

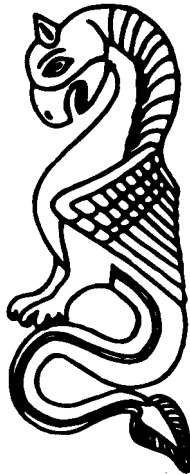
Leeds Studies in English

Article:

John Field, 'Crops for Man and Beast', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 18 (1987), 157-71

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CROPS FOR MAN AND BEAST

JOHN FIELD

On 22 May 1959, there appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* a review commending a new three-volume addition to the Survey of English Place-Names. The final paragraph began:

In conclusion, it should be noted that the work of explaining minor and field names seems to have been carried a good deal further than in some previous volumes of the Place-Name Society; and if many such names still remain without any account of their origin, that was no doubt inevitable unless publication was to be unduly delayed; and after all it is in some ways rather a virtue than a fault that a book which makes so valuable a contribution to knowledge as this does should also provide a stimulus to further enquiry.

The work being reviewed, Kenneth Cameron's *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*,¹ undoubtedly offered students of field-names an abundance of material on which to draw, as well as a perception of details overlooked in the Society's pre-War volumes. The Cumberland survey² had been the first to incorporate field-names in the relevant parish sections of the volumes, and this practice was followed (with a much more generous selection of examples) in Dr Gelling's *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire*.³ Professor Cameron's survey provided a separate glossary of elements occurring in field-names, as well as the customary discussion of selected terms found in names of recent origin. These features had been found in some earlier surveys but were here developed to the extent made possible by a larger number of field-names.

On the frequent specifier, *Big*, for example, there had been no particular comment in previous volumes. Cameron's observation on this term may or may not have been among those thought by the reviewer to be likely to "provide a stimulus to further enquiry": "In some instances it is descriptive of the size of the land, but more often it would appear to be from *bygg* 'barley'" (PN Db 756).⁴ As this term is of Old Norse origin, it might be thought to be limited to an area of Scandinavian settlement. It is not really significant, however, that there should be no convincing instances of the element in the published field-name lists in the Hundreds of Scarsdale and of Repton & Gresley, noted as being those offering most place-name evidence for such settlement. The term passed into

the English dialects of the Midlands and the North, with a special (if not precise) sense, to be discussed later.

The more usual term, *barley*, is found frequently in these and other hundreds of Derbyshire. In addition to four or five examples of *Barley Croft* and two of *Barley Field*, the element is combined with *Close* in *Ault Hucknall*, with *Storth* in *Pinxton* (on record from 1699), and with *Bottoms* and *Close* in *Netherseal*. Another possible example is *Berley Butts* (*sic*, in *Hasland*). *Big Hook*, in *Morton*, and *Big Field* and *Meadow*, in *Walton upon Trent*, receive no supporting evidence from early forms to sustain a derivation from *bygg*. It may be observed that there is a *Big Close* and a *Brewery Close* (but no *Barley Close*) in *Derby*, and a *Big Croft* and *Malt House Croft* (but no *Barley Croft*) in *Dalbury Lees*. It cannot be argued merely from this (partly negative) evidence that *Big* in these places has any other than a quantitative sense. Instances of the cereal allusion can be found, however, in other counties. *Yorkshire* (West Riding) examples include *Bigg Croft* (*Stirton*), *Bigcrofte* (*Horton* in *Ribblesdale* 1534), and the *Bigg Croke*, among the sixteenth-century fields of *Settle*. Among the *Tithe-Appportionment* names of *Bentham* is *Bigbergh*, traceable to *Bigbergh* or *Bygbergh* in deeds of 1235-55 and somewhat later. In *Westmorland* there are, among recent names, *Biglands* (*Patton*), *Bigg lands* (*Meathop*) and *Bigham* (*Barbon*); and from fourteenth-century documents, *Bigcroft* (*Helsington Chapelry*). *Bygg-hús*, the ON equivalent of OE *bere-ærn*, "barley house, barn", occurs in *Bighusdal* c.1294 (*Lowther*), alongside *Berslak* a.1286, which appears to be a derivative of OE *bere*. The generic, from ON *slakki* "hollow", is found with other cereal-names in this township: *Haverslac* 1200-1300, from ON *hafri* "oats", and *Waytslak* c.1300, "wheat hollow".

Barley Croft has the distinction of an OED citation, in the form *Bærlice croft* 996. Most English field-names alluding to this crop have as their first element either *Barley* (OE *bærlic*) or one of the spellings of *Bear* (OE *bere*), from which it appears to be formed. Agriculturally, these three terms, *bigg*, *bear*, and *barley*, are not now taken to be synonymous, though the distinction between the first two is not always precisely observed. *Bigg* refers to *Hordeum hexastichon*, with six rows of spikelets. Though of inferior quality, it grows quickly, and so is more suited to northern areas. *Barley*, *Hordeum distichon*, has only two rows. *Bear* is *Hordeum tetrastichon*, the name describing its structure and implying also the general regional intermediacy of its occurrence between the others. Sir Walter Scott's dismissive reference to *Reuben Butler's* not knowing "bear from barley" (*The Heart of Midlothian*, chap. ix) appears more serious when the failure in visual discrimination is realised.

Medieval forms containing *bærlic* are not common, one instance being *Barlichforlange* 13c, in *Pitchcombe Gl.* Midland and southern examples of field-names derived from *bere* are numerous, though sometimes disguised in their modern forms. An early instance is *Berefurlong* 1367, in *Tredington Gl.* One of the more frequent and transparent examples is *Bear Croft*, found in *Hinstock* and in *Middleton Scriven Sa*, in *Fifehead Neville Do*, in *Gotherington Gl*,

and in Church Minshull Ch. *Berecroft* occurs in Foulk Stapleford Ch, in a document dated 1202-29, and in Hurdfield from the late 13th century, as do *Le Berecroftes* in Poynton and *le Berecroft* in Little Budworth, in the same county. Combined with *-hill*, this element sometimes produces *Beryl* or *Berrill* forms. *Berryl* Close, in Hatton Db may be compared with *Bear Hill* 1696. There is an even earlier antecedent of *Berril* Hedge, in Tysoe Wa: *Berihul* 1284. Other instances are *Berrel*, in Woodford Halse; *Beryl*, in Maidford (both Northants); *Berril*, in Ledbury North Sa; and *Berrill*, in Burton Overly Lei.

The cereal, rye, is alluded to even in a number of major place-names, e.g., Ryhall, Raydon, Rayleigh, and the frequent Roydon. In field-names the element (OE *ryge*) offers little variation in its appearance. Forms with *Ru(y)* are not uncommon, e.g., in Gloucestershire, *Rulinge* 1284 "rye ridge" (Winchcomb), *Rufurlange* 12c (Alderton), *Rufurlong* c.1250 (Swindon), and *Ruyforlonge* 1286 (Standish). There may sometimes be a possibility of confusion with derivatives of ME *atter* e or *atter* ie. Percy Reaney⁵ interpreted Rye Field, in Kelvedon Ess (*Reyfeld* 1318) as "at the island or low-lying land" (OE (*æt þære*) *æg*), and Hugh Smith⁶ gives Rye and Crooked Rye, field-names in Leonard Stanley Gl, as "at the stream", with elements *atter* and *ēa*. Combination with certain generics, e.g., *halh* "nook", *hyll* "hill", and *lēah* "wood, glade, clearing" produces such forms as *Royal*, *Ryall*, and *Ryle*, found in various counties, as well as *Ryley* or *Riley*, which may be confused with the surname. In *Place-Names of Derbyshire*, Kenneth Cameron interprets *Royle* 1535, in Stapenhill, as "perhaps rye clearing", with *lēah* as the second element. George Foxall⁷ has recorded the Shropshire examples *Royals*, in Bedstone and in Rushbury; *Royal Bank*, in Wrockwardine; and *The Riley*, in Burford and in Prees.

Commenting on Ryecroft as the name of several small localities in the West Riding of Yorkshire, Smith remarks (PNYW 3.31) that this is "a very common field-name", examples of which he records in Long Drax, Great Preston, Hirst Courtney, Wakefield, and a number of other places, as well as compounds with other generics, e.g., *Rye Roods* (Birkin). *Rye Croft* is found in other counties at Badesley Ensor and at Coleshill in Warwickshire; and at Idridgehay, at Clifton and Compton, and at Hognaston, in Derbyshire. John Dodgson⁸ records a number of instances among modern names in Cheshire, as well as *Ruecroft* 1262 (Somerford Booths), *Ruycroft* 1309-12 (Lower Bebington), and *Ruykroft* early 14c (Odd Rode). The Tithe Award name *Rye Croft* in Frodsham Lordship has earlier forms *Rucrof* 1317, *Ruycroft* c.1320, 1348, *Ricroft(e)* 1331, 1362, and *Rycroft* 1338, 1394. Dodgson also draws attention to *ryeland*, cited as a common noun in OED and meaning "land, usually of a light and inferior quality, suitable for growing rye". Barbara Kerr⁹ offers parallel evidence. In Dorset, she observes, "Rye was less frequently sown than white corn crops, yet it appears more often in field names, particularly as Ryelands (North Poorton) and Rye Croft (Whitchurch Canonicorum)" (p.140). It is so used in an entry in a Cheshire charter of 1481, "a parcel of land called a Ryland" (in Aston by

Sutton), and Dodgson¹⁰ accepts this term as an independent element, found in Reylands Hey (Greasby), Rylands Fields (Little Neston), and Ryelands Meadow (Little Sutton). The termination *-lance* also occurs, for *-lands* as with other first elements, a Cheshire example of this being Roylance, in Toft.

In Warwickshire, Rhine Hill occurs as a minor name in Long Itchington and in Hampton Lucy, earlier forms being *Ruynhull* 12c for the former and *Rynehyll* 1536 for the latter. The first element seems to be the adjective *rygen* from OE *ryge*, found also in Ruin Clifford (*Ryne Clyfford* 1330) in Stratford on Avon. This adjective may occur in the name of a furlong shared between the parishes of Sherington and Chicheley (Bucks), *Rynfurrow* 1557, noted as of obscure meaning by Professor A.C. Chibnall.¹¹ One of the great fields of Newton Blossomville was known as *Clifton Rhynell*.¹² It cannot be ignored that the adjoining parish is Clifton Reynes, but this may account merely for the Clifton part of the field-name which was recorded simply as *Rynell* in the 1680 terrier (Beresford, p.20). The similarity between *Reynes* and *Rhynell* may have attracted the *Clifton* element as a piece of popular etymologizing. Another possibility is that suggested by *Rynnels*, noted by Reaney as a variant of *runnel* "short stream, drainage furrow" (PN C 354). The adjective *rygen* is found also in Withington Gl, which had a *Ruyndone* "rye hill" in 1299. It may be inferred from the modern field-names, Hungry Park, Hungerstarve Meadow, Sour Moor, and Coneygree Wood that this parish has a considerable area of land with poor soil.

References to oats in English field-names follow much the same pattern as those to other cereals. In modern documents, from the Enclosure and Tithe Awards onwards, Oatlands, Oat Croft, Oat Field, and Oat Close occur fairly regularly, though not quite so frequently as names alluding to barley and rye. Oat Furlong occurs in Twigworth Gl, and Oatleaze in Breadstone and in Hamfallow in the same county.

Some names alluding to oats appear to be of considerable antiquity. Oat Hill in Eydon Nth has an antecedent *Otehul* of c.1200; Oathill Field in Great Wyrley St was earlier *Otehilfield* 1595, and Smith suggests that Oathill Slad, in Evenlode Gl, is to be identified with *on áthyllie* in the Old English bounds of Donnington (PN Gl 1:218). Comparative forms are adduced in various counties, often with a change of generic: Oat Close, in Stanwell Mx (*Otecroft* 1450); The Oatyard 1783, in Brewood St (*Atecroft* c.1270-80); Oatcrofts, in Laleham Mx (*Otlond* 1329); Oat Pightle, in Colne Engaine Ess (*Oteland* 1225); and Oatlands, in Hankerton W (*Otegarstone* c.1300), the early form of the last having (for a cereal name) the unusual second element of *gars-tūn* "paddock". Oatle Corner, Miserden Gl, is probably a development of Oat Hill. A derived adjective *āten* enters into the composition of *Oteneforlong* early 12c, in Sherborne Gl. In the same county the deceptive Oaklands, at Bisley, has a varied set of early forms, *Ote-*, *Wootelande* 1599, *Oteslond* 1609, with similar spelling variants to those encountered elsewhere, e.g., *Woot Leasow*, in Gnosall St, and *Hotcroft*, in Foremark Db.

In Midland and northern counties, the ON element *hafri* "oats"

occurs in some field-names. Early compounds containing this term have been discussed by Kenneth Cameron¹³ and by Gillian Fellows Jensen.¹⁴ The Dunholme L name, *Hauerhul* 1349, is one of these, with earlier spellings *Haueril* 12c, *Hauerhil* 12c, *-hil* late 12c, showing a combination with OE *hyll*. An entirely Scandinavian compound occurs in *Hauerholm*, *-wong*, in Nettleham L. *Hafri*, like ON *bygg*, passed into English dialects, and so it is not surprising that numerous modern field-names containing the term lack earlier forms. Among these, in Westmorland, are Haver bank (Docker) and Haver ridding (Bampton). A similar name to the last, Haverrudding, "clearing used for growing oats", in Beetham, was *Haverreddinge* in 1548. In the West Riding of Yorkshire are several examples of Havercroft; Haver Lands, in North Elmsall, was *Haverland(e)s* c.1200, 1322. With the same name in Gorton Nt may be compared *Longe Haverland* 1566. The initial aspirate is not often omitted, but *Averlands*, in South Scarle Nt, may be noted.

In a few names in the Lancashire hundred of Amounderness, Wainwright¹⁵ detected another ON term, *korki* "oats", as the first element in Corcass (Stalmine with Staynall), Corkey (Bryning with Kellamergh), and Corkey Croft (Ribby with Wrea).

The Warwickshire editors suggested that *Pilatushull* (13c) "must have been a hill of ill-omen", the precise location of which is not stated. The information is offered in the entry for *hyll* in the field-name glossary (PN Wa p.329), which also invites the comparison with *Pilateshul*, in Trusley Db. In due course, Kenneth Cameron dealt with this among the other field-names of Trusley (PN Db 3:613), recognising the first element as *pilāte*, found also in Pilhough, in Stanton Db, *Pilethaich* c.1290, "pill-oats nook", alluding to a variety (considered by Linnaeus to be a species), known also as piled, red, or naked oats (*Avena nuda*). The characteristic of this plant is that the glumes or husks do not adhere to the seeds. Derbyshire examples include Pillow Croft, in Willington (*Piletcroft* 1312) and in Ault Hucknall (*Pella Croftes* 1609), and others to be discussed below.

Eilert Ekwall identified the element in *Studies on English Place-Names* (Stockholm, 1936), issued in the same year as the Warwickshire EPNS volume. His discussion begins with the name Pillaton Hall (Staffs), among the early forms of which are *Pilatehaia* a.1113, 1190, *Pilletenhale* 1262, and *Pilatonhall* 1271, *Pilatenhale* 1327. He notes that the forms with *-e-* may be from the OE side form *æte* for *āte*, but (no doubt because of the paucity of the material available) does not remark that the plural forms implied by most of the early spellings (representing either *Pilātan-halh* or *Pilātena-halh*) are not found in examples of the name elsewhere. For Pillaton, in his first Staffordshire volume, Dr James Oakden¹⁶ has assembled a substantial sequence of forms, showing that *-en-* or *-in-* survived in the spelling until the seventeenth century. The same volume includes other examples of the name: Pillaton Piece, in Hatherton, and Pillar's Croft (*Pyllyttes crofte* 1562) in Brewood.

Ekwall (p.105) also adduces *Pilate Croft* a.1186, *Pilatcroft* 1184-91, in Denby YW. Pillow Close, Methley YW, is probably

identical with *Pillocroftes* 1592, earlier *Pyletcroft* 1354, *Pilatcrofte* 1394. This name also occurs in Pudsey YW (*Pilotrecroft* 13c, *Pilatecroft* 1638) and in Carrington Ch. Pillows Croft, in Siddington Ch, is of the same origin, and there are lost early names such as *Pilatecrofte* 1349 (Macclesfield), *Pilatescroft* 1371 (Sutton Downes), and *Pilotcroft* late 13c (Lower Withington). Another lost *Pilatecroft* 1327-77 has been located in Coole Pilate Ch, the suffix of which is also derived from this element. In Shropshire, there is a Pillow Croft in Sheriffhales, and George Foxall¹⁷ suggests that The Pills, in Much Wenlock, and Pill Leasow, in Rushbury, are further allusions to pilloats. The rather puzzling Pillow Tallow, in Longford Db, is probably another instance of *Pilate-haith*; a similar misdivision occurs in Pilly Tough, in Holmesfield Db, representing *Pelethhaigh* 1498. These variants point to different pronunciations of the second element, [hælou] in the first and [huf] or [ha:f] in the second. Ekwall's cautious conclusion from his evidence, "The examples show that pilloats were grown in early days in Staffordshire and in Yorkshire" (p.105), can now be confirmed, and the area can be enlarged to include Shropshire, Cheshire, the West Riding of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and some counties further south. For Pillance, in Pamphill Do, there are no early forms, but it may contain *pil*(āte) and *lands*; the first element may, however, be OE *pyll* "pool (in a river), small stream". Pilot Field (*Pilatefeilds* 1638), in Falfield, is the sole instance recorded in the survey of Gloucestershire, and a single possible example has been noted in each of the following counties: Leicestershire (*Pillitland* 1606, in Bruntingthorpe), Kent (*Pillet Shaw*, in Lamberhurst), and Hampshire (*Pilot Hill*, in Facombe).

References to wheat occur in numerous field-names throughout the country, many of them seeming to be of relatively recent origin. Early forms have not been recorded for Wheat Lands, in Stourpaine Do and in Breadstone Gl; Wheatlands, in Buckland Brk; Wheatridge Field, in Matson Gl; Wheat Ridges Field, in Ashampstead Brk; Wheat Close, in Compton Brk; Wheat Croft, in Fretherne Gl and in Abingdon Brk (now Oxon); and Wheat leaze in the Gloucestershire parishes of Frocester, Ham and Stone, and Hamfallow.

However, Wheat leaze, in Alkington Gl, looks back to *Wheat leese* 1575; Wheat Ground, in Haselbury Bryan Do, may be the land known as *Wheat Close* in 1607; Wheat Field, in Turnditch Db, possibly originated as *Whetefelde* 1608, 1635; Wheat Croft 1775, in Huntington St, was earlier *le Wheate crofte* 1598; Wheat Field, in Brewood St, was probably *the wheate fyld* 1581, though the name *the wheat croft* 1783 also occurs in this parish. An even earlier form is adduced for comparison with Wheat lands, in Swindon Gl, *Watelond* c.1250. Wheat Croft 1869, in Faddiley Ch, is probably the direct descendant of *quatecroft* 13c, *le Whetefeld* 1367, and *le queteruding* 14c ("clearing in which wheat was grown").

*Wheat felde*s and *Wheat syches* 1570, in Cannock St; *Whetclouse* 1507, in Mirfield YW; *Wheate Close* 1591, in Pamphill Do; *the Wheat feilds* 1690 and *Wheate Land* 1693, both in Sturminster Marshall Do; *the Wheat Eddish* and *the two Wheat Feildes* 1637, in Horton cum Peel Ch, do not appear to have survived. Lost names of earlier date

include *Whetfelde* 1448, in Chalbury Do; *Whethul* 1368, in Childrey Brk; and *Whetesplot* 1351, in Frodsham Ch (*spiott* means "a patch of ground"). Indirect references occur in Wheat Rick Field, in Blandford St Mary Do and in *le Wheteberne* 14c ("the wheat barn"), in Church Minshull Ch.

The general uniformity of spelling among wheat names makes few demands on etymological skills, but one or two traps exist. There is occasional uncertainty among forms referring to "wheat", "wet", "white", and even "woad". Wheat Moss, in Winnington Ch, is undoubtedly "wet moss", and the first element in Wheat Reins, in several places in Cheshire and Staffordshire, is more likely to be "wet" than "wheat". Reins are "boundary strips", and such land is not usually very well drained.

Derivatives of ON *hveiti* "wheat" are often indistinguishable in modern spellings from those of OE *hwæte*, but medieval forms with -ai/ay- or -ei- are likely to be of Scandinavian origin and the spellings occasionally persist in current names e.g., Waitlands, in King's Meaburn We. Medieval examples include *Wayte Rustlache* 13c, in Mere Ch, "wheat (land) beside *Rusclache*, i.e. the rushy rivulet"; the West Riding names *Wayte Holm* and *Whaitecroft*, both of 13th-century date; and the lost 13th-century Westmorland names, *Waytcroft*, in Bampton, *Quaytewangbank*, "(bank of) wheat meadow", in Cracken-thorpe, and *Waytlyth* (*Quaitelit* c.1240) and *Waytslack*, "wheat slope" and "wheat hollow" respectively, in Lowther.

In recent centuries plant-breeders have introduced new varieties of wheat and other crops. Many of these bear fanciful and abstract names, some of which may have passed to enclosed fields. A little evidence has been found, and the possibility is suggested that occasionally fields bearing such names as Paragon, Mirable, or Nonpareil may have borrowed these designations from improved cereal varieties.

The general term, *corn*, is only rarely found, e.g., in Gloucestershire, *Corn Dingle*, in Westcote; and *Corneclose* 1629, in Woolaston. Mixtures of grains were known as *meslin* or *maslin* (wheat and rye), *dredge* (barley and oats, and/or sometimes peas), and *mongcorn* (usually identical with *maslin*). In Wiltshire, the name of the locality in Chute now marked on the 6" map as *Mankhorn Round* has undergone some curious changes; from *Mangcorne Fild* 1528, evidently where such a mixture was habitually sown, it had become *Mankhorn Long Ground* by 1840, the present name evidently having developed by misdivision of the second and third words, and subsequent omission of "Long".

Dredge is etymologically related to the French word *dragée*, which has an agricultural sense of "a mixture of pease, vetches, beans, lentils, sown as a forage crop" (OED), though evidently the English husbandman is more limited in his selection of ingredients. Possible instances of this term are to be found in *Drudge Field*, in Banstead Sr (*Dredge field* 1558); *Drudge(s) Leasow*, in Norbury St; in *Weston Jones St*; and in *Little Wenlock Sa*, and *Drudge Meadow*, in Much Wenlock Sa.

Arable husbandry is not limited to cereals, and allusions to numerous other crops are encountered in field-names. Pulses, root crops, and brassica varieties are some of the plants whose regular cultivation has led to the naming after them of the fields in which they grow. It has still to be established, of course, what link there may have been between the crop and the field bearing the name, and why, given the rotation of crops, one plant-name took precedence over others. Besides plants used as human or animal food, the fields may have produced in due season vegetable flavourings, fibres, and dyes, all of which have contributed to the nomenclature.

The general term for leguminous plants appears in a few field-names, e.g., Pulse Hill, in Rosliston Db, but specific names are by no means uncommon. In earlier centuries, beans played an important part in the diet of both farm-workers and horses, and formed a substantial proportion of the harvest of the common fields. Kerridge¹⁸ mentions the areas cultivated in Little Oakley Nth in 1776: of the 220 acres of common-field tillage, of which 73 were fallowed, there were 37 acres of wheat, 37 of barley, and 73 of beans. Such proportions indicate that beans were not a minor consideration in arable farming, and so names like Bean Meadow, in Bredbury Ch, Bean Close, in Morley YW, or Bean Clough, in Bosley Ch, sit quite comfortably alongside, say, Wheat Field, Rye Croft, or Barley Stubble, in the respective townships.

Field-names alluding to beans vary greatly in their first syllable, and it is impossible to generalise about the development, in which obviously local dialectal peculiarities, as well as scribal idiosyncrasies, must have played their part. In names dating from the past three centuries or so the word *bean* may be found in its modern form (the spelling of which happens to coincide with the Old English) or as *beane*, but compounds of earlier date may have *Ban-* or *Ben-* as their first syllable. Alternatively, modern forms with *Ben-* or *Ban(d)-*, or even *Been-*, may occur, although a different vowel is to be found in earlier spellings. Examples are not hard to find: Bean Close, in Yeldersley Db; Bean Piece, in Sudbury Db; and Bean Flatt, in Osleston and Thurstaston Db, all lack early forms, but the antecedent of Been Lands, in Great and Little Coxwell Brk, was *Beanelande* in the early 17th century; and Bean Land, in Stanton Fitzwarren (Wilts) was *la Benelonde* 1347; Bean Close, in Turnditch Db, may have been *Benefelde Meadowe* 1508, *Benefeld* 1594. Bandland, in Brigstock Nth, was *Banlond* in 1480, and early forms of Bandlands, in Brackley Nth, were *Benlond* 1259, *le Banlonde* 1262. The lost names, *Benacre* 1154-68, in Gosford & Water Eaton, Oxon; *Beneacre* 1492, in Charminster Do; *Benelondes* 13c, in Hilton Db; *Banfelong* 1592, in Burton Ch; *Banlond* 1324, in Leckhampton Gl; *Beane stiches* 1606, in Affpuddle Do; and *Beaneham* 1624, in Awre Gl, illustrate something of the spelling variety found in this group. The completely modernized form Bean Acre, in Bromborough Ch, may be compared with Banacres, in Leighton Ch, or Banakers, in Saughall Massie Ch and in Newton cum Larton Ch.

Banlond, in Haselbech Nth, became the modern Ballands, though the development to Ballards, from *Ballands* 1764, in Ashby St Ledgers

Nth, must be seen as anomalous. Modern forms with *Balance* are by no means unusual, e.g., (The) *Balance* in Bray Brk and Hognaston Db; *Balance Close*, in Wallington Hrt; and *Top, Middle (&c) Balance*, in Ashby Folville Lei. *Bellent*, in Cuddington Ch, without early forms and otherwise unexplained, may have an origin in **Be(a)n-land*. *Bancroft* seems to have an independent existence, the spelling with *Ban-* being found in medieval forms and in what appear (from lack of recorded earlier spellings) to be names of more recent origin: *Bancroft* c.1230, in Newnham Gl; *Bancroft* 1482, in Melbourne Db; *Ban Croft*, in Hodnet Sa; and *Ban Croft Meadow*, in Inkpen Brk. *Bandcroft*, in Sunningwell Brk, represents the occasional intrusion of *-d-*, found also in other *Ban-* names. An exceptional modern form occurs in Kingsbury Wa, where *Bancroft* 1570 appears as *Barn Croft* in the Tithe Apportionment.

Spellings with *Bin-* or *Byn-* are recorded in several counties: *Binhill*, in Coleshill Brk (*Beneshull* 1473-4, *Binnill Pasture* 1666); *Bin Field*, in Ellesmere Sa; *Binhays*, in Portland Do (*Bynheye* 1323, *Byn-*, *Benhaies* 1608); and the lost *Nether-*, *Suthbinaker* 1318, in Osmington Do. In areas of Scandinavian settlement, derivatives of ON *baun* "bean" may be found, e.g., *Bounecroft* 1300, in Middleton We, and *Bowneriggs* 1676 ("bean ridges"), in Brougham We.

The many purposes for which beans could be used included floor-covering: in Sawbridgeworth (Herts) the land called *Beanfield* in the Tithe Apportionment had been bequeathed for the purpose of growing beans to be strewn on the floor of the church. Its later name, *Bell Mead*, may indicate an alteration in the application of the bequest, possibly using the rent for the upkeep of the church bells.

Names referring to the principal other leguminous crop almost always have the historically exact form, *Peas(e)*, from OE *pise*, *peosu*, as their specifying element, and some apparent instances with the (pseudo-) singular *pea* (especially combined with *Hill*) must be regarded with caution. *Peahill*, in Brigham YE, is a good instance of the development of *Pighill* 1585 (i.e., *Pightle*), a transformation found also in other parts of the country. *Peas Close* and *Peascroft* are on record in many counties; *Peas Furlong*, in Chadlington Oxf, *Pease Furlong*, in Eyam Db, and *Peasland(s)*, in Ugley Ess (cf. *Peselondfeld* 1344) and Hunsterson Ch, probably originated in the medieval unenclosed fields.

Despite the reservation expressed above, there is no reason to reject *Pea Mead*, in Studland Do; or *Pea Ground*, in Swanage Do; though these may be of more recent formation than *Peas Plot*, in Church Knowle Do; *Pease Hill*, in Upper Slaughter Gl; *Peaseley*, in Chedworth Gl; or *Pease Close*, in Warmwell Do. For *Piscombe* ("valley where peas are grown"), in Bindcombe Do, there are the comparative forms *Puscumbeswey*, *Purscombesweye* 1376, to support an early origin. The Essex names, *Peasland*, in Stebbing, and *Peaslands*, in Ugley, were respectively *Peselonde* in 1425 and *Peselondfeld* in 1344. *Peaseall Field*, in Wistaston Ch, lacks earlier spellings, but its form, combining *pise* with *halh*, suggests a previous name, **Peas(e)all*, "pea nook". Similar compounds,

possibly of earlier origin, include those with *-hill*, such as Pussell (Shillingstone Do), Pessill (Husbands Bosworth Lei), and Pessle Syke (Laughton Lei). Among the field-names of Tarrant Gunville Do (PN Do 2, p.251), David Mills accepts Professor Löffvenberg's suggested derivation from *pulse* of *Poushull(e)* 1337, 1351, *Pulshull'* 1353, *Pushel* 1356, but it might be objected that only the 1353 form supports this; the pattern of both earlier and 1356 spellings resembles that of other names derived from *peosu* and *hyll*. A variety of early pea is alluded to in Hastings, in Foremark Db.

Turnip Close 1698 in Stanton by Bridge (Derbys) is one of the earliest references to that crop, closely followed by the same form in a Rousham Oxf document of 1729. The name is also found in Tithe Awards in Atlow Db, in Tibshelf Db, and several parishes in Leicestershire; *Turnip Field* occurs in Dunston St, and in Gussage All Saints Do. The Stanton by Bridge example is approximately contemporary with the movement to introduce this crop as a course in the arable rotation, but no useful conclusion can be drawn from the occurrence of the term in the name of a close, unless there is also evidence of the cropping routines of the land concerned. The unlikely form, *Furnip Ground*, recorded in Fifehead Neville Do, may be a clerk's error for *Turnip Ground*. The Neaps, recorded in the 1774 Enclosure Award for Stanton Harcourt Oxf, and The Neaperies, in Pontesbury Sa, also refer to this crop. *Mangold Field*, in Newbold Db, and *Swedelands*, in Dalby Db represent rarer allusions to other root-crops.

In Dorset, and possibly elsewhere, at the time of enclosure, small plots for growing potatoes were sometimes allocated to working labourers, to compensate them for the loss of common land. Names such as *Potatoe Ground*, in Binfield Brk, or *Potato Close*, in Ashleyhay Db and in Kirby Underdale YE, or *Potato Garth*, Fridaythorpe YE, may refer to this custom.

Mention must be made of the crop experiments in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It has been observed that names commemorating these suggest failure rather than success, but the location of some references to liquorice in the Pontefract area indicates that a few at least of the examples record a clear victory on the part of the cultivators. To *Liquorice Hill*, in Linthwaite YW, may be added *Liquorice Close & Garth*, in Ferry Fryston YW; and *Spanish Liquorice Ground*, in Bere Regis Do. *Spanish Piece*, in Clowne Db; and the Shropshire names, *Spanish Hayes*, in Cound and in Cressage, and *Spanish Flat*, in Norton in Hales, may also allude to trial plantings of this crop.

Tobacco was occasionally grown. As the area of cultivation was restricted by law to half a rod it is not to be expected that field-name allusions to it should be numerous. There are, however, traces in the west Midlands: *Tobacco Plat*, in Southam Gl, *Tobacco Piece*, in Billingsley Sa, and *Tobacco Field*, in Prees Sa.

Arable crops included other economic plants besides those consumed directly as human food. Animal fodder was (and, of course, is) an important part of the produce of the land. Fibres from flax

and hemp were used in weaving, rope-making and other processes, and from cultivated land were also obtained dyes and flavourings. There are numerous references in field-names to the considerable range of plants involved.

Dr Gelling remarks (PN Brk, p.903) that field-names alluding to sainfoin (*Onobrychis viciifolia*), though frequent in Oxfordshire, number only five or six in Berkshire. This name is characterized by a wide range of ingenious spellings; one or two examples of each are enumerated here, and others (e.g., *sandfoyle*) occur in the literature:¹⁹ Cinqe Foin Piece (Beechamwell Nf), Cinque Foin Close (Tadlow C, Brampton Cu), Sainfoin (Walkington YE), Saint Foil (Luttons Ambo YE), Saintfoin Close (Ault Hucknall Db, Muston Lei), Old Saintfoin Close (Tinwell R), St Foin Ground (Shrivenham Brk), Saint Foynes Field (Hendon Mx), Sanfoin Close (Spelsbury Oxf), Sangfoil Field (St Martha's Sr), Sarnfoin Close (Wharram le Street YE). It is uncertain whether some names, e.g., Cinque Foil Close (Londesboro YE), Sinfoil (Kirby Grindalythe YE), Sink Foil (Duggleby YE) refer to this plant or to cinquefoil (*Potentilla* spp), especially as the latter was commended, with eight or nine other plants, by Folkingham: "Sowing of the seed of . . . septfoile, cinque-foyle &c., doth much enrich meddowes and pastures both in forrage and fenage".²⁰ But it does not seem to have been sown as a single crop, as might be necessary for it to lend its name to a piece of land.

Lucerne (*Medicago sativa*) may have been introduced into Britain as long ago as the fourteenth century, but it was discussed by the "Improvers" alongside Sainfoin as "French Grass", and names with this reference may thus be ambiguous: Great & Little French Grass (Alderholt Do), French Grass Field (Long Crichel Do). The crop referred to in French Wheat Field, in Ollerton Ch and in Rostherne Ch, is buckwheat (*Polygonum fagopyrum*). This is not of French origin, being an Asian plant used as animal feed and brought into Europe by the Turks. Its former name, brank, does not seem to have yielded any field-names.

In the seventeenth century, clover gained the status of an arable crop. Its earlier presence in the natural vegetation is attested by references to it in major place-names, e.g. Clarendon W. In *Claueraymedowe* 1432, in Huntington Ch, one of the rare early field-names alluding to the plant, OE *clæfre* is identified as the first element, and this is postulated also for Clever Loonds, in Little Stanney Ch, which has a seventeenth-century antecedent, *The Clefferlandes*. Most modern field-name references contain the current form *clover*. There are numerous instances of Clover Close in Derbyshire Tithe Apportionments, especially in Appletree Hundred. Other examples, which are not so frequent as might be expected, occur in Bushby, Stretton Magna, Stretton Parva, and Upton (all Lei), Heworth Du, and Kingston Magna Do. Holwell Do has both Clover Lands and Clover Inhams; there are examples of Clover Field in Prestbury Ch, Abbotsham D, and Hylton Du, of Clover Flat in Carleton La, and of Clover Leasow in Acton Burnell and other parishes in Shropshire.

Botanical exactitude is seldom to be expected in toponymic

elements. In former popular usage, *clover* might refer to several different species, and vernacular alternatives were similarly ambiguous. One of these popular expressions may lie behind Honey-suckle Field, in Upminster and in Chignall St James Ess, Honeysuckle Ground, in Wootton Oxf, and Honey Suckle Piece, in Heage Db. The allusion in Trefoil Close, in Snelston Db, may be to clover, though there is also a Clover Close in that parish, or to cultivated medick (or Lucerne). In addition to "cow grass" and "suckling", possibly to be found in some field-names, another vernacular synonym is to be found in Sucklesome, in Catton Db.

The expected context for alfalfa is the United States, but its use in this country is attested by Alfa Alfa, in Ellerton Priory YE, where another close, New Lucern, bears the alternative name for this plant. A crop of greater antiquity was rape, of which two varieties were grown: dwarf rape, *Brassica napus*, used as fodder, and giant rape, *Brassica campestris oleifera*, from the seeds of which colza oil was obtained, used for lubrication and soap manufacture. Rape Close, in Church Lawford Wa, Rape Garth, in Wawne YE, and Rape Leasow, in Tasley Sa, are typical of the names referring to these plants, no information being provided by the names as to which variety was being grown.

Numerous references to flax and hemp occur in early field names. Flaxhill, in Hook Norton Oxf, is the successor of *Flexhulle* 1260. Other instances are *Flexley*, in Wotton under Edge Gl, *Flaxlands*, in Teversall Nt, and *Flax Land*, in Aston Wa (*Flaxe plecke* 1613, *Flaxelands* 1622). The Northamptonshire editors tell us that *Flaxlands*, in Everdon (*Flexlond* 1240), was at the time of publication "pronounced locally *Flexlonds*" (PN Nth p.275). References to flax also include field-names with OE *lin* (or its ON equivalent) as first element, e.g., *Lingards*, in Linthwaite YW, *Linecroft* c.1250, in Swindon Gl, and *Lincroftum* 13c in Hensall YW. This crop also had more than one use, as a textile fibre and as an oil-bearing seed, but the distinction does not seem to be detectable in the field-names.

Hemp was often grown in small plots near the houses, but also took its place among the field crops: "A first crop on old grasslands in the districts of Lyme, Bridport, Beaminster, Barpole, South Petherton and Under Hamdon was often woad, hemp or flax".²¹ Small-scale cultivation is suggested by such names as *Hemp Garden* 17c, in Wargrave Brk; *Hempyard*, in Cholmondley Ch; and *Hempbutt* Dunston St; *Cannock St*; whereas *Hemp Close*, in Kelfield YE, *Hemp Leasow*, in Stirchley Sa, or *North and South Hempland*, in North Poorton Do, may well refer to rather larger plantings.

There is space for only the briefest mention of woad, madder, and dyer's greenweed. The former provides a large number of such names as *Wad Leaze* (Syde Gl), *Wadley* (Chedworth Gl), and *The Wadlands* (Moreton Corbett Sa). Shropshire field-names include an early reference to madder, *Le Maderyarde*, in Shrewsbury St Chad Sa, as well as *Gaudy Ground*, in Pontesbury Sa and *Gaudywood Park*, the last two containing OF *gaude* "dyer's greenweed".²²

Much research is needed on field-names alluding to holly, the

importance of which as a fodder crop has been so well described by Jeffrey Radley²³ and by Martin Spray,²⁴ in separate articles, the latter making generous use of place-name evidence. Such names as Holly Field or Holly Close will be regarded rather more critically when it is realised that in some places the shrub was carefully cultivated for this purpose, and not every field-name reference to it should be taken as a descriptive allusion to casual hedgerow growths. Gorse, too, was sown as a regular cattle and horse fodder (Spray, p.97), so that field-names alluding to that plant also merit appropriate attention.

Two groups of plants differ from the generality of arable crops so far discussed in both their cultivation and their ultimate use. But it would be out of keeping with the spirit of celebration not at least to mention these names. The brewer's essential supplies receive abundant mention in field-names, and the part played by barley has been discussed earlier. Andrew Boord's view²⁵ that a new drink containing hops was becoming "moche used in Englande to the detryment of many Englysshemen", is borne out (as to extent, if not as a value-judgement) by the number of Hopyards and Hop Closes occurring up and down the country from the late sixteenth century onwards. Hop Ground occurs as a field-name in Berkshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, and Rutland, and the example at Sible Hedingham in Essex looks back to *Le Hopgrounde* 1596. Instances of Hop Yard are even more numerous and comprehensive, examples being found in Aston Grange Ch, Ashover Db, Fifehead Neville Do, Kemerton Gl, Kings Norton Lei, Rampton Nt, and Rugeley St, selecting only one parish from several in each county.

In Dorset, Hop Yard in Piddletrenthide and in Motcombe replaced Vineyard (surviving at Arne and at Corfe Castle) as a general name for a small home close;²⁶ as such, with examples of Hemplot and Kailyard elsewhere, the term may be regarded almost as an appellative, without an essential connexion with the crop named. The extent of the field-names alluding to the vine, especially (The) Vineyard, is wider than either climatic or economic conditions might suggest. Besides southern counties, the term is also found in Yorkshire (e.g., Long Riston YE, Mytholmroyd YW, Warmfield YW), Derbyshire (e.g., Brailsford), and Cheshire (e.g., Hale). Some have earlier counterparts, e.g., The Vineyards, in Fobbing Ess, was *Le Vynyarde* in 1539, and Vineyards at Great Baddow in the same county has an early form *Vynejerde* 1421.

All that has been attempted in this brief survey is to establish that the body of field-names relating to arable and other crops bears some relationship to the plants to which the names allude. There is much scope for further research in relating the names to the processes of agrarian history, and potential investigators may be encouraged to find that the material is more extensive than has been possible to indicate here.

SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Yorkshire (East Riding) field-names are selected from the lists collected by school-children and now in Brynmor Jones Library, University of Hull; other examples from the volumes of the Survey of English Place-Names (EPNS), from authorities cited in the text, or from the writer's own collections. County abbreviations are generally those used in the volumes issued by the EPNS, which are referred to in a standard form, e.g. PN Db = *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*.

NOTES

- ¹ EPNS, 27-9, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1959).
- ² EPNS, 20-2, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1950-2).
- ³ EPNS, 23-4, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1953-4).
- ⁴ For abbreviation conventions, see above.
- ⁵ *The Place-Names of Essex*, EPNS, 12 (Cambridge, 1935) pp.321, 615.
- ⁶ *The Place-Names of Gloucestershire*, Vol.II, EPNS, 39 (Cambridge, 1964) p.202.
- ⁷ *Shropshire Field-Names* (Shrewsbury, 1980) p.32.
- ⁸ *The Place-Names of Cheshire*, EPNS, 44-7 (Cambridge, 1970-2); 48, 54 (Nottingham, 1981).
- ⁹ "Dorset field names and the Agricultural Revolution", *Trans. Dorset Nat. Hist. & Arch. Soc.* 82 (1961) pp.135-42.
- ¹⁰ PN Ch 5 (I:ii) 324-5.
- ¹¹ *Sherington: Fiefs and Fields of a Buckinghamshire Village* (Cambridge, 1965) p.7.
- ¹² M.W. Beresford, "Glebe Terriers and Open-field Buckinghamshire", Part 2, *Records of Bucks* 15, pp.5-28.
- ¹³ "Early field-names in an English-named Lincolnshire village", in *Otium et Negotium*, ed. Folke Sandgren (Stockholm, 1973) pp.38-44.
- ¹⁴ In *Festskrift til Kristian Hald* (Copenhagen, 1974) pp.45-55.
- ¹⁵ F.T. Wainwright, "Field-names of Amounderness Hundred", *Trans. of the Historic Soc. of Lancs. and Cheshire* 99 (1945) pp.181-222.
- ¹⁶ EPNS, 55 (Nottingham, 1984) pp.91-2.
- ¹⁷ See above, n.7.

Crops

- ¹⁸ Eric Kerridge, *The Agricultural Revolution* (London, 1967) p.94.
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p.291.
- ²⁰ Quoted by Kerridge, p.30.
- ²¹ Kerridge, pp.118-119.
- ²² Foxall, *Shropshire Field-Names*, p.31.
- ²³ "Holly as a winter feed", *Agric. Hist. Rev.* 9 (1961) pp.89-92.
- ²⁴ "Holly as a fodder in England", *Agric. Hist. Rev.* 29 (1981) pp.97-110.
- ²⁵ Quoted in M.A. Seebohm, *The Evolution of the English Farm* (London, 1927; rev. ed. 1952) p.220.
- ²⁶ Kerr, *Dorset field names*, p.138.