

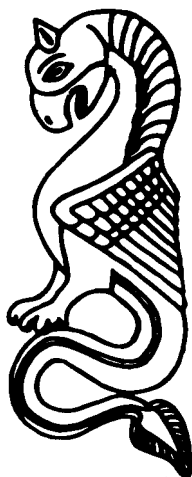
Leeds Studies in English

Article:

Victor Watts, 'Place-Name Evidence for the Allocation of Land by Lot', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s. 18 (1987), 247-63

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PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE FOR THE ALLOCATION OF LAND BY LOT

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The holdings of shareholders in the communal lands of a medieval manor are generally held to have been subject to allotment and re-allotment at various times. This was particularly so of the scarcest land of all, the meadowland, where occupation was often strictly regulated on a temporary basis either by lot or rotation. The classic example of this is the village of Yarnton (O)¹ where the annual allocation of meadowland was carried out up to the nineteenth century by balloting with cherrywood balls, and a similar system was used at Bampton in the same county.² Arable land too was liable to the same principles of rotation and assignment by lot, especially, but not exclusively, the fields of urban settlements where, again, arable land had become an exceptional and valuable commodity. The frequency with which the arable was re-allotted is uncertain. Some authorities have believed that it took place annually, others that re-division occurred more sporadically to take account of encroachments, disputes, changing economic conditions and patterns of cultivation. Sometimes, although rarely, it does seem to have taken place by casting lots on an annual basis. Freshly cleared land and fenland reclamations would also have been subject to a process of allocation.³

In Scotland, however, land was frequently re-allotted, either annually or on a three-yearly basis. Much quoted is Robertson's description of the practice in Perth, which also obtained in Nairn and Moray:

The first deviation from run-rig was by dividing the farms into kavel[s] [Footnote:> This name is significant of the manner in which these divisions were made. Either the tenants of the farm or a neutral person, marked off the several portions of land; and the possessors cast lots (or kavel[s] in the Scottish dialect) for their particular share. Kench signifies a larger portion of land than a ridge.] or kenches, by which every field of the same quality was split into as many lots as there were tenants in the farm. This was a real improvement, so far as it went; every farmer had his own lot in each field . . . reaping every full benefit of his industry, which by the run-rig husbandry, he could not enjoy, owing to the exchange of ridges every year, or the smallness of the different portions. Kavel[s] still exist in the Stormont, and in

some other parts of the county.⁴

The reform here described seems to imply movement away from an earlier practice of annual re-allocation, which may also have been by lot, to a more permanent possession.

In what follows the incidence in place-names of two terms reflecting allocation by lot, ME *cavil*, *kevelle* and OE *hlot*, is investigated.

(a) ME *cavil*, *kevelle*

In his chapter on "Rural Settlement" in *Durham County and City with Teesside*,⁵ Dr Brian Roberts, commenting on multiple-row settlements, cites the case of the complex village plan of Wolviston with its *Northraw*, *Southraw* and *Westraw* together with a *Westkevyle*, a *Northkevyle* and a *Southkevyle*. He regards complexity of this kind as a reflection of such villages' enhanced function as administrative centres, elevating them above their neighbours. The *kevyles* he takes to be small lanes (p.245). Similarly, in his chapter on "Planned villages from Medieval England" in *Man Made the Land*,⁶ he writes of "lanes or *kevyles* radiating from the core" of Wolviston and already built-up in the early thirteenth century. A.H. Smith⁷ knows nothing of a place-name element of this kind: the only formal parallel seems to be late ME *kevelle*, *cavil* with the sense "an allotment of land, share of property made by lot" cited in the etymology of the lost p.n. *Mid Keavels* (YW vi.74), ultimately from ON *kefli* "a stick, a piece of wood", *kafli* "a piece cut off". This duality of form links *kevelle* with the ME *cauel*, *cavel* cited in the explanations of Middle Cale (New Mills Db 150) and a handful of Cale names in Cheshire.

I next present the p.n. evidence for this somewhat fugitive element so far as I can presently discover it and then proceed to a discussion of its etymology and significance.

Cheshire

- CALE GREEN 1831, *Kale Green* 1844 (Che i.297, Stockport).
- MIDDLECALE PIT and WOOD, *Cale Wood*, *Middle Cale* 1831 (Che 1.200, Lyme Handley).
- Cale Fd* 1845, a f.n. in the tp of Kingsley (Che iii.243).
- Cale Green otherwise Earls Green* 1780, a f.n. in the tp of Crowton (Che iii.197).
- Middle Cale* 1848, a f.n. in the tp of Adlington (Che i.186).

Cumberland

- CAVEL GILL, *rivulum de Kaulegile* 1227; *Caluegille*,

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Cauegile c.1227; *Cavel Gill* 1550 (Cu 8, a tributary of Lostrigg Beck).

Derbyshire

MIDDLE CALE (now NEW MILLS), *Midelcauel in villa de Boudon* 1306; *Middelcavil* 1362; *Middle Cale* 1587 to 1743 with variant sp. *Midle-* (Db 150).

Durham

cavell prope le Coleway, balk in, 1613 MAN, a lost name in the North field of Wolviston (Billingham).

Cavels 1838 TA, a f.n. in Cowpen Bewley (Billingham) associated with the f.n. *Old Town*.

North and South Long Cavels 1838 TA, a f.n. in Harton (South Shields).⁸

Cavil field 1846 TA (Kyo, Lanchester).

foginflat Cavell 1722 HCB, a lost f.n. in Norton.

Keueldale 1189-1212 MC 6487, early 13c 3.9.Spec.3, the lost name of a share of meadow in Wolviston (Billingham).

Keulfeld c.1280 4.9.Spec.71; *le Keuylfeld de Wluiston* 1315 3.9.Spec.95; *le Keuifeld* 1316 MC 6494, 1323 MC 6497; *le Keuylfeld* 1325 4.9.Spec.60, 1333 1.10.Spec.84; *le Keuelfelde* 1351 MC 6513, probably identifiable with the *Kellfelde* 1614 MAN. The lost name of one of the open fields of Wolviston (Billingham).

Southkeville 1424 Gilly; *Suthkeuil(e)*, *-kevyle*, *Westkevyle*, *Northkevill*, *-kevyll* 1430 FPD, the locations of various tofts, cottages and messuages in Wolviston (Billingham).

Leicestershire

Keulfild, -feld 1506 Cl, an enclosed pasture in Knaptoft tp.

Staffordshire

Cavelles felde 1570 (Cannock, St 64. The editor of St, however, explains it as from the surn. Cavell).

Kaulhul' meirs, Kaulhull sige early 13c (Penkridge, St 99, the first el. tentatively identified by the editor with ME *cauel*).

West Riding of Yorkshire

MID KEAVELS, *Midel-*, *Mydelkevel*, *-kenel* 1200-26;
Midkeavells als. Mowsey flatts 1673; *Midkawells* 1743; a
lost name in East Staincliffe (Skipton), now Massa Flats
(YW vi.74).

Dumfriesshire

MIDDLEGILL, *Midilkeuille* 1315 RGS; *Middelgill* 1581 Dum.
A constituent element of the estate at Erickstane granted
to Sir David de Lyndesay by Robert I.⁹

Fife

KEAVIL, *Cavul* 1645 Map. An estate SW of Dunfermline.

The late Professor Bruce Dickins seems to have been the first, in Professor Cameron's *Place-Names of Derbyshire* (Cambridge, 1959) p.150, to have identified the element with ModE *cavel* "a division or share of property made by lot, an allotment of land", first recorded in this sense in Iosias Arelebout's map of 1639 of *Euery Particular Cauell or Closs in the Seuerall Counties of Yorke, Lincolne and Nottingham in the leuell of Hattefeild Chass*¹⁰ with reference to lands reclaimed from Hatfield Moor on the border between Doncaster deanery and the Isle of Axholme, by drainage by Vermuyden and his partners or participants. These lands were "cavelled out, and allotted to every Participant, by six capital divisions, in every part of the said Levelles" so that there were six *cavells* in each of the twelve locations in question.¹¹

The original sense of *cavel* was "a lot, a small piece of wood used in the casting of lots", being recorded in this sense before 1300. According to the *Acts of the Apostles* (i.26), after the death of Judas two names were put forward as candidates for his place among the twelve apostles: Joseph, known as Barsabbas, and Matthias. A prayer was said and lots were then drawn to find which was the Lord's choice (Vulgate: *dederunt sortes eis et cecidit sors super Matthiam*). In the Cotton MS of *Cursor Mundi* this is rendered:

Dan kest þai cauel þam emell,
Bot son a-pon mathie it fell (18907-8)¹²

with variant *caueles* in the Göttingen MS; and again:

Mathias to þe tuelue was chosen
Als þe cauel on him fell. (21156-7)

Already, however, the northern word *cavel* is replaced in two MSS by the commoner *lot*, even to the detriment of metrical regularity in the second instance (Fairfax 18907 *lottis*; Trinity 18907 *lottes*, 21157 *lot*). Again, as OED records, in the romance *Sir Percyvell of Gales* (mid 14th century) four knights cast lots to decide who shall

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do single combat with the hero:

They fore forthward right faste
And sone kevelles did þay caste,
And evyr fell it to frayste
Un-till sir Wawayne. (1425-8)¹³

It is clear that the phrase "to cast cavils" was a set collocation. It occurs several times in the ballads. Seven sisters choose by lot which is to go to the greenwood for recreation:

We keist the cavils us amang
to see which shoud to the greenwood gang.
(*Gil Brenton*, Child 5A, stanza 46, with variant reading
lotties in 5C)

Men imperilled at sea cast lots to find which is the jinx among them:

We'll cast kevels us amang,
See wha the unhappy man may be.
(*Brown Robyn's Confession*, Child 57, st.2:1-2)

Rebels cast lots to see who shall kill the king:

And thay cast kaivles them amang,
And kaivles them between,
And thay cast kaivles them amang
Wha shoud gae kill the king.
(*Fause Foodrage*, Child 89A, st.3; cf. st.19)

Brothers cast lots to choose which is to take up piracy:

And they cuist kevels themsells amang,
Wha sould gae rob upon the salt sea.
(*Henry Martyn*, Child 250C, st.1:3-4 recorded in Ayrshire,
while 250A recorded in Devon substitutes *lots*)

The oldest reference to activity of this kind in which the will of fate is invoked is the famous Chapter 10 in Tacitus's *Germania*:

auspicia sortesque ut qui maxime observant. sortium
consuetudo simplex. vergam frugiferae arbori decisam
in surculos amputant eosque notis quibusdam discretos
super candidam vestem temere ac fortuito spargunt.
mox, si publice consulitur, sacerdos civitatis, sin
privatim, ipse pater familiae, precatus deos
caelumque suspiciens ter singulos tollit, sublato
secundum impressam ante notam interpretatur.
(For omens and the casting of lots they have the
highest regard. Their procedure in casting lots is
always the same. They cut off a branch of a nut-bearing

tree and slice it into strips; these they mark with different signs and throw them completely at random onto a white cloth. Then the priest of the state, if the consultation is a public one, or the father of the family if it is private, offers a prayer to the gods, and looking up at the sky picks up three strips, one at a time, and reads their meaning from the signs previously scored on them.)¹⁴

More apposite to the present context, however, is another Scots literary usage. In *Aeneid*, Book 5, Vergil describes how Aeneas founded a city in Sicily for those of his band of exiled Trojans who were unable to follow him further to the promised land:

interea Aeneas urbem designat aratro
sortiturque domos, hoc Ilium, et haec loca Trojam
esse iubet. (755-7)

In Gavin Douglas's version of 1513 this becomes:

In the meyn tyme, Eneas with a pleuch
The cite circulit, and merkit be a seuch:
By cavillys syne the tenementis dyd depart;
Heir ordanys Ilion, and, in 3ondir art,
Of Troy commandis beld othir memoriallis. (V.xiii.167-71)¹⁵

Here we find the use of *cavils* specifically associated with the allocation of lands and tenements. Most of the evidence for this practice in real life as opposed to literary artifice in fact comes from Scottish sources though they are comparatively late. The earliest instance known to me, however, comes from a dubious reading in the Curia Regis rolls for 1201 (Cur.R.II,31) concerning lands of Hugh son of Robert in Upton, Floore and Northampton which were said to have been divided into three portions *per ruvuliam*. For this nonsense word R.E. Latham¹⁶ would read *kuvillam* which he takes to be a form of MedLat *cavilla*. A second early instance cited by Latham also involves emendation. It concerns an estate in Badbury Hundred in Dorset *partitus per duas conillas*, now emended to *covillas*. It is clear that this was a recognised legal procedure in which the interested parties appoint fortune the judge "ut quilibet habeat partem illam que per sortem illi acciderit".¹⁷ And in a third thirteenth-century occurrence *cavil* is specifically linked with lot:

stallangiator ("a stall-holder") nullo tempore potest
habere loth, cut neque cavyl de aliquo mercimonio cum
burgense nisi infra nundinas quando quilibet potest
habere loth et cavyl. (*Acts of Parliament of Scotland*
I, 31, 1)

The main evidence from Scotland, though later, is more prolific. In 1459 Jhon the Lelman was ordered to

tak Ectour of Meldrum kawyl as he is oblyst and sworn

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to do . . . has it war is awyn, . . . becaus thar was
na nothyr that wald resaff is kawyl and he was absent
in the tym hym self.

(*Rep.Hist.Mss, Varr.Coll.V.82*, cited in DOST s.v. kavel(1,
kavel(1)

In 1488 a dispute between the prioress and convent of Elcho, Perth, and one Henry Livingston over their shares in lands in *braidlaw* called *middill bynning* was ordered to be settled by casting of *caivillis*.¹⁸ In 1506 five marks worth of land of the *Hagthornehil of auld extent* in the lordship of Cathcart, Renfrewshire, were to be divided "be castine of cavillis (in) equale porcions and diuisione".¹⁹ In 1522 Janat Drumond, widow, was entered upon her third part share of her late husband's lands in *kynnere, owyre* and *nether caithlok, kyttady* and *cragusunquhar* to which she was *befalline be cavillis cassine*.²⁰ In the MS Protocol Book of R. Lumsdane in 1551 there is mention of:

twā merk land . . . that he aucht and suld be kennit
tharto as vse is be diuisioun of cavillis to be cassin
thairvpone. (Cited by DOST s.v. *cavill, cavell*)

Similarly in 1555 Iohn Allan "drew cavillis for his fourt pairt of a tenement of land".²¹ In 1570 the town moor of Lanark was to be divided into *cavils*:

The bailleis gart thair offeceris warne the cunsall
and commonatie of the brought of Lanark to compeir in
the kirk of Sanct Nicolas . . . for to haf ilk persone
thair kavie [sic] of certein of the muir quhilkis the
provest, balleis, and cunsall, and commonatie hes
sechtet and bundet.²²

An Edinburgh will of 1582 bequeathes:

my ovis till haif the ane half of the forsaid merkland
as sall fall to tham at the ane end be thair cut or
cavill. (*Edinb.Test.X.325*, MS cited in DOST)

In 1607 at the Baillie Court of the regality of Melrose there was a case of complaint between two tenants holding adjacent rigs of equal length and breadth on the same *cavell*, one of whom

mast malitiouslie and wrangouslie hes layit the
(other's) teilling doun agane and deteins mair nor
his cavell extendis to and will on na wayis to suffer
the compliner to possess his pairt and cavell be just
measour and met.²³

In 1698 Abraham de La Pryme knew *cavel* as a division of land which might bear a name on his proposed map of the parish of Hatfield YW,²⁴ and *cavil* is also used of a division of land in Whickham Du²⁵ and Chester-le-Street Du ("one Cavill of land . . . the 12 Cavills of land").²⁶

Cavil is derived from ON *kafli* "a circular stick, a staff" and corresponds to ModIcel *kafli*, Faroese *kalvur*, ModNorw dial. *kavl(e)*, ModSwed *kavle* "a circular piece of wood, a cylinder", Shetland Norn *kavl-*, *kavel-*, *kavlin-tree* "a cylindrical piece of wood put into the mouth of a fish to extract the hook".²⁷ It is cognate with MLG, MDu *kavele* "a piece of wood used in casting lots, a lot, a little stick inscribed with runes for casting lots",²⁸ ModDu *kavelen* "to cast lots". The variant form *kevelle* is derived from ON *kefli* "a peg, a cylindrical piece of wood, a bit", ModIcel *kefli*, ModNorw *kjevle*, ModSw dial. *kävle*, Shetl.Norn *kev(e)l* "a bit, a short billet of wood put into a lamb's mouth to prevent it sucking the ewe". In literary use it occurs in *Havelok the Dane* (547),²⁹ "a keuel of clutes", for a gag shoved in the mouth of the hapless child victim. Both forms are ultimately derived from IE **gebh-* "bough, branch, piece of wood".

Tacitus's account of the manufacture of wooden lots has already been cited (above p.251). In the *Lex Frisiorum* they are called *tenos*³⁰ which must represent Gmc **tainaz*, Go *tains*, ON *teinn*, OE *tān* "a twig, a stick". The word occurs in a context dealing with divination in *Hymiskviða*:

Ár valtívar . . .

 hristu teina ok á hlaut söu.³¹ (1-3)

Elsewhere the words used in ON are *spánn* "a chip, a shaving, a divining chip" and its compound *blótspánn*, and *hlutr*. *Kefli* does not seem to be used in this way. There are instances of the carving of runes on a *kefli* in the sagas. In *Gisla saga Gisli*, now an outlaw, visits his brother Thorkell who does not answer his knock at the door until Gisli takes up a stick (*kefli*), cuts runes on it (*rístr á rúnar*) and throws it inside (what the runes said we are not told).³² Again when he leaves home for the last time he is carrying a *kefli* and cutting runes on it (*reist á rúnar*). The chips that fall on the ground as he goes lead Eyjolf to his hiding place and to Gisli's eventual death.³³ In *Egils saga*, on hearing news of the death of his son Bodvarr, Egil shuts himself away in his bed-closet to fast to death. His daughter Thorgerd suggests he relieve his feelings by composing a dirge which she will carve in runes on a *kefli* (*rísta á kefli*).³⁴ After his adventure under the waterfall Grettir left a *runakefli* in the church porch at Eyjardaleriver on which two verses were beautifully carved in runes.³⁵ It is not necessary to believe, however, that the marks cut on a *kefli* when casting lots were themselves runes. Any identifying mark would have served.

It seems clear that as a p.n. el. *cavil* hovered between the status of descriptive term and name element proper.³⁶ It is most frequently compounded with the adj. *middle* or another descriptive term. Otherwise it mainly stands alone or qualifies *field* as a prototheme. It must also be admitted that some of the instances cited are uncertain. The Che Cale names are included on the analogy of Middle Cale (Db) and might in some cases rather contain OE *cawel* "kale". Cavel Gill (Cu) may contain *cavil* in the sense "pillar".

Allocation by Lot

In Durham in Wolviston tofts and cottages are specifically said to stand on the *kevylls*. This may reflect a situation in which both the tofts and their associated land holdings were subject to allocation by lot. Roberts has drawn attention to the existence of the practice of *solskifte* or sun-division in some Du townships, whereby the tofts in the principal street of the village and their associated strips were numbered off in the order that the sun moved over them, a practice that may date back to a period of re-organisation after the eleventh-century harrying of the north.³⁷ It would seem that the actual allocation was done by lot (cf. especially the occurrence of the form *keveldale* "lot portion"), and in this connection it is interesting to note that casting of cavils is specifically said to have been to the sun and to the shadow in an adjudication in 1428 by Patrick of Dunbar between the Abbot of Melrose and Lord Walter of Haliburton over the partition of two plough-lands at Hassington near Eccles in Berwickshire:

þe said Abbote & þe said lorde of Haliburton' tuke
twa kabillis and brocht me þaim & I kest þaim, þe
tane to þe son'. þe topir to þe schadow & thus it
(sc. the land) was departit.³⁸

Unfortunately no direct connection with annual or sporadic re-allocation of the common arable can be argued here since the adjudication of 1428 seems to be an instance of a well known procedure in Scottish law. Thus, Erskine describes how the widow's terce, or liferent in the third of her husband's heritable subjects, is allotted or "kennit" to her:

the sheriff divides the land between her and the heir.
In this division, after determining by lot or kaval,
whether to begin by the sun or the shade (i.e. by the
east or the west), the sheriff sets off the two acres
for the heir, and the third for the widow.³⁹

(b) OE *hlot*, *hlet*.

I now proceed to the p.n. evidence for OE *hlot* (ModE *lot*) together with a few possible instances of its i-mutation ablaut side form *hlēt*. ModE *lot* is of very frequent occurrence in the Tithe Awards of some counties and 19th century instances are only summarily noticed here.

Bedfordshire

WHITSUNDOLES FARM. This land was *Lott Meades* 1595, marked as "x lottes" or "x doles" and seems to have been allotted annually at Whitsun (Bd 131).

Berkshire

Le Lotte Acre 1549 (Sandhurst, Brk 132)

Lotemedede 15c (Earley, Brk 95)

Lotmedede 1543 (Englefield, Brk 213)

In addition the following 19th century instances are noted: *Lot Farm* (Hurley, 63), *Lotmead Lane*, *Lot Meadow* (Milton, 416), *Lot Meadow* (Shellingford, 398), *Lot Moor* (Tilehurst, 196), *Four Mans Lot* (Draycott Moor, 405), *Peaked Lot* (Hungerford, 305).

Cambridgeshire

les Fenlotes 1402 (Whittlesey, Ca 150)

lez lotes 1446 (Elm, *ibid.*)

THE LOTS, *The Lotts* 1604 (Cottenham, *ibid.*)

THE LOTS, *fenground called Common Lots* 1658 (Soham, *ibid.* 202).

Lotts in Gallfenn early 17c (Haddenham, *ibid.* 150).

the Lott Landes of Edward Love 1678 (Sutton, *ibid.*).

the lote or dole of John Belward 1637 (Witcham, *ibid.*).

In addition one 19th century instance is noted, *HOBB'S LOTS* (Wisbech St Peter, 297).

Cheshire

All the instances are 19th century, *COMMON FARM* (*Common Croft, Field & Lot*, Marton, iii.183), *COMMON FARM* (*Common Land & Lot*, Bulkeley, iv.18), *COMMON SIDE* (*Common Field, Land & Lot*, Alvanley, iii.220), *COMMONSIDE* (*Common Brow & Lot*, Kingsley, iii.242), *Handley Lot* (Helsby, iii.238), *Helsby Lot* (v.228), *Long Lot* (Kingsley, iii.244), *Lot(t)* (v.228), *MARSH LANE* (*Marsh Field, Lot & Meadow*, Crowton, iii.197), *New Lot* (Helsby, iii.238), *ROYALTY COVERT* (*Royal Lot*, Crowton, iii.197), and two possible instances of *hlēt*, both 19th century, *Blakelett* (Butley, i.196), *Thorn Lett* (with OE *þyrne* "a thorn-tree", Bollington, i.192).

Derbyshire

Only one early example is noted in this county which may, in any case, be a lead-mining lot.

le Loth 1295 (Youlgreave, Db 185)

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Gloucestershire

Lottes 1543 (Gl iv.140)

the Lotts 1639 (ibid.)

Lott ground 1668 (ibid.)

Lott mead (*Smartes Lott meade* 1639, Ampney St Peter, ibid. i.55)

Lott Meadowe 1621 (ibid. iv.140)

Lot Medowe 1535 (ibid.)

19th century examples include *Barblotts*, *Picked Lotts* and other examples of *Lot(t) mead(ow)* (ibid.).

Lincolnshire

Fodder Lots 1846 (Lincoln, L i.176)

Middlesex

LOTS ROAD (crosses land called *lez lotte*, *le lottes* 1544, Chelsea, Mx 87)

Oxfordshire

Lotewood 1487 (Aston Rowant, O 104)

Lottreden 1278, *Lottresden* c.1233 (Enstone ibid. 351, said to contain OE *loddere* "beggar", might equally well be an instance of **hlotere* "lot caster, allotter")

17th century instances include *Lotts* (Aston Rowant ibid. 104), *Lotte meadow ground* (Rollright 373), *Lot Mead* (Northmoor 367), *Lot Furlong and meadowe* (Eynsham 263), *the Lott meade* (South Leigh 276), *Lott mead* (Tackley 287), *le common lott meadow vocatur le High meade* (Burford 311), *Normoore lotte meadowe*, *Southe Moore lotte meadowe* (Marston 182).

18th and 19th century examples include *Big Lott* (Holton 177), *Catstail Lot* (Milton under Wychwood 364), *The Lots* (Kiddington 359, Bix 68), *Lot Mead* (Hampton 214), *Lot Meadows* (Yarnton 297, see above p.247), *Lot Meadow* (Broadwell 309, Denton 169, Holton 177, Finmere 209, Ipsden 58, Kingham 361, South Weston 99), *Lottacre* (Shiplake 83), *Lotts* (Lewknor 114)

Longleigh 1650 (*le Longelete* 1363, Eynsham 263, might possibly be an example of *hlēt*)

In Churchill (O 345) it is reported that the village had four *Lot Meadows*, divided yearly by the drawing of lots.

Sussex

LOATS LANE (*le Widelote, Suthlote* 1482, Bersted, Sx 91)

Westloats Lane (Bognor, *ibid.*)

Whitelote 1377 (Portslade, *ibid.*)

Westmorland

Late examples include *Lord's, Moss, Tup* and *Whinny Lot* (We ii.262)

Wiltshire

Littlelot 1570 (W 436)

le Lott 1540 (*ibid.*)

les Lottes 1637 (*ibid.*)

Lott meade 16c (*ibid.*)

Other instances of this compound occur in Wanborough 1649 (W 285), Malmesbury 1669 (460), Brinkworth (464), Sherston (472, *Le Lot* 1670), and Staverton (477), North Bradley (478), Bratton (479), and Monkton Deverill (483), all 19th century.

LOTMOOR, *Lotmore* 1709 (Great Wishford 231).

Lot is derived from OE *hlot*, ME *lote* "a lot, a share", cognate with OE *hlyte* "a lot", OFris *hlot*, OHG (*h*)*luz*, ON *hlutr* and, with a different grade of ablaut, OE *hlīet* "lot, luck", OHG (*h*)*lôz*, OSax *hlōt*, ON *hlaut*, Go *hlauts* and the verbs OE *hlēotan* "cast lots", OSax *hliotan*, ON *hljóta*, OHG *hliozzan*, *liozan*, MHG *liezen*. The ultimate origins of this CGmc word are uncertain, connections having been sought with Lat *clavis*, *clavus*, *clau-do* (IE *kleu-/klau-* cf. Doric *κλαῦς*, and *kleud-* from the root *kel* "hide, conceal") or with Gk *κλαδός* "twig", *κλήρος* "share, lot", originally "piece of wood for casting lots". In the latter case, which is attractive in the present context, *hlot* would be cognate with OE *holt* "a wood, thicket,holt". Especially interesting is the semantic development of Gk *κλήρος* to mean "allotment of land, piece of land, farm, estate" and in Macedonia "estate granted by the king".⁴⁰ We may also note the OE compounds *tānhlyta* and *tānhlytere*, "one who divines by casting lots", found unfortunately only in glosses.

Many of the *lot* names appear only in very late sources such as the Tithe Awards and must be of post enclosure origin. Indeed, as with *cavil*, *lot* seems to hover in status between appellative and element proper. There are, however, sufficient instances of its early use in names, especially in Ca where land newly reclaimed from the fens seems to have been apportioned by *lot* (cf. *les Fenlotes* supra, p.256), to provide, again, firm evidence of the allocation of

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land by the casting or drawing of lots. This was particularly so of meadowland, as we have already noted, and as the regular occurrence of the compounds *Lot Mead*, *Lot Meadow* testifies. As terms connected with land apportionment and land holding, however, *hlot* and *hlēt* were already in use in pre-Conquest times. The inter-linear gloss in the Vespasian Psalter, for instance, translating Psalm lxxvii.55, *eiicit a facie eorum gentes et sorte diuisit eis terram*, reads: "awearp frō onsiene heara óeode 7 hlete todaelde him eordan".⁴¹ In a grant of land by King Eadwig in 956 we find:

on Fearnas felda [Farnsfield Nt] gebyrað twega manna
hlot landes . . . and þreora manna hlot on
Normantune [Normanton Nt] (Sawyer 659 = BCS 1029,
printed in EYCh, no.2).

A *manslot* seems to have been a technical term for "the amount of land allotted to the head of a family when the hundred was divided up" (BT s.v.). Napier prints from a manuscript dealing with land-holdings of the Abbey of Bury St Edmund in various Nf hundreds which includes the following statements:

On Elsingtun hundred ah Sancte Eadmund xxvii manslot.
On Spelhoge hundred xlv manslot etc.⁴²

He believed the compound to have been of Scandinavian origin.

However, the p.n. evidence for both these elements is scanty, and one is led to enquire why. In the first place, although their occurrence offers clear evidence for the practice of casting lots for land, this was probably a comparatively rare event except where meadow was concerned. Then, other terms for shares in the common fields and pastures which do not specifically allude to the method of allocation, e.g. OE *dāl* and its compounds *dāl-mæd*, *dāl-land*, ME *shote* etc., may obscure the evidence. There is also some evidence of the use of other terms for allotted land: cut from ME *cut(te)* "a lot", of obscure origin but in use from at least the late twelfth century, seems to have had some currency as a p.n. el. although not recognised by EPN. Unfortunately it is difficult to distinguish it from ME *cut(te)* "a cut, a water-channel" and in some counties from dial. forms of *cot* and even *croft* (Hrt 262). However, it has been recognised as a term for a piece of land in f.n.s. such as *Longcut(t)*, *Broadcut(t)* etc., in O, although the forms are all modern (O 438). In one particular O parish where there is independent evidence of the yearly drawing of lots for meadow another word, *set*, seems to have been used for a block of land so allocated.⁴³

In Y, and occasionally too in Cu, Nt and Nth, the term used is ME *wandale* "a share of the common arable land of the tp.", commonly derived from ON *vǫndr* "a wand, a measuring stick" and *deill*. This term is understood either to mean a strip fenced off with wands or stakes (YN 59, YE 107) or a strip measured off with a wand (Nt 293, Cu 497). Perhaps in the light of the evidence collected here the possibility that *vǫndr* might have been used in the same way as *kefli* and *hlot* should not be entirely dismissed.

NOTES

- ¹ The abbreviations used in this article are those commonly employed in the publications of the English Place-Name Society up to and including vol.49, except for the following: Brk = Margaret Gelling, *The Place-Names of Berkshire*, EPNS, 49 (Cambridge, 1973); 50-1 (Nottingham, 1974, 1976). Ca = P.H. Reaney, *The Place-Names of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely*, EPNS, 19 (Cambridge, 1943). Che = J.McN. Dodgson, *The Place-Names of Cheshire*, EPNS, 44-7 (Cambridge, 1970-72); 48, 54 (Nottingham, 1981). Child = *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ed. F.J. Child, 5 vols. (Boston and New York, 1882-98, repr. 1957); ballads cited by number. DOST = Sir William Craigie and A.J. Aitken, *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (Chicago and Oxford, 1929-). Dum = Col. Sir Edward Johnson-Ferguson, *The Place-Names of Dumfriesshire* (Dumfries, 1935). EYCh = W. Farrer, *Early Yorkshire Charters*, Vol.I (Edinburgh, 1914). FPD = *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, [ed. W. Greenwell], Surtees Society, 58 (Durham etc., 1872). Gilly = Schedule of "Gilly Corn" from the Rental of the Farms of Durham Almonry, *Archaeologia Aeliana* 4.Ser. 33 (1955) pp.50-60. HCB = unpublished Post-Dissolution Halmote Court Books of the Diocese of Durham. IE = Indo-European. L = Kenneth Cameron, *The Place-Names of Lincolnshire I*, EPNS, 58 (Nottingham, 1985). MAN = unpublished Post-Dissolution Manorial Records of the Dean and Chapter, Durham. Map = Map of Fife surveyed by James Gordon in A.J.G. MacKay, *A History of Fife and Kinross* (Edinburgh, 1896). MC = unpublished Miscellaneous Charters in the Muniments of the Dean and Chapter, Durham. RGS = *Register of the Great Seal of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1882-1914). Sawyer = P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (London, 1968). Shet1 = Shetland. Spec = unpublished Special charters in the Muniments of the Dean and Chapter, Durham. St = J.P. Oakden, *The Place-Names of Staffordshire I*, EPNS, 55 (Nottingham, 1984). surn. = surname. tp. = township.
- ² W.E. Tate, *The Village Community* (London, 1967) pp.33-4, citing R.W. Gretton, *Economic Journal* 22 (1912); and J.A. Giles, *History of Bampton* (Bampton, 1848) pp.75-82.
- ³ Sir Paul Vindogradoff, *The Growth of the Manor* (3rd ed., London, 1920) pp.166-79, 265-6; R.A. Butlin, "Field Systems of Northumberland and Durham" in *Studies of Field Systems in the British Isles*, ed. A.R.H. Baker and R.A. Butlin (Cambridge, 1973) pp.133-4; and Baker and Butlin in *ibid.*, ch.14 "Conclusion", pp.635ff.; Trevor Rowley, "Medieval Field Systems" in *The English Medieval Landscape*, ed. Leonard Cantor (London, 1982) p.30.
- ⁴ James Robertson, *General View of Agriculture in the County of Perth* (2nd ed., Perth, 1813) pp.91-2; W. Leslie, *General View of Agriculture in the Counties of Nairn and Moray* (1813) p.459, where keavie is defined as "The part of a field which falls to one on a division by lots". *Kench*, or *kinch*, "an unexpected advantage or opportunity; a division of land for which lots are cast" apparently represents ONFr *canche*, *keanche* "a throw at dice, luck, fortune" (*Scottish National Dictionary*, s.v. *kinch*) and is thus cognate with ModE *chance* < OFr *ch(e)auce*, from *cheoir* "to fall". Robertson's interest in names is further illustrated by his footnote (*op.cit.*, p.92): "In some parts of Monteat, the names of places are expressive of this ancient mode of the division of land, viz. Arn-prior, the Prior's portion, Arn-tommy, Arn-finlay, Arn-more etc." where he clearly assumes that these names are compounded with Gael. *earran* "a share, portion of land, division".
- ⁵ Ed. J.C. Dewdney (Durham, 1970).
- ⁶ Ed. A.R.H. Baker and J.B. Harley (Newton Abbot, 1973) p.51.

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- ⁷ *English Place-Name Elements*, English Place-Name Society 25-6, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1956).
- ⁸ I owe this example to Mr Thomas Pyke's undergraduate dissertation on the place-names of South Shields, submitted as part of the examination for the degree of BA in English Language and Medieval Literature at Durham, June 1985.
- ⁹ The full text of the charter as given in RGS is: *Robertus etc. Sciatis nos dedisse concessisse et hac presenti carta nostra confirmasse Daud de Lyndesay . . . omnes terras de Le Revwaus, Meshope, Midilkeuille, Blaclau, Grenhilcotis, Ayrikstan et de Mikylholmesyde*. No identifications are offered in the source. However, six of these names may safely be identified with Rivox, Mosshope, Blacklaw, Greenhill, Eriskstane and Meikleholmside, northwest of Moffat, Dumfriesshire. Middlegill lies between Mosshope and Blacklaw on the ground and is here therefore identified with *Midilkeuille* as it is in Dum 99.
- ¹⁰ Reproduced in W.B. Stonehouse, *The History and Topography of the Isle of Axholme* (London, 1839). This antedates the first reference recorded in OED which is in any case wrong: see note following.
- ¹¹ *List of Participants' lands lying in the Isle of Axholme, 1642* (not 1652 as in OED): Stonehouse, *History and Topography*, pp.90ff. The use of *cavel* here raises the question of whether the Hatfield minor name *Calls* (YW i.9 1842 TA) is not a contraction of this element rather than a representative of dial. *call* "a place where cattle are driven, a cow-gang", or *caul* "a weir" (YW, *ibid.*). The same consideration may arise with some of the other Y call names, viz. *Cowgill* vi.255, *Callgill* 1592, *Cawegill* 1660; *Callis* iii.171, *Adam de Calys* 1375, *my playces called Calys* 1551; *The Calls* iv.125, *Le Calls* 1668; *Kittycaul* vi.179, *Kitty Caw* 1848; *Call-bank* iv.5, 1729; *Caw Croft* iii.233, *Call(e)croft(e)* 16; *Callehirst* lll.253, 1342; the *Calling* iii.136, 1766).
- ¹² Ed. R. Morris, *EETS OS*, 62 (1876; repr. 1966): examples from OED.
- ¹³ Ed. J. Champion and F. Holthausen (Heidelberg, 1913).
- ¹⁴ Ed. A. Önnersfors (Stuttgart, 1983); trans. H. Mattingley, revised S.A. Handford (Harmondsworth, 1970).
- ¹⁵ Ed. D.F.C. Coldwell, *Scottish Text Society*, 2 (Edinburgh and London, 1957).
- ¹⁶ *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, Fasc. II (London, 1981) s.v. 2 *cavilla*; and "Some Minor Enigmas from Medieval Records", *English Historical Review* 74 (1959) p.669.
- ¹⁷ Bracton, *De Legibus* ii.34, cited by Latham, "Some Minor Enigmas", *loc.cit.*
- ¹⁸ *Acts of the Lords Auditors of Causes and Complaints 1466-94*, Jan 23, 1488.
- ¹⁹ *Liber Protocolorum M.Cuthberti Simonis*, ed. J. Bain and C. Rogers, 2 vols. (London, 1875) II, p.162.
- ²⁰ *Sheriff Court Book of Fife 1515-22*, ed. W.C. Dickinson, *Scottish History Society*, 3rd ser. 12 (Edinburgh, 1926) pp.252-3.

- ²¹ *The Stirling Antiquary*, ed. W.B. Cook (Stirling, 1893-) IV, p.219.
- ²² *Extracts from the Records of the Royal Burgh of Lanark 1150-1722*, [ed. Robert Renwick] (Glasgow, 1893) p.48.
- ²³ *Selections from the Records of the Regality of Melrose 1605-61*, ed. C.S. Romanes, Scottish History Society, 2nd ser. 6 (Edinburgh, 1914) p.35.
- ²⁴ *The Diary of Abraham de La Pryme*, [ed. C. Jackson], Surtees Society, 54 (Durham etc., 1870).
- ²⁵ *Rural Economy in Yorkshire in 1641, being the Farming and Account Books of Henry Best*, [ed. C.B. Robinson], Surtees Society, 33 (Durham etc., 1857) pp.33 and 128 note.
- ²⁶ *Parliamentary Surveys of the Bishopric of Durham*, ed. D.A. Kirby, Surtees Society, 183, 185 (Gateshead, 1971, 1972). In Scotland *cavil* is also used of a share of fishing rights, cf. John Spalding, *The History of the Troubles and Memorable Transactions in Scotland 1624-45*, 2 vols. (Aberdeen, 1792) I, p.231:
- They got about 40 chalders of victuals and silver rent (sc. for the supply of troops) out of the bishop's kavil, consisting of three cobles on the water of Don, and other rents out of the samen water
- and State. *Leslie of Powys* 17 (cited in DOST):
- The Town and Bishop feued out the fishing in shares, six of them called the King's cavil, and the other six the Bishop's cavil.
- ²⁷ J. Jakobsen, *An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland* (repr. Lerwick, 1985) s.v..
- ²⁸ J. Franck, *Etymologisch Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal* ('s-Gravenhage, 1884-92; 1912) s.v..
- ²⁹ Ed. W.W. Skeat, 2nd. ed. revised by K. Sisam (Oxford, 1956).
- ³⁰ Cited in his commentary on Tacitus 10 by R. Much, *Die Germania des Tacitus* (3rd ed., Heidelberg, 1967).
- ³¹ *The Elder or Poetic Edda*, ed. and trans. Olive Bray, Viking Club Translation Series 2 (London, 1908).
- ³² *Gísla saga*, in *Vestfirðinga sǫgur*, ed. Björn K. Þórólfsson and Guðni Jónsson, *Íslenzk fornrit* 6 (Reykjavík, 1943) Ch.24, p.77.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, Ch.34, pp.109-10.
- ³⁴ *Egils saga*, ed. Sigurður Nordal, *Íslenzk fornrit* 2 (Reykjavík, 1933) Ch.78, p.245.
- ³⁵ *Grettissaga*, ed. Guðni Jónsson, *Íslenzk fornrit* 7 (Reykjavík, 1936) Ch.66, p.216. The use of *runakefli* for letter writing is discussed by Aslak Liestøl, "Correspondence in runes", *Medieval Scandinavia* 1 (1968) pp.17-27.
- ³⁶ As a mining term it continued in living use throughout the nineteenth

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- century and was still familiar in Durham in 1982; cf. the letter by R.O. Heslop of 1887 quoted in OED s.v.: "Each collier draws his cavel, and the number on his ticket is the number of the 'bord' at which he must hew for a stated period until another cavilling takes place".
- ³⁷ B.K. Roberts, *The Green Villages of County Durham*, Durham County Library Local History Publication, 12 (Durham, 1977) p.40.
- ³⁸ *Liber Sancte Marie de Melros*, [ed. C. Innes], Bannatyne Club, 56 (Edinburgh, 1837) p.521.
- ³⁹ J. Erskine, *The Principles of the Law of Scotland*, (12th ed., Edinburgh, 1827) II.ix, "Of servitudes", section 29, p.243; originally published in 1754.
- ⁴⁰ Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. II.1 and 2; J.B. Hofmann, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Griechischen* (München, 1949) s.v., where it is derived from *qlāros, cogn. with OIr clār "Brett, Tafel" and the root seen in κλάω "breche"; Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie d. Klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* s.v.: "Grundbedeutung Los, dann der durch das Los erworbene Anteil am Grundbesitz des Stammes, also Landgut; so schon bei Homer u. Hesiod". Also, "Landgut das der makedon. König gleichsam als Lehen an hochstehende Persönlichkeiten vergibt".
- ⁴¹ Ed. Sherman M. Kuhn (Ann Arbor, 1965).
- ⁴² A.S. Napier, "Contributions to Old English Lexicography", *Transactions of the Philological Society* (1903-6) pp.307-8.
- ⁴³ L.E. Rose, *The History of Churchill* (Brackley, 1934) p.54, cited at O 345.