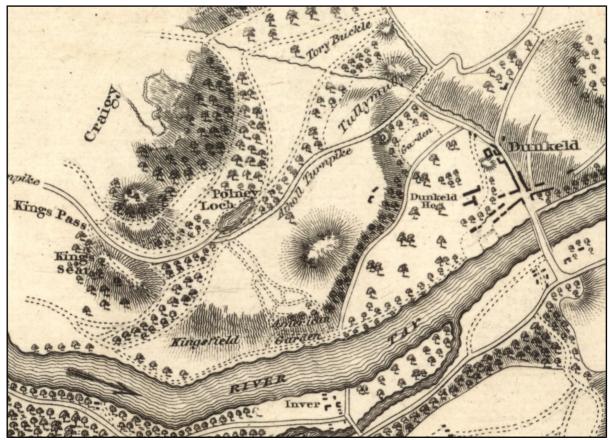# The place-names around King's Seat, Dunkeld:

a short survey for Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust

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December 2017

Contents

Introduction

The study looks at a small selection of place-names around King's Seat. Two training days looking into the place-names around the hill were held on 28th and 29th of August, and it was at these and through discussions with the Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust team that the shape of the survey was largely determined. The place-names and relevant discussion are laid out in detail below.

Place-names matter. If there are any doubts about that statement, imagine trying to travel anywhere in the world without them; try booking flight from 55°57'00" N, 003°22'21" W to 51°28'39" N, 000°27'41" W. How much simpler is it to say you want to go from Edinburgh Airport to London Heathrow? For most of us place-names are merely words, often incomprehensible, on maps or road-signs indicating where a place is in the world. Some place-names have special resonance for people; for example, their home town or village, a place where they spent a special holiday or occasion, or perhaps they just delight in the sound of the name – many Scots like how 'Scottish' places such as Auchtermuchty or Ecclefechan sound, and can take great delight in their mispronunciation by non-Scots speakers.

The place-names of an area, however, meant something to the people who originally coined them. Once we crack the code, as it were, we can discover a great deal about the landscape in which the place-name is situated. Place-names are a window through which we can glimpse Dunkled's past. They contain a large amount of information about such topics as people, the landscape, how that landscape was used, belief, and of course language. For place-names are words and once we can understand what a place-name means we can begin to use it to tell us about the past. Place-names can be a great aid in helping historians and archaeologists understand rural settlement and society in the Middle Ages and beyond to the cusp of the Agricultural Improvements and Industrial Revolution in Scotland in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Not only do they give us clues to landscape use, but they also indicate important religious and social organisation that would otherwise have gone unrecorded. Place-names are very much an under-utilised resource for Scottish history, but can be said to be one the main resources for the study of important questions, such as those relating to the Picts. Place-names can help historical researchers and archaeologists with many aspects regarding the historic landscape of an area. A full historical and analytical survey of the place-names of Dunkeld and the surrounding area would reveal much more that this brief survey, but even this has uncovered many aspects of the area's past than archaeological or historical survey alone can hope to reveal. Place-names can give an indication of an area's past landscapes, whether natural or human influenced; past social organisation and land divisions can be revealed; beliefs, both religious and mythical are contained in the names of many features, whether they be hills, burns or vegetation. Indeed, so varied are the topics for place-name research that a recently published book on the Gaelic landscape by John Murray gives the following categories for looking at place-names in the landscape: landforms – mountains, hills, passes, hollows, valleys; hydronomy (river and loch-names); climate, season, sound and time; Landover and ecology – flaura and fauna; agriculture – crops, domestic and farm animals; buildings and settlement; church and chapel; cultural artefacts; people and occupations; events; legend and the supernatural. All of these categories can also be described in terms of colour, pattern, texture, form, size and position, and through metaphor using the anatomy of the whole human body (Murray 2014, 209-10). Many, if not all these categories can be found in Dunkeld and the surrounding area. However, one of the problems we face is that Scotland is very limited when it comes to how many counties have had their place-names closely scrutinised. Scotland lacks the intensive surveys of England and Ireland, particularly the Republic of Ireland.

Underpinning all this, of course, is language. Research in place-name involves looking for their earliest spellings of the names. The reasoning is that the earlier the spelling the closer we are to the language spoken when the name was first coined. For example, Pictish, like British or Brittonic south of the Forth, a language related to modern Welsh, is generally thought to have died out by around the year 900, the language having been replaced by first Gaelic, perhaps around 900 to 1000, and then Scots which probably began to make inroads into the area from the early twelfth century, perhaps as a result of trade with England and Flanders (which spoke a Germanic language reasonably similar to English at this time). Researchers look at various material for early spellings, including old

maps, the earliest detailed of which are Timothy Pont's maps dating to the 1590s. Other useful maps are William Roy's Military Map (1747-53) and James Stobie's *Map of the Counties of Perth and Clackmannan* (1783). While these maps are very useful, they are not as accurately drawn as the Ordnance Survey maps which only started in the early nineteenth century, and did not reach Perthshire until the 1860s. It is from the Ordnance Survey that we get the majority of our current spellings of place-names.

Prior to the arrival of the Ordnance Survey there was no system of standardised spelling of place-names; indeed, standardised spelling only arose in the nineteenth century with the appearance of mass produced newspapers and compulsory education. It is not unusual while looking at medieval documents for the place-name researcher to find two or more different spellings for the same place in the one sentence! Nevertheless, old documents are where most of the early spellings of place-names are to be found and there are a myriad of different documents. Generally, however, they fall into a small number of types, including: charters granting or exchanging land; rentals of land; wills and testaments; travellers' and ministers' accounts; letters and recollections. All of these can be further sub-divided into royal, ecclesiastical, and private. All this affects how early and how often which names appear on record. Many Pictish and Gaelic place-names only appear on record due to the modern map makers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The reason is part due to the survival of records (they can be lost, among other reasons, due to war, fire, rot, rodents, and damp) and in part due to who the landowner or landholder was. The medieval church was very jealous of its possessions and often kept detailed records of their properties. However, not all of the church records will have survived the tribulations of the Protestant Reformation of the mid sixteenth century or wars with England. Royal records, such as charters, can sometimes be dated back to the reign of David I (1124-53). Royal records can go missing too, often due to war, or accident (in 1661 many Scottish records were lost when the ship carry them sank off the English coast. The records were being returned to Edinburgh after they had been taken to London by Oliver Cromwell). There are many documents of private landowners held in the National Records of Scotland in Edinburgh (along with royal and ecclesiastical records), but they are often not published in modern editions like the royal and ecclesiastical records, while others are in the hands of individuals or companies which can make access difficult.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey Name Books for Dunkeld, produced in the mid 1860s, are missing, probably due to the attack by the Luftwaffe on the OS head-quarters on the evening of 30th November/1st December 1940 – nearly all the English and Welsh Name Books, as well as a significant portion of Perthshire, went up in flames. The result is that there a few places below for which these Name Books were the earliest or only information as to the reason they were named.

Dunkeld: importance and early history

A church was founded at Dunkeld between 807 and 818 (Fraser 2007, 134) and Columba's relics were moved there from Iona, possibly around 849 (Bannerman 1997, 28-9; Taylor 2000, 113; Woolf 2007, 98-101). However, if Atholl, first attested in 739 (Clancy 2010, 87; Taylor 1999, 41), and the province and later earldom in which Dunkeld and Glen Lyon were situated, means 'New Ireland', as Watson (1926, 111) and Clancy (2010, 84) state, then there had been significant movement between the Gaelic kingdom of Dál Riata and the Pictish kingdom or province of Atholl prior to the founding of a church at Dunkeld. Indeed, Atholl, from Old Gaelic *ath* plus Fotla, a poetic term for Ireland, implies a significant presence of Gaels from Dál Riata 'long before the establishment of Gaelic power in Pictland in the ninth century' (Taylor 1999, 42). This presence might have come via the church established on Iona by St Columba. In a poem, *Amra Coluimb Chille* 'Elegy of Colum Cille', compiled soon after Columba's death in 597 (Sharpe 1991, 89; Fraser 2009, 73; Clarkson 2012, 123), it is written that Columba was 'the teacher who would teach to the peoples of the Tay' and 'subdued with a blessing' the 'arrogant ones who surrounded the great king of the Tay' (Fraser 2009, 99). It has been generally assumed that Columba was preaching in the Inverness area; however, this may have been overstated by historians and it is perhaps more likely that Columba and his followers were more active in Atholl and southern Pictland (Foster 2014, 2151-75). Contacts between west and east were not limited to Perthshire. We also know that in the years after Columba's death that contacts were strong between Iona and Lindisfarne in Northumbria. In 634, Oswald became king of Northumbria

and arranged for a bishop to be sent from Iona to build a monastery at Lindisfarne to help preach Christianity to the northern English (Taylor 1999, 48; Clarkson 2012, 141). Dunkeld, meaning 'fort of the Caledonians', a Pictish tribe or kingdom based in the Tay valley and beyond, was, by the time a church was built there in the early ninth century, a place with a long established Gaelic community, and Columba was the patron saint of the royal kindred who claimed descent from the Cenél nGabrain, the dominant group originally based in Kintyre in Dál Riata before the establishment of the kingdom of Alba in the tenth century. In addition, the abbots of Dunkeld were all descended from the aristocracy of Cenél nGabrain (Driscoll 2002, 45).

Dunkeld is not the only place-name in Atholl that is associated with the Caledonians. Shiehallion, a prominant mountain lying between the Tay and Tummel valleys, about 30 km north-west of Dunkeld, is *sith chailleann* 'fairy hill of the Caledonian'. Just 4 km south-east of King's Seat fort is Rohallion *rath chailleann* 'fort of the Caledonians'. An intriguing entry in the *OSA* for Little Dunkeld, which is the area around Birnam, (vol. vi, 374) mentions the possibility of another fort of the Caledonians. There is notice of a fort which is 'called (in Gaelic Forhaillon)'. A later Errata provided by the same minister in 1799 (*OSA* xxi, 151), presumably following his initial account having been printed in 1792, which says it should be *Carhallion*. It is not clear from his description whether he is referring to the same place as Rohallion or whether it is slightly different place but very close. Might the *Car*-element here signify Pictish *caer* 'fort'? It would form a nice pattern if we have a *Dùn*, *Ràth* and *Caer* all beside each other! It may be that this is in fact Rohallion, but the *for*- or *car*-elements are intriguing and would be worth following up, if only to eliminate them.

The earliest mention of Dunkeld is in 873, when Flaithbertach son of Muirchertach, superior of *Dún Caillen*, died (AU 873.8). However, the Caledonians are mentioned in Roman texts from c.200. The *Historia Brittonum*, an early historic text dating to the ninth century, mentions *Coit Celidon* 'the Caledonian forest' (Fraser 2009, 49). The Caledonians, a British tribe, are likely to have been the tribe that the Romans encountered from the outset of their attempts to conquer what is now Scotland. The Roman fortress at Inchtuthill was probably built as an attempt to control and monitor the movement of the Caledonians at the entrance into the Highlands at Dunkeld (Márkus 2017, 20). The name Caledonian has at it root a Celtic word *kaleto-* 'hard' (Márkus 2017, 5). Quite what is meant by 'hard' is not known.

It would appear that the remains of the structure sitting atop King's Seat was the *dùn* or hill-fort of the Caledonians. The name King's Seat may be relatively recent; it first appears from the late 1750s on a plan detailing the planting of forestry and parks in the landscape around the hill. This not the only King's Seat in Scotland – there are at five others shown on a 1:50,000 OS database, and no doubt there will be others on lower scale maps. The earliest King's Seat in Scotland dates from 1182 x 1231 in Earlston parish, Berwickshire, where a hill is called *Kingessete*.[1] These hills are usually associated with royal or aristocratic hunting grounds and may be the Scots equivalent of Tom an Rìgh 'hill of the king' which is found in the royal hunting reserve of Glen Finglas in Menteith, Perthshire.

King's Seat

Names containing Sc *set* or ScEng *seat* plus an aristocratic specific element, such as king, queen or earl, probably refer to places connected with hunting (*PNF* 5, 489). It is not known which king is referred to in the name. Hunting had taken place in the area during the Middle Ages, and the forest of Birnam and Strathbrann was let to the bishop of Dunkeld (Gilbert 1979, 45). By the time the *Old Statistical Account* was written in the 1790s, the minister of Dunkeld and Dowally could say: '[The Duke of Atholl] has a tract of 100,000 acres reserved chiefly for them, and it is computed that not less than 4000 feed there constantly...It would not be difficult for the Duke to furnish a royal hunt, more splendid than that given by one of his predecessors in former times' (*OSA* xx, 470). About fifty years later the minister wrote: 'Dunkeld was visited by one of our early kings, William the Lion, for deer hunting, it is reported that he took his station for shooting the deer, on a small knoll now called the *king's seat*. It is a small terraced hill, on the summit of which is the remains of a building and the out-works of an ancient fort. The road which runs between that knoll and *Craig-y-barns* is called the *King's pass*. Mary Queen of Scots also visited the locality for a similar amusement. On one of her

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1My thanks to Dr Simon Taylor for this reference.

hunting excursions, she narrowly escaped serious bodily injury from the leader of a herd of deer, who ran in the direction where she stood, and which she selected contrary to the advice of her attendants' (*NSA* x, 979).

Language and content of the place-names

The place-names are in Gaelic and Scots or Scots English. Gaelic is the language of the largest settlement and hill, i.e. Dunkeld and Craig a Barns, and also the largest loch in the survey area, Polney Loch. A now lost (?) standing stone had the Gaelic name Clach an t-Sagairt 'stone of the priest', suggesting it had been called that name for many centuries. Scots, on the other hand is the language of the smaller features and also of recent legends features, such as Lover's Leap. Smaller features can be linguistically more unstable and may change language more often than larger features, and their names may be more recent, but they may have been called something else prior to this.

The *OSA* shows this change in language happening almost before our eyes in the late eighteenth century: 'The Gaelic language is spoken universally in this parish, though all the people, at the same time, understand more or less perfectly the English. It is a curious fact, that the hills of King's Seat and Craigy Barns, which form the lower boundary of Dowally, have been for centuries the separating barrier of these languages. In the first house below them, the English is, and has been spoken; and the Gaelic in the first house, (not above a mile distant), above them' (*OSA* xx, 490).

The content of some the place-names around King's Seat are a mix of topographical names and names connected with local legends. The topographical names, such as Craig a Barns and Polney Loch, are descriptive and were named as markers in the landscape in order to facilitate movement through the landscape, and also in the case of the name Dunkeld, to show ownership; this was a hill-fort that was once possessed by the Caledonians. Most of the other names belong to the realm of local legends. Versions of these legends can be found all over Scotland, and indeed Britain and Europe. St Colme's Well, Clach an t-Sagairt, and the Hermit's Cave are probably connected with the fact that Dunkeld was an early centre of Chrsitianity. These names need not have been named by early Chrsitians, but have come down to us because people believed, whether true or not, that figures such as Columba visited Dunkeld and used or blessed places like St Clome's Well. The Deil's Loch is the product of belief in the supernatural in the Middle Ages and early modern period and may be connected to episodes such as the witchcraft scare of the sixteenth century or the religious upheavals of the seventeenth century (Westwood and Kingshill 2011, x). Duncan Ogg's Hole and Willie Miller's Well are more intimate to Dunkeld and fuller versions of the stories connected with these legends may remain hidden in the minds and folklore of local people.

A fuller place-name survey of the area would reveal so much more of the area's history, including aspects of land-use, farming, and the early church, the medieval and post-Reformation church, administration and justice, ecology and environment, and language. There may be place-names that are roughly contemporaneous with the hill-fort at King's Seat. Cardney, lying about 5 km north-east of King's Seat, looks like it contains the Pictish word *carden, once thought to be a 'thicket or grove', but now thought to mean 'fort'. In addition, a fuller survey would look at the evolution of the parochial structure and boundaries in order to see what information could be gained on early land use and administration, and how the place-names might add to this (see Rogers 1992).

CRAIG A BARNS   DDA R NO013436
> *Craig Barns* 1759 McNaughtan
> *Craigybarns* 1783 Stobie
> *Craigy Barns* 1798 *OSA* xx, 461 ['the rocky hills of *King's Seat* and *Craigy Barns*']
> *Craigy Barns* 1823 Wood [Plan of Dunkeld]
> *Craig Barns* 1832 Turner
> the hill of *Craig-y-barns* 1845 *NSA* x, 962
> *Craigie Barns* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXII
> *Craig a Barns* 1901 OS 6 inch 2nd edn PER & CLA LXII.NW

ScG *creag* + ScG *an* + ScG *beàrn*
'Crag of the fissure, gap'. The *beàrn* or 'fissure' in the name must apply to the small, steep-sided valley about 400 metres to the north-east. The description in *NSA* ' the hill to the west of Dunkeld, called in Gaelic *Creag-bhan-righ* or *Creag-nam-ban righ*, but better known in English as *Craig-y-barns*' (*NSA* x 987), seems to suggest that the Gaelic name for the hill translates as 'Queen's Crag', but the early forms do not bear this out.

CLACH AN T-SAGAIRT   DDA O NO006436
> *Clachan Saggirt* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI
> *Clach an t-Sagairt* 1901 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI.NE

ScG *clach* + ScG *an* + ScG *sagart*
'Stone of the priest'. There are no known legends associated with this stone. It is not mentioned in Canmore, and as the OS Name Book is missing it is not known why the stone is so named.

DEIL'S LOCH   DDS W NO008432
> *Deil's Loch* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

Sc *deil* + Sc *loch*
'Devil's Loch'. Dave MacDougall, a long term local resident in Dunkeld, says of the loch, which he calls 'Deil's Lochy', that 'as boys, about 9 to 12 age group, me and some mates had been raking about Polney and the Deils Lochy area and I mentioned it when I got home and was told, quite severely as I recall by [my] father that I was to 'bide away from the Deils Lochy as it was bottomless'. As one who learned to swim in the Tay and the Braan, where over the years there have been drownings, I am unable to say why there would be emphasis on the Deils Lochy, but there it is'.

DUNCAN OGG'S HOLE   DDA O NO010431
> *Duncan Hogg's* Hole 1845 *NSA* x, 988
> *Duncan Hogg's Hole* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI
> *Duncan Ogg's Hole* 1901 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI.NE

pn Duncan Hogg or Ogg + ScEng *hole*
There is a tentative tradition in Dunkeld, probably modern, that the surname may relate to Gaelic word *òg* 'youth, young man' . However, in the *NSA* is written the following: 'on the side of Craig-y-barns, overlooking the King's Pass, there are two caves, - one called the Hermit's Cave, the other Duncan Hogg's Hole. Neither of them are any size. Duncan, who was a lawless character, was shot, on his return from the well of St Columba, on the east side of King's Seat' (*NSA* x, 988). For more on the surname Hogg see Black (1946, 361).

DUNKELD   DDA S NO023426 1 55m

Duin Chaillden 873 AU 873.8 [Flaithbertach m. Muirchertaigh, princeps *Duin Chaillden*, obit (Flaithbertach son of Muirchertach, superior of Dún Caillen, died)][2]

Duin Caillenn 865 AU 865.6 Conmal equonimus Tamlachta, & Tuathal m. Artgusso prim-epscop Fortrenn & abbas *Duin Caillenn*, dormierunt (Conmal, steward of Tamlacht, and Tuathal son of Artgus, chief bishop of Foirtriu and abbot of Dún Caillen, fell asleep)]

Duine Caillenn 965 *AU* 965.4 [Cath eter firu Alban imoneitir ubi multi occisi sunt im Donnchad, .i. abb *Duine Caillenn* (A battle between the men of Scotland themselves in which many were killed, including Donnchad, i.e. the abbot of Dún Caillen)]

Duine Caillenn 1045 AU 1045.6 [Cath eter Albanchu fein i torchair Cronan, ab *Duine Caillenn*. (A battle between the Scots themselves in which Crónán, abbot of Dún Caillen, fell)].

Dúni Callden 1131 × 1132 Book of Deer (Forsyth edn, 138)

Dúncallden 1131 × 1132 Book of Deer (Forsyth edn, 142)

Gregorio Episcopo *Dunkeldensi* 1135 Lawrie, *Charters*, no. 105

abbacie *Dunkeldensi* c.1166 *RRS* ii no. 30

Dunkelden 1177 × 1190 *RRS* ii no. 275

Dunkeldensis 1274 Bagimond (Dunlop edn), 48

Apud *Dunkeld'* 1308 *RRS* v no. 3

Dunkeldyn 1377 *RMS* i no. 664

ecclesia cathedrali *Dunkeldensi* 1472 *RMS* ii no. 1056

ecclesie *Dunkelden* 1473 *RMS* ii no. 1106

bishoprik of *Dunkeld* 1560s *Books of Assumpion* (Kirk 1995, 302)

Dunkelde 1590s Pont 23 [Garry, Tummel, and Upper Tay; Dunkeld to Blairgowrie]

Dunkeld 1590s Pont 25[Lower Strath Tay from Dunkeld to Benchil]

Dunkell 1636 × 1652 Gordon 41 [Anguss]

Dunkeld 1654 Blaeu

Dunkell 1685 Adair

Dunkell 1745 Rutherford [An Exact Plan of His Majesty's Great Roads through the Highlands of Scotland]

Dunkeld 1746 Willdey [A map of the King's Roads, Made by his Excellency General Wade in the Highlands]

Dunkeld c.1750 Roy

Dunkeld 1776 Taylor and Skinner, plates 20 & 21 [Survey and maps of the roads of North Britain or Scotland]

Dunkeld 1783 Stobie

Dunkeld 1823 Wood [Plan of Dunkeld]

Dunkeld 1850 Knox [Map of the Basin of the Tay, including the greater part of Perth Shire]

Dunkeld 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXII

ScG *dùn* + ScG *Cailleann*
'Hill-fort of the Caledonians' or 'Hill-fort of Caledonia' (Márkus 2017, 24). See introduction above.

HERMIT'S CAVE   DDA R NO009433

the Hermit's Cave 1845 *NSA* x, 988

Hermit's Cave 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

ScEng *hermit* + ScEng *cave*
Hermit's Cave first appears on record at the same time as Duncan Hogg's Hole in1845 (*NSA* x, 988). There are no known legends associated with it, but the connection between early Christianity at Dunkeld and the need for churchmen to have solitary places for the purposes of devotion and contemplation may have given rise to the place-name.

There seems to have been a similar place on the Tay near Errol; for in the thirteenth century David de Haya gave to the monks of Coupar Angus 'one net upon the main water of Tay, wherever they may judge most useful to them, to fish with the said net when and as often as they will, between

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2 The Annals of Ulster can be found at the Corpus of Electronic Texts website hosted by University College Cork at http://celt.ucc.ie/published/G100001A/index.html (Irish) and http://celt.ucc.ie/published/G100001A/index.html (English).

Lornyn[3]...Randolph of Hay, and t*he Hermitage*, which Gillemichell, sometime Hermit, held; with three acres of land lying next to the said *Hermitage*, and with all easements which the said Hermit enjoyed about the *Hermitage* (*C. A. Rental* ii, 289; Latin text 284).

KING'S PASS DDA O NO010430
> *King's Pass* 1823 Wood [Plan of Dunkeld]
> *King's Pass* 1845 *NSA* x, 988
> *King's Pass* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

ScEng *king* + ScEng *pass*
This road, which passes to the north of King's Seat, was in existence by 1759 and is depicted on McNaughtan's plan of that date. However, this road is not mentioned in the *OSA* of 1798, and instead another, probably earlier, road was used to travel northwards from Dunkeld. This older road passed south of King's Seat and had 'been cut with great labour and expence [sic] along the bottom of [King's Seat]. The road overhangs the river so closely, and at such a height, that the timid traveller, who looks over the wall which has been built to support it, is disposed to hasten on his way' (*OSA* xx, 461). It may be that the King's Pass road was originally a road, or rather 'walk', built by the Duke of Atholl as part of his pleasure grounds, and is mentioned in 1760 by Richard Pococke, bishop of Meath, as he was touring Scotland (Pococke 1887, 226-7).

KING'S SEAT DDA A NO009430
> *King's Seat* 1759 McNaughtan plan
> *King's Seat* 1772 Pennant, *Tour in Scotland*, 430
> King's Seat 1798 *OSA* xx, 461 ['the rocky hills of *King's Seat* and *Craigy Barns*']
> *King's Seat* 1832 Turner
> *King's Seat* 1823 Wood [Plan of Dunkeld]
> *King's Seat* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

ScEng *king* + ScEng *seat*
See introduction above.

LOVER'S LEAP DDA R NO013436
> *Lover's Leap* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXII

ScEng *lover* + ScEng *leap*
It is not known who the eponymous lover was. Lover's Leap is a toponym (or place-name) given to a number of locations throughout the world of varying height, usually isolated, with the risk of a fatal fall and the possibility of a deliberate jump. Quite often these places are associated with legends relating to romantic tragedy (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lover%27s_Leap).
> Leaps belong to a particular motif of folklore called the 'prodigious jump' (Nicolaisen 2011, 45-59). There are at least two other leaps in eastern Perthshire: the Soldier's Leap at Killiekrankie; and Cargill's Leap at Blairgowrie. So far as Lover's Leap is concerned, Dave MacDougall, a local informant in Dunkeld, stated that did not 'not know who the lovers were, other than they were chased off the cliff top by the [mythical] 'strong man of Dunkeld''. This suggests that according to current local knowledge of the legend there were two lovers in the, even though the place-name is in the singular.

OSSIAN'S HALL LDK O NO008417
> *Ossian's Hall* 1790s Plumptre
> *Ossian's Hall* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

pn Ossian + SSE *hall*

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3 According to J. M. MacKinlay 'Lornie near Errol...now forms part of the farm of Hill' (MacKinlay 1914, 55). Hill of Errol lies at NO228210, about 3 km south-west of the village of Errol.

Marked as *Hermitage* on Stobie's map of 1783, Ossian's Hall is a folly built in 1757 as the focal point in an extensive designed landscape (NTS). The name relates to Oisín, the son of Fionn mac Cumhail, the legendary Irish hero. Fionn mac Cumhail was popular throughout Gaelic Scotland and Ireland, but he is particularly associated with Glenshee where there are a number of place-names relating to his deeds. It is likely that these place-names would have been used in the telling and possibly acting out of the adventures of Finn and his band (McNiven 2014). For many Highlanders Fionn mac Cumhaill and his band of warriors were popular role models and heroes of Gaelic culture, and for some Gaels Fionn was even an ancestor (Newton 2009, 2). The tales, in the words of Michael Newton, plugged Gaels into the 'Gaelic mytho-historic matrix with a plausible ancestral tradition' (Newton 2009, 58), and for this reason they were popular with the Campbells (Meek 1990, 336). The Fian were seen as protectors of Gaeldom from invaders such as the Vikings, but the Fenian ballads also provided inspirational tales for young Gaelic warriors to aspire to: games were 'aggressive competitions between young men; invitation to the Fian bands required passing strenuous tests' (Newton 2009, 175). In one elegy preserved in the Book of the Dean of Lismore, Fionn mac Cumhaill is ruler over all rulers, a mighty horseman, a leader of battle, but he is also generous to the ordinary folk (Newton 2009, 327). Gaels considered the place-names in the Highlands dedicated to Fionn as 'suitable evidence for the historicity of the Fian' (Newton 2009, 227).

One issue with this name is its age. In 1760 James MacPherson wrote Fragments of Ancient Poetry, a publication purporting to be based on works of the third century. While these and other works by MacPherson were a literary sensation across Europe, after a few yeasr their authenticity came to be doubted (Flahive 2017, 71). Since Ossian's Hall was built before the controversy surrounding MacPherson's Ossian, the name was clearly not influenced by it. However, the hall was built as part of a designed landscape and the naming was probably influenced by nearby Ossian's Cave, which is shown on the 1st edn OS map of 1867. It is not known when the cave was so named, but given the popularity of Finian lore with large sections of Gaelic society, including the aristocracy, there may be a Fenian tradition in this area going back many centuries.

POLNEY LOCH   DDA W NO014431
　　　Polney Loch 1759 McNaughtan plan
　　　Polney Loch 1823 Wood [Plan of Dunkeld]
　　　Polney Lake 1832 Turner
　　　Polney Loch 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXII

en Polney + Sc *loch*
Polney Loch is a small loch, about 240 metres long, sitting at the foot Polney Crag, a part of the larger hill of Craig a Barns. The first element *pol-* is probably Gaelic *poll* 'pool, pond'. See also Dwelly, who gives other definitions such as 'hole, pit; mire, mud; dark, deep part of any stream; deep, stagnant water'. It is not know what the *–ney* element is, but Gaelic *neimheadh* 'church, sacred place, sanctuary, shrine, temple' might be a possibility. Polney could mean, then, 'pool of the church', i.e. a pool belonging to the Dunkeld Cathedral.

THE ROCKING STONE   DDA R NO124439
　　　The Rocking Stone 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXII

On the 1759 'Plan of Dunkeld' by Patrick McNaughtan there is a 'Grey Stone' mentioned near this position, and this may be the Rocking Stone. The following description in *NSA* may be this stone 'There is a natural curiosity
on the top of the hill to the west of Dunkeld, called in Gaelic *Creag-bhan-righ* or *Creag-nam-ban righ*, but better known in English as Craig-y-barns. It is a huge mass of stone, supported, at some distance from the flat surface of solid rock on which it stands, by means of three fragments' (*NSA* x, 987). A long time local informant, Dave MacDougall, says that 'it is a very large grey coloured stone which sits on three much smaller stones. An engineer friend of mine estimated that it would weigh about 30 tons'. He further states that it is probably an erratic 'carried down by the glacier which flowed from Rannoch Moor east to the sea and was left as the glacier melted'. The only story Mr MacDougall had heard regarding the stone was that 'it was a ridiculous boys story, that if you visited

it at Hogmanay, at midnight, it rocked. Also that it was put there by the 'strong man of Dunkeld' - whoever he was'.

ST COLME'S WELL DDA W NO010430
> *St Colm's Well* 1832 Turner
> *well of St Columba* 1845 *NSA* x, 988
> *St Colme's Well* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

Saint's name Columba + ScEng *well*
'A well associated with St Columba'. See introduction for more on the cult of Columba in Dunkeld. There is no mention of the well in earlier plans, such as McNaughtan's Plan of Dunkeld of 1759.

WILLIE MILLER'S WELL   DDA W NO008440
> *Willie Miller's Well* 1867 OS 6 inch 1st edn PER & CLA LXI

pn Willie Miller + ScEng *well*
It is not known who the eponymous Willie Miller was. However, there have been people with the name Miller in the Dunkeld area since the early sixteenth century; Finlay Myllair received alms from the bishop of Dunkeld in 1506, while John and George Myllair were servants to the bishop in 1510 (*Dunk. Rent.*, 79, 115).

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