and the promontory, was originally the more important Anglo-Saxon site. Its earlier name was in Old English *Ēadwulfesnæss* 'Ēadwulf's promontory', and, as Reaney pointed out in his discussion of the name, *Ēadwulfesnæss* was used of the Naze itself, the vill, the manor and the *soken*, which included Walton, Kirkby le Soken and Thorpe le Soken, which all incidentally belonged to the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's London. Here, too, there is evidence of Roman salt-workings and of numerous finds from the same period. This is yet another example, like the Lincolnshire Walcot, which serves as a warning not to take present-day situations at face value. The patterns of situation and of site of most of the Waltons are in fact very similar to those we have ob-

served already in the Walcots and Walworths.

Further, at least three are less than two miles from places with names of hybrid Celtic-English origin: one of the Staffordshire Waltons is near Eccleshall; Ulnes Walton in Lancashire is near Ecclestone; Isley Walton in Leicestershire is just over a mile and a half from Breedon on the Hill, while, in addition, in the same parish as Walton upon Trent in Derbyshire is a possible Celtic name, Barr. In Leicestershire, too, another Walton and Walcote are just three miles apart, high up in the valley of the R. Swift on the Lutterworth uplands. If the evidence for Walsworth, I discussed a short time ago, is thought to be doubtful, no uncertainty exists with Wallingtons and Wawcott in Kintbury, Berkshire, for, there, in the same parish we have two undoubted *Wale-* names. Of this pair, Dr. Margaret Gelling says, "It is tempting to connect the names with Walbury Hill, a large hill-fort, mostly in Combe (the adjoining parish), but as no forms have been found for it, it is impossible to say whether that name has the same etymology" (i.e. from *w(e)alh*)⁴⁹. It is also worth noting that only half a mile from Wawcott remains of a substantial Romano-British villa have been discovered, and a Roman road runs through the parish. Furthermore, on the boundary of Kintbury and Welford is Wickham, the third instance of a *wīchām* name in the neighbourhood of *walh* names. Elsewhere, the Suffolk Walton is near a Roman coastal fort, called Walton Castle, now submerged in the sea, while Walton le Dale in Lancashire is beside a Roman fortlet. There is a Roman villa close to Walton on Thames, and several Roman sites have been identified.

in Wallington, both in Surrey. Walton Farm, just outside Grantham, is only a mile from the minor Roman town at Salfersford, perhaps to be identified with *Causennae*. The place of the same name in Kent is in Folkestone, where there was a villa and other buildings, though these are not known for certain to have been occupied to the end of the Roman period. There was also a villa occupied until late in the 4th century in Downton in Wiltshire near to a 'lost' Walton. Walton on the Wolds in Leicestershire is within two miles of the large settlement at Barrow on Soar, in a region of several Roman farmsteads. Again, near Walton in Bosham, Sussex, several Roman sites are recorded, together with another villa, one and a half miles away at Fishbourne; and Wallington is in Fareham, Hampshire, where there is dense Roman settlement, including one small village, several farmsteads and potteries. When we consider these facts in the light of similar correlations noted previously, even though the correlations may not be equally significant, such relationships hardly seem to be pure coincidence.

Again, however, the distribution of some of the Waltons is particularly significant. Walton in Onibury is another Shropshire example, and four others are in Lancashire. Though the dating of Anglo-Saxon settlement there is problematical, the Lancashire Waltons are likely to be comparable in date with those noted previously in Devonshire, Shropshire, Herefordshire and Cheshire. A fair proportion of the major *walh*-names and those recorded in Anglo-Saxon charters, therefore, occur in western districts and to these we can perhaps add others in the West Midlands, which could well be-

long to a similar period as those a little further to the west. I do not need to emphasise the importance of this evidence in terms of the likely date, not only of the Walcots, but also possibly of many of the Walworths and Waltons too.

In *Signposts to the Past*⁵⁰, Dr. Gelling has argued, as has Dr. Faulk as we have already seen, that place-names derived from the genitive singular of Old English *walh*, i.e. *wales-*, are more likely to represent the personal name than the appellative itself, and is therefore comparable with Old Saxon *walh*⁵¹. So, Walsall in Staffordshire means 'the sheltered place of a man called Walh'. She comments "It is unlikely that it was used as a personal name theme without any reference to meaning", and goes on "It cannot be assumed that all Old English personal names were bestowed on account of the meaning of the elements..., but it seems most unlikely that a word primarily understood to mean 'serf' would have been used in the naming of a male child, and unthinkable that such a meaning would enter into the names of Saxon princes", and further, "In the names of non-royal persons it seems possible that W(e)alh and Welisc are nicknames, corresponding to modern Taffy". This is a fuller statement of the view expressed in her interpretation and discussion of Wallingford, Berkshire, for which a number of Old English forms are available, pointing to an etymology *W(e)alhingaford* 'the ford of the people of W(e)alh' and which she takes to be clearly indicative of the racial origin of W(e)alh himself⁵². Where *walh* appears in place-names there is really no reason to doubt at all that the person holding the name must have

been a man of some importance, and this is fully in accord with the evidence adduced from the *Laws of Ine*, I discussed earlier, which show that at the end of the 7th century in Wessex there were free Welshmen as well as slaves.

For reasons I mentioned earlier⁵³, I have left out of consideration place-names containing compound personal names like *W(e)alhere*, which certainly appears in Walgherton, Cheshire, and Walkeringham, Nottinghamshire, and similarly I have omitted those possibly derived from *W(e)alca* or *W(e)alaca*, hypocoristic forms of compound personal names in *W(e)alh-*. In some ways I regret this for Dr. Faulk has made an excellent case out for Walkingham in the West Riding representing Old English *Walcingahām* 'the homestead of the people of Walca', parallel therefore to the Berkshire Wallingford⁵⁴. The geographical situation and archaeological associations of Walkingham are exactly comparable to a number of the undisputed *walh* place-names.

There are numerous doubtful instances of the personal name *W(e)alh* in English place-names, but in addition to Wallingford and Walsall, already mentioned, I think we can accept those set out in the Corpus. I have included there one name found in the bounds, added much later, of the Anglo-Saxon charter for Chertsey and which I discussed earlier, but I have omitted any additional field-names since in a number of possible instances there is really insufficient early evidence on which to make a firm decision.

Though some of the names derived from the personal name *W(e)alh* are those of small and insignificant

places, standing in a similar relationship to more important Anglo-Saxon sites, at least four are themselves the names of more significant settlements or estates, and therefore probably belong to an early stratum of name-giving in England. One of these, Walsham le Willows seems also to have clear Roman associations, for it is less than two miles from the potteries at Wattisfield and is in an area where numerous Romano-British finds have been made. Further, Wallingford in Berkshire, which, as we have seen, has as its first element the genitive plural of the group name, *W(e)alhingas* 'the people of *W(e)alh*', also has remains of Romano-British buildings in the village, and is in an area of dense Roman settlement on the floor of the Thames valley. Even more important, however, as my former colleague Professor Malcolm Todd reminded me, just across the river, or if you prefer it across the ford from Wallingford is Benson in Oxfordshire. This was one of the four places recovered from the Britons by Cuðwulf after the battle of *Bedcan ford* in 571⁵⁵. At this time, Benson and presumably the district around were in the hands of Britons and it can hardly be pure coincidence that here we have a group of people known as the *W(e)alhingas*, a linguistic formation also belonging to an early stratum of English name-giving.

Again, we have pairs of names in close proximity -- Wallsworth in Gloucestershire is a couple of miles from Walham, with Roman rural sites in the neighbourhood, and South Walsham in Norfolk is about a mile from Walcote Hall in Burlingham St Andrews. It is also worth noting that there is a probable Roman villa near

Wallsworth in Idsworth, Hampshire.

A number of important points seem to emerge as a result of this analysis of undisputed place-names derived from Old English *w(e)alh*.

1. The names themselves are pretty widely distributed over most of England, though there are some gaps in the overall pattern. For example, no *w(e)alh* place-names occur in the extreme north, both north-west and north-east, of the country, or in the East Riding of Yorkshire; nor have any been noted in parts of the East Midlands - in what are now Nottinghamshire and Rutland, parts of Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, and Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire. The two examples of Walton in Buckinghamshire are not *walh* names, in spite of the fact that Sir Allen Mawer accepted them as being genuine. It is certainly worth drawing attention to the rarity of place-names of Celtic origin in these areas of the East Midlands, and perhaps the two features are not entirely unrelated.

On the other hand, attention should be drawn to the three Surrey examples, Wallington, Walton and Walworth, and the two Anglo-Saxon charter boundary names in Chertsey, which are situated south-west of London, and which form part of a cluster of Celtic names there, a fact already noted by Dr. Gelling⁵⁶. It is clear that here, as well as further to the west in Berkshire, a county with five *walh* names, there must have been close and continued contact between Britons and Anglo-Saxons. I have already drawn attention to the names in the western areas of Devonshire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire

and Lancashire, and to others in districts a little further to the east. The importance of these in terms of the dating of the *w(e)alh* name-giving process may well be considerable.

2. In connection with the Briton, Welshman/slave dichotomy, it has to be pointed out that on the one hand we seem to have hardly any English place-names derived from the common Old English words denoting slaves, while on the other there are numbers of place-names derived from terms for minority groups in the population.

3. The late development of derogatory overtones in the use of Old English *w(e)alh* seems to me to suggest that the Wal- place-names must certainly predate such a development.

4. The four compounds of *w(e)alh* in uninflected form, which do not seem to have been properly recognised before, suggest to me that they belong to an earlier rather than to a late period of Old English, and further suggest that these might well have been compound appellatives, and not *ad hoc* place-name formations. Walford in Herefordshire could not of course have been named before the late 7th-early 8th century at earliest.

5. We have seen that the corpus of undisputed *w(e)alh* place-names consists of a couple of names denoting, presumably, isolated communities of Welshmen, both on major boundaries, - Wales, on the boundary of Northumbria and Mercia, and probably also of Elmet and the *Pēcsatan*, and for which a date in the second half of the 7th century at earliest is likely; and Walreddon, close to the Devon-Cornwall border, again a compara-

tively late name, 8th century at earliest, - the rest being compounds with topographical or habitative second elements.

6. The overall impression is that most denote small settlements, and whether they refer to Britons or Welshmen, or to slaves, these groups must have formed characteristic features in the population around. If, as I am hypothesising, they do denote Welshmen, as indeed in some names they must, these Britons cannot have been other than a small but nonetheless very distinctive feature of the racial complex in the areas in which the names occur.

7. In very many cases one is able to indicate a relationship between a *Wale-* place-name and an important Anglo-Saxon settlement or estate in the neighbourhood. This is such a marked feature that it cannot be purely coincidence. The *Wale-* names seem to be, in one sense, 'outliers' of the English names, if I may put it that way. A very close, indeed intimate, connection is suggested between the inhabitants of the English and those of the *Wale-* places. This seems to me, again, to suggest that it is much more likely that the sense of *w(e)alh* here is 'Briton, Welshman'.

8. When one compares the *Wale-* places with those of the more important adjacent Anglo-Saxon settlements, time and again one finds the former on more marginal soils, or in some instances in minor valleys running from the major valleys, where Anglo-Saxon settlement took place. That they occur on the fringes of Anglo-Saxon settlement is clearly the case, and Dr. Faulk has emphasised this splendidly in her paper "British Survival in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria"⁵⁷.

9. I have also been able to indicate a few, but, nonetheless, apparently significant, 'modern parishes', in which *w(e)alh* names occur in pairs, as is in Charlbury, Chertsey, Grandborough, Hitchin and Kintbury, as well as perhaps in Whittington and the nearby Withington in Gloucestershire, while in the same county Walham is about two miles from Wallsworth, Walcote Hall, Norfolk, is about a mile from South Walsham, and the Leicestershire Walton and Walcote are just three miles apart in the same river-valley. I cannot really believe that the meaning of *w(e)alh* here can be anything other than 'Briton, Welshman'. Certainly to translate these names as 'the ... of the slaves' seems to me downright perverse.

10. Similarly, I have been able to gather a further group of ten, Wallasey in Cheshire, Walden in the North Riding, Walford in Herefordshire, Walford in Somerset, Walcot in Wrockwardine in Shropshire, Walton in Staffordshire, Ulnes Walton in Lancashire, Isley Walton in Leicestershire, Walton upon Trent in Derbyshire and Walworth in Hampshire, each of which is very close to a place with a name of Celtic origin, to which probably also belongs the pair recorded in the Anglo-Saxon bounds of Chertsey, a place-name with a Celtic personal name as first element, and the boundary-name *to wealh geate* near to Comberton and to Bredon. To these we can add the remarkable example of Walton Head in Yorkshire close to the lost *Tidover*, where there must have been a recognisably British group in the local population at the end of the 7th century. Again, no one will convince me that we are not dealing with Britons or Welshmen in these particular *Wale-* places.

11. We have, also, a remarkable number of instances where Roman(o-British) archaeological remains are associated with *w(e)alh* place-names, including three of the pairs of such names. Although these correlations are not equally significant, there are altogether too many of them to be pure coincidence. It must be pointed out, however, that no such associations have been discovered in Durham or the North Riding, for example. It seems to me likely that traces of the British population are commemorated in these Waldens, Walcots, Waltons and the like, rather than that they reflect groups of slaves, living at a little distance from the more important Anglo-Saxon settlement-areas, to which they are no doubt related.

12. There is a small but significant number of place-names derived from the personal name *W(e)alh*, including one forming a group name in *-inga-*, and three with a second element Old English *hām*, each of which no doubt belongs to an early stratum of name-giving. While some of this group are small and comparatively insignificant places, several are clearly the names of more important settlements or estates. Scholars seem to be agreed that the personal name *W(e)alh* here can hardly have been used without reference to its meaning, and further that the men who gave their names to Walsall, Wallingford and Walsham must have been of some substance. It seems pretty certain that such place-names must belong to the early period of Anglo-Saxon settlement in the areas in which they occur.

13. Finally, sufficient evidence has emerged from this analysis of *walh* names for at least something to be said of the dates at which they were given, and I

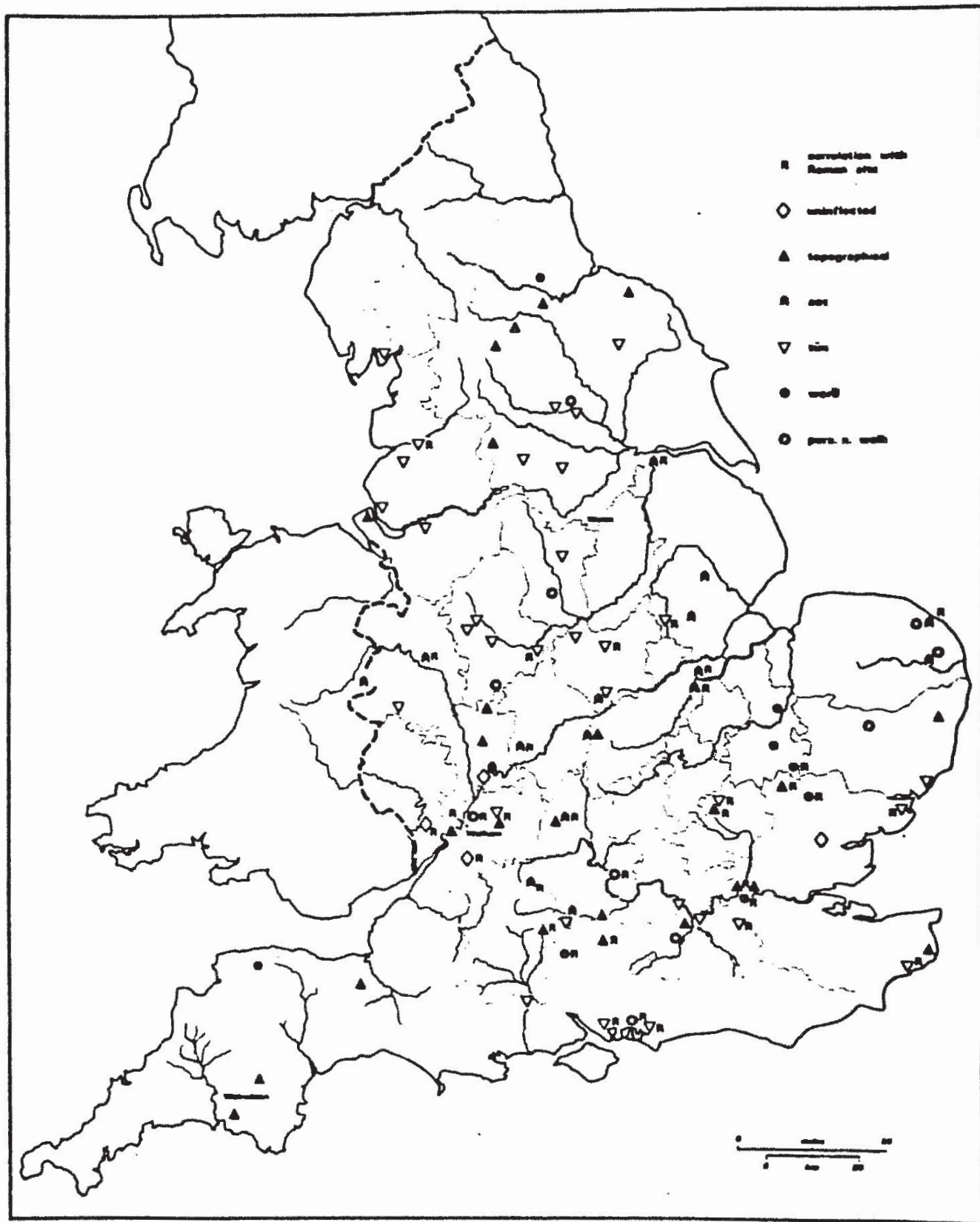
do not need to add much to what I have just said about the place-names derived from the personal name *W(e)alh*. There can be little doubt that some belong to an early stratum of English name-giving, but others in this group may be of a similar date to that of the Walcots, and perhaps the Walworths too. These might then reflect "pockets" of recognisably Welshmen, whether individuals or groups, and this could well be the case with the *W(e)alh* names in the West Riding, Derbyshire and Gloucestershire.

As I have already demonstrated the geographical distribution of some of the *walh* names indicates clearly that they cannot have been given at earliest much before the end of the 7th or early 8th century. I think it is altogether reasonable to assume that certainly the Walcots, and perhaps many of the Walworths, belong to this sort of date. In this connection, it may well be significant that Barrie Cox did not find a single place-name derived from Old English *cot* and *worð* in the earliest English records up to 731⁵⁸. Further, as compared with other second elements like *burh*, *ceaster*, *ēg*, *feld*, *ford*, *hām*, the *-ingas* and the *-inga-* groups, Old English *tūn* is only recorded six times in this material. I do not think that this again can be pure coincidence. It is certainly worth while considering, at least, as a working hypothesis, that the Walcots and perhaps the Walworths, as groups, are to be placed at earliest in the late 7th and 8th centuries, and that many of the Waltons may belong here too. One of these, Walton Head in Kirkby Overblow is certainly in a district with a recognisably British group in the local population at least at the end of the 7th century. If this

is the case, then we can claim to have some objective reasons for thinking that, in general, place-names derived from Old English *cot* and perhaps *worð*, and also *tūn*, were, for the most part, not being formed in numbers much before the late 7th or 8th century.

Of course, I do not claim to have proved that Old English *w(e)alh* simply and solely means 'a Briton, a Welshman' in the place-names in which it undisputably occurs, but I am suggesting that this is a very reasonable hypothesis. With our present evidence, on balance of probabilities, it seems tenable to translate Walden as 'the valley of the Welshmen', Walworth as 'the enclosure of the Welshmen' and so on. As I conclude, I have to say that I agree with Dr. Faull, and I am delighted that Dr. Gelling has withdrawn her reservations too, that the certain examples of *walh* in English place-names do denote Britons, Welshmen. These place-names have left traces on the modern map, as well as in lost names recorded in earlier sources, of the Britons, who ultimately became absorbed into the local Anglo-Saxon population, but who also retained their national identity, including in all probability their language, long enough, in some cases certainly into the 8th century, for place-names to be formed from the distinctive word used by the English settlers to describe them.

KENNETH CAMERON



FOOTNOTES

* The substance of this article was given as the O'Donnell Lecture in the University of Edinburgh. I have to thank my colleagues Miss Christine Fell, Professor W.R. Fryer, Professor Cuchlaine A. King, Professor James Kinsley, Professor R.E. Markus and Mrs. Jean P. Russell-Gebbett, who read the draft of the lecture and as non-place-name specialists ensured that it could be followed by a general audience. Dr. Margaret Gelling and Dr. Margaret Faull each provided examples from their own collections and made numerous suggestions for its improvement, while Professor Kenneth Jackson also read the draft and drew my attention to various points of detail. I have especially to thank my former colleague Professor Malcolm Todd who checked possible Romano-British correlations and has provided a detailed Appendix in which these are grouped and discussed. My best thanks are due also to Mr. A. Clarke of the Archaeology Branch, Ordnance Survey, for notes on Sawbridge near the lost Walcote End, Warwickshire, to Mr. Brian Simmons of the South Lincolnshire Archaeological Unit for very detailed notes on Roman settlements around Sapperton and their possible relationships with Walcot near Folkingham and to Mr. Paul Everson for details of Roman finds near Walcot in Alkborough, Lincolnshire. The Map was drawn by Mr. C. Lewis of the Cartographic Office, Department of Geography, University of Nottingham, to whom I owe special thanks.

1. E. Ekwall, 'The Celtic Element', *Introduction to the Survey of English Place-Names* (EPNS, part 1), 1924, p. 18.
2. Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past*, 1978, p. 94, subsequently abbreviated SttP.
3. J.R.R. Tolkien, 'English and Welsh', *Angles and Britons*, 1963, pp. 1-41.
4. Ibid. pp. 26-8, for this and the following two paragraphs.
5. R.E. Zachrisson, *Romans, Kelts and Saxons in Ancient Britain*, 1927, particularly pp. 39-46 and 67-75.

6. Ibid. p. 42.
7. Ibid. p. 46.
8. EPNE part 2, s.v. *walh*. The normal EPNS abbreviations to the Society's volumes are used throughout.
9. E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th ed., 1960, s.v. *walh*.
10. Margaret L. Faul, 'The Semantic Development of Old English *wealh*', *Leeds Studies in English*, xviii (1975), pp. 20-44.
11. Ibid. p. 22.
12. Ibid. p. 23.
13. Ibid. p. 35.
14. Ibid. p. 35.
15. Ibid. pp. 27, 29-30.
16. Ibid. p. 32.
17. Ibid. pp. 32-4.
18. SttP p. 94.
19. Berks part 1 p. 94.
20. E. Ekwall, op. cit. pp. 494-5.
21. Where forms are quoted from Anglo-Saxon charters, the first number in the brackets is the date of the extant copy, i.e. II denotes 11th century etc. For the other references see the Corpus.
22. EPNE part 2 p. 243.
23. Berks part 3 pp. 643-4.
24. See p. 25f.
25. This form was provided by Dr. Margaret Gelling and the identification was made by Miss Deborah Ford.
26. According to H. Middendorff, *Altenglisches Flurnamenbuch*, 1902, p. 31, *croft* is found in eight Anglo-Saxon charter boundary names, six of which are from Worcestershire, and one each from Staffordshire and Buckinghamshire, seven therefore being West Midlands examples. All are from documents dated in the late 9th century or later except for one found in a spurious charter. This occurs in the form *on wude crofte* 708 (12, BCS 120, Sawyer 78). Of this charter G.B. Grundy, *Saxon Charters of Worcestershire*, 1931, p. 6, comments "it is of later date than the reputed date of

the grant". It may be noted that the word also occurs in the bounds of Bishopton, Warwickshire, in the phrase *ond-lang broces ðæt onbuton ðone croft ðe Wynstan bylde* 1016 (lost, KCD 724, Sawyer 1388). The occurrence of this word only in late charters and indeed the meaning of the word itself seems to suggest that names containing it probably date from a later rather than early period of English name-giving.

27. E. Ekwall, op. cit. s.n. Walford.

28. Ess pp. 239-40.

29. Gl part I pp. 155-6.

30. For the reference to Roman and Romano-British sites see *Map of Roman Britain*, 4th ed., 1978 and Malcolm Todd's 'The Archaeological Significance of Place-Names in *walh*', infra pp. 47-50.

31. Worc p. 221. On the identification of *wealh geat* see G.B. Grundy, op. cit, p. 200. Grundy clearly assumed that *wealh* here means 'wall', for he translates the name as 'Wall Gate' and comments "the old name was probably suggested by the rampart of the camp". This camp is referred to in the preceding boundary name of *Bænincges byrig*, surviving in Banbury Stone, the name of the mass of rock forming the nucleus of the encampment. See also Wo p. 196, Gl ii p. 60.

32. E. Ekwall, 'The Celtic Element', p. 18.

33. YWR part I pp. 155-6. Dr. Faull has drawn my attention to the fact that the boundary between Derbyshire and Yorkshire was probably earlier than between Elmet and the *Pecsætun*.

34. D part I, p. 248.

35. For the details both here and subsequently see The Corpus.

36. Wa pp. 6-7.

37. Ibid. pp. 130-1.

38. YNR pp. 265 and 256.

39. Ch part IV pp. 323-4, 324-5.

40. For the details see Margaret L. Faull, 'British Survival in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria', *Studies in Celtic Survival*, 1977, p. 1-55, particularly pp. 12-3.

41. *on weale weg* seems almost certainly to be identical with boundary-name *on waluweg* 968 (13, BCS 1213, Sawyer 756, with a variant spelling *on walweg* 12, ib) in Bedwyn, and hence must be considered a very doubtful *w(e)alh* name.
42. Margaret Gelling, 'English Place-Names derived from the compound *wīcām*', *Medieval Archaeology*, xi (1965), pp. 87-104, reprinted in *Place-Name Evidence for the Anglo-Saxon Invasion and Scandinavian Settlements*, 1979; and also SttP pp. 67-74.
43. Berks part 2 pp. 317-8 and part 3 p. 656.
44. W.J. Ford, 'Some Settlement Patterns in the Central Region of the Warwickshire Avon', *Medieval Settlement*, 1976, pp. 274-94, particularly p. 287.
45. Gl part 1 pp. xli, 185 and 189.
46. Hrt pp. 10-11.
47. G.R.J. Jones, 'Historical Geography and our Landed Heritage', *The University of Leeds Review*, xix (1976), pp. 53-78, particularly pp. 66-70.
48. Ess pp. 354-5.
49. Berks part 2 p. 317.
50. SttP p. 95.
51. See Appendix 2.
52. Berks part 2 pp. 535-6.
53. See *supra* pp. 5-6 .
54. Margaret L. Faulk, 'British Survival in Anglo-Saxon Northumbria', p. 11.
55. *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. C. Plummer and J. Earle, 1892, s.a. 571.
56. Margaret Gelling, 'The Evidence of Place-Names', *Medieval Settlement*, pp. 200-11, particularly p. 204.
57. See note 40.
58. Barrie Cox, 'Place-Names of the Earliest English Records', *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, viii (1976), pp. 12-66. Cox here comments on the comparative rarity of *tūn* in this material and suggests that *tūn* in general belongs to the period after c.730 (p. 63).
Hugh Smith in *English Place-Name Elements* s.v.

states that *worð* was "clearly in early use in the OE period, for it is found in documents as early as the 7th century and there are a few compounds with folk-names in *-ingas* and with *ham*". The first part of this statement is in fact misleading for the reference to Isleworth (Mx 27) is in a charter of 677 (16, BCS 87, Sawyer 1246), which is of dubious or doubtful authenticity, though the names of the estates mentioned there are in good Old English, and may well be derived wholly or in part from authentic, but no doubt later, charters. It cannot be claimed, therefore, that this name is recorded from the 7th century, hence its omission by Cox. Other charters purporting to date from the 7th and 8th centuries, like that which includes the name *Derevorde* 664 (13/14, BCS 22, Sawyer 68), Hillborough (Wa 210) 710 (12, BCS 127, Sawyer 81), Tadworth (Sr 70-1) 727 (13, BCS 39, Sawyer 1181), and the group for Bengeworth (Wo 95-6) 709 (12, BCS 125, Sawyer 80), 714 (16, BCS 130, Sawyer 1250) and 780 (11, BCS 235, Sawyer 118) are all spurious. The earliest reference to a *worð*-name in a genuine Anglo-Saxon charter is *lindwyrðe* in the bounds of *Hellerelege* in Kings Norton (Wa) e8 (11, BCS 123, Sawyer 64). Other names from 8th century charters are *Scobbanwirht* (So) 744 (14, BCS 168, Sawyer 1410) said to have been much altered (Sawyer p. 397), and *Peartingawyrth* and *Wealingawyrth* (Sx) 772-87 (14, BCS 262, Sawyer 1183). So, there appear to be only four *worð*-names recorded in genuine charters from the 8th century, and it should be further noted that there are very few such references in 9th century Anglo-Saxon charters. Examples do not become numerous before the 10th century.

On the other hand, Smith is certainly correct in pointing out that *worð* occurs in compounds with *-inga-* and with *ham*. It is extremely rare with the latter, and I have only noted Wortham (Sf, DEPN s.n.). There are a few, but only a few, *-ingaworðs*, for example, Abinger (Sr 259), Bobbingworth (Ess 52-3), Worlingworth (Sf, DEPN s.n.), the two Sussex names noted above, and *æt Tæccingawyrðe* 11 KCD 154. These clearly must belong to a comparatively early period of English name-giving and occur in south and eastern areas of England. Indeed, Ekwall (DEPN s.v.) comments that some "are no doubt pretty old", though according to current thinking the *-ingworths* seem to belong to the post-pagan period. However, Ekwall goes on to say that for

various reasons "word must have long continued to be used in forming pl.ns". Smith's view is less forthright (EPN ii, 233-4), for he simply believed that the appearance of the word in the gloss of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*, Mathew vi, 5, "suggests that it continued in living use longer in the far north than elsewhere". But, Smith had forgotten that Professor M.T. Löfvenberg (*Studies on Middle English Local Surnames*, 1942, p. 238) had already shown that it was "in living use as late as ME times", for he found numerous examples of the surname type John *atte Worthe* in 13th and 14th century sources from Somerset, Surrey and Sussex. Clearly, a full-scale study of *word* is needed. At the moment, it seems reasonable to suggest that it was being used in the formation of some place-names in the latter part of the 6th and in the 7th century, but that it is very likely that it did not become common till later, and that it continued to be used as a name-forming element till long after the Conquest. Its occurrence in Wallover in Devonshire certainly cannot date from before the 8th century, and it may well turn out that many of our place-names derived from *word* are post-700 formations.

CORPUS

Abbreviations:

ASCharters	<i>Anglo-Saxon Charters</i> , ed. A.J. Robertson, 1939.
BCS	<i>Cartularium Saxonicum</i> , ed. W. de G. Birch, 3 vols., 1885-93.
KCD	<i>Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici</i> , ed. J. M. Kemble, 6 vols., 1839-48.
Sawyer	P.H. Sawyer, <i>Anglo-Saxon Charters, An Annotated List and Bibliography</i> , 1968.
DEPN	E. Ekwall, <i>The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names</i> , 4th ed., 1960.
KPN	J.K. Wallenberg, <i>Kentish Place-Names</i> , 1931.
St	W.H. Duignan, <i>Staffordshire Place-Names</i> , 1902.

See also the relevant volumes of the English Place-Name Society for all other counties. For some counties as yet

unpublished forms are held in the Society's Archives in the University of Nottingham.

- + pairs of adjacent *walh* place-names .
- x *walh* place-names with adjacent place-names of Celtic origin.
- * *walh* place-names with Roman and Romano-British remains in the neighbourhood.

Old English forms in *weala*-:

- *Walden (Hrt 22-3), *on Wealadene* 11 (12, KCD 1354),
- *Walworth (Sr 27), *Wealawyrð* 1001 (12, KCD 715, Sawyer 914, spurious), *Wealawurð* EdwConf (11, ASCharters XCV, Sawyer 1047),
- xWalford near Quantock in West Monkton (So), *Weala-ford* 682 (16, BCS 62, Sawyer 237, dubious or spurious),
- **on weala bruce* (Berks 643-4), 944 (c.1240, BCS 802, Sawyer 500), in bounds of Brimpton,
- +x*to Wealagate* (Sr 106), 672-4 (13, BCS 34, Sawyer 1165, bounds added much later), *to wealegate* 871-99 (13, BCS 563, Sawyer 353, spurious), in bounds of Chertsey,
- **Wealagarstune* (Ha), 945 (14, BCS 803, Sawyer 505), which has been identified with Woodgarston in Wootton St. Lawrence,
- to wala crofte* (Wo, not recorded in EPNS volume), 951-5 (15/16, BCS 1023, Sawyer 579), in bounds of Old Swinford.

Uninflected *walh* place-names:

- *xWalford near Ross (He, DEPN s.n.),
Walter Hall in Boreham (Ess 239-40), *into Walhfare* 1062 (13, KCD 813, Sawyer 1036, spurious),
- **walhweg* (Gl i 115), 716-45 (11, BCS 164, Sawyer 103), in bounds of Woodchester,
- x*to wealh geate* (Wo, not recorded in EPNS volume), 972 (10, BCS 1282, Sawyer 786, suspicious), in bounds of Pershore.

walh denoting communities:

- Wales, township (YWR i 155),
- Walreddon in Whitchurch (D 248).

walh as second element of nature names:

OE *brōc* 'a brook, a stream':

Walla Brook, tributary of R. Dart (D 16),
*Walbrook, R., tributary of R. Thames (Mx 7 and
DEPN s.n.),
+Wallon Brook (Wa 6), with forms in *Walehamebroc*,
etc.

OE *burna* 'a stream':

Walburn, township in Downholme (YNR 270),

OE *ēg* 'an island, etc.':

xWallasey, parish (Ch lv 323-4), earlier *Waleye*,
later *Waleyeseye*,

OE *denu* 'a valley':

*Saffron Walden, parish (Ess 537),
+*King's Walden and St. Paul's Walden, adjacent
parishes (Hrt 22-3),
xWalden, joint township in Aysgarth (YNR 265),

OE *ford* 'a ford':

Walford, lost in Plympton St. Mary (D 254),
xWalford, near Quantock in West Monkton (So),
see above,

OE *mere* 'a lake, a mere', possibly also 'sea':

Walmer, a Cinque Port near Deal (KPN 298),
Walmer Farm in Hanbury (Wo, not in EPNS volume),

OE *mōr* 'a moor':

Walmire in Croft (YNR 283), probably influenced
by ON *myrr* 'a mire'.
Walmore in Westbury on Severn (Gl iii 204),

OE *pōl* 'a pool':

Walpole, parish (Sf, DEPN s.n.),
Wapley House in Loftus (YNR 141), to which ON
haugr 'a mound' has been added,

OE *sc(e)aga* 'a copse':

Walshaw in Wadsworth (YWR iii 202),

OE *gærstūn* 'a grassy enclosure, a paddock, a meadow':

**Wealagærstune*, has been identified with Woodgars-
ton in Wootton St. Lawrence (Ha).

Possible minor names and field-names:

Walland in Milton Damarel (D 153) ???,

Wallen Lane street in Potterne (W 244), only one
form dated 1422,

Wallhurst Manor in Cowfold (Sx 211) ???,

Wallmead Fm in Wardour (W 198) ???,

**on weale weg* 961 (13, BCS 1067, Sawyer 688), in
bounds of Burbage (W 449), but probably iden-
tical with *on wæluweg* 968 (13, BCS 1213, Saw-
yer 756), *on wælweg* (12, ib.), in bounds of
Bedwyn, and therefore an uncertain example,
le Walebroc 1277, *Wallbrooks* TA in Totteridge
(Hrt 292),

+**Waledenehulle* c.1272 in Charlbury (O 418),

Waledich 1289 in Avebury (W 395),

Waleland 1376 in Bincombe (Do i 199),

+**Walemerse* 1212 in Stepney (Mx, see DEPN s.n.
Walbrook, R.),

le Walepathe 1292 in Droxford (Ha),

Walershe 1292 (W 430), no parish given,

Walewell 1346, *Walley Hill* TA in Breamore (Ha).

walh in habitation place-names:

OE *hamm* 'an enclosure, etc.':

+**Walham* in Longford (Gl ii 149),

OE *worð* 'an enclosure':

Walworth lost in Ely St. Mary (C 218),

Walworth lost in Horningsea (C 218),

*Walworth lost in West Wickham (C 218),

Wallover in Challacombe (D 60),

Walworth, parish (Du, DEPN s.n.),

x*Walworth in Andover (Ha),

*Walworth in Newington (Sr 27),

Field-name: *Walcuuurt Hy 3, -wurth 14, Walfords
TA in Finchingfield (Ess 628),

OE *cot* 'a cottage':

+*Wawcott in Kintbury (Berks 317-8),

+Walcote in Misterton (Lei),

*Walcot in Alkborough (L),
Walcot, parish near Billingham (L),
Walcot, parish near Folkingham and Pickworth (L),

*Walcott in Happisburgh (Nf),
+Walcote Hall in Burlingham St. Andrews (Nf),

*Walcot Hall by Barnack (Nth 242),
*Walcot Lodge in Fotheringhay (Nth 202),

+*Walcot in Charlbury (O 416),

x*Walcot in Wrockwardine (Sa),
Walcot in Chirbury (Sa),

*Walcot in Haselor (Wa 212),
+Walcote End lost in Grandborough (Wa 130-1),

*Walcot in Swindon (W 277),
Walcot in Pershore (Wo 221),

Possible field-names:

Wallcote Lake c.1586 in Studland (Do i 52) ???,
Walcotes 1497 in Thornbury (Gl iii 19) ?,
Walecote 1239 in Cropredy (O 420),
Walecotesborwe c.1230 in Oxford (O 26),
Walecote, three examples quoted from the 12th,
13th and 14th centuries, but without identifi-
fications (Sx 558),
Walecote 13 near Malmesbury (W 395),

OE *tūn* 'a farmstead, a village':

- +*Wallingtons in Kintbury (Berks 317),
Walton lost in Old Windsor (Berks 31),
- Walton Inferior and Superior, township (Ch 11
157-8),
- Walton, parish near Chesterfield (Db 321),
- *xWalton upon Trent, parish (Db 667),
- *Walton on the Naze, parish (Ess 354-5),
- *Wallington in Fareham (Ha),
- +*Walsworth in Hitchin, earlier *Waltonesforde*
(Hrt 10-1).
- *Walton Fm in Folkestone (KPN 299),
- Walton Hall in Upper Holker, Cartmel (La 198),
- *Walton le Dale, township (La 68),
Walton (on the Hill), parish (La 115),
- xUlmes Walton, township (La 136),
- +Walton in Kimcote and Walton (Lei),
- *Walton on the Wolds, parish (Lei),
- xIsley Walton, parish (Lei),
- *Walton Fm in Grantham (L),
- Walton in Onibury (Sa),
- Walton in Baswich (St 160 and DEPN),
- xWalton in Eccleshall (St 160 and DEPN),
Walton in Stone (St 159-60 and DEPN),
- *Walton in Felixstowe (Sf, DEPN),
- *Wallington in Beddington, also a Hundred name
(Sr 55, 39),
- *Walton on Thames, parish (Sr 96-7),
- *Walton in Bosham (Sx 59),
- *Walton lost in Downton (W 394-5),
- Walton lost in Welburn (YNR 66),

Walton, township (YWR ii 112),
Walton Cross in Clifton, Dewsbury (YWR iii 5 and
West Yorkshire Survey, in progress),
Walton Head in Kirkby Overblow (YWR v 43),
Walton, parish (YWR iv 246),

Possible field-name: **Walton* 1838 in Whittington (Gl i
185), together with *Walwell* 1819 in Withing-
ton (Gl i 189), see also Gl i xii.

Walh as a personal name:

OE *ford* 'a ford':

*Wallingford, parish (Berks 535-6),
Walshford in Great Ribston (YWR v 20),

OE *h(e)alh* 'a sheltered place, etc.':

Walsall (St, see DEPN ignoring form dated 1002
which probably belongs to Wales YWR),

OE *hām* 'a homestead':

North Walsham, parish (Nf),
+South Walsham, parish (Nf),
Walsham le Willows, parish (St),

OE *tūn* 'a farmstead, a village':

Wallstone Fm in Ildridgehay and Alton (Db 578),

OE *word* 'an enclosure':

+*Wallsworth in Sandhurst (Gl ii 153),
*Wellsworth in Idsworth (Ha),

+*xto wealas hupe* (Sr 106, 122) 672-4 (13, BCS 34,
Sawyer 1165, bounds added much later), *to*
wealeshupe 871-99 (13, BCS 563, Sawyer 353,
spurious), in the bounds of Chertsey.