The Artistry of Gaelic Legacy: An intimate tapestry woven with the threads of life

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045286

Ordnance Survey of Scotland 1859 – 1864, Loch Lomond, Sheet 38

Figure 1. Reproduced Image by Author (2019)

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List of Abbreviations

c. – *circa* ‘about’

*Gael* – Scottish Gaelic Person

HBF – Highland Boundary Fault

OS – Ordnance Survey

OSA – Old Statistical Account
Thesis

How do the Gaelic place-names of Callander and The Trossachs translate into a narrative of symbolic significance with folklore, ballads and poetry, in a time when the natural environment was synchronised with social unity?

“The naming process is a continuum intimately linked with the history of the human race and its mastery over the world that surrounds it” (Nicolaisen 1976: 47).
Abstract

Place-names are an essential functioning component of societal direction that were woven into the fabric of Gaelic Scotland’s material and cultural heritage. Names, that are often taken for granted, but without them, there would be no guidance. The anthropomorphic layers of change over hundreds of years has meant the symbolic significance describing something so simple and used in everyday speech denoting a place, such as 'Leny', Lànaigh, to mean damp place, or meadow, is long forgotten. This dissertation is a narrative of eight short chapters, with further reading in the attached Appendices to combine the multi-layered facets of Gaelic Society in Scotland. My final conclusion outlines some of the restrictive issues and offers scope for improvement should there be any future research on place-names study.
Aim

The aim of this dissertation is to discuss the Gaelic place-names in the periphery of Callander and The Trossachs environs, and in doing so, harness the wider environmental aspects of flora, fauna and the landscape, encapsulating the transhumance economy that was centred around poetry and tales, and thus opening a window to the past.

“…that this dialect of the Celtic has, in its constitution, a much nearer affinity to languages, which are acknowledged to be more ancient than Greek or Latin, than it has either to those or to any other language of modern date. Its construction, its genius, and its power bear the evident marks of a very remote origin” (Reverend Mr. James Roberston. OSA 1794: 613).
Methodology and Literature Review

There are so many books, papers, websites, maps, and more to consider for the research that these had to be narrowed down to what was going to be the most suitable reading for the purpose of the dissertation to incorporate the many layers, and changes in life from years gone by with the tales, poetry, history, economy and more. I had hoped I had a head start with the three Gaelic Place-Names courses I attended in 2019, courtesy of the Callander Landscape Partnership, hosted by Roddy Maclean, then Dr. Peter McNiven and was thus armed with a reading list and a basic knowledge on how to proceed with toponymic research. But, when left to your own devices under lockdown, things can grow horns and leap chasms. Nevertheless, persevere I did, and I have thoroughly enjoyed the research. I have expanded my own limited knowledge, tried not to be too emotive, and learned about a few of the stages in the life of the Gaels with the precious natural resources essential for home, hearth and medicinal purposes, the importance of domestic animals, and that the transhumance economy was a time of summer replenishment for all, plus it was a break from the kirk’s religious confines in the township. I have dabbled with the Scottish Gaelic language, some of this in Old Irish and I am now able to recognise and interpret the words even with the corruptions, and how these place-names were altered to suit the mapmaker, as well as the political powers, to merge with the social and material changes called improvements.

Initially, I looked at W. Watson’s (1993 [1926]) The Celtic Placenames of Scotland, which is intensively hard-going, but authoritatively descriptive,
alongside W. Nicolaisen’s (1976) *Scottish Place-Names*, easier on the brain-cells with an additional paper (1992), ‘The Onomastic Legacy of Gaelic in Scotland’ which enlightened the onslaught of Watson. Two papers written by C. Withers were instructive with the social processes of language change in ‘A Geography of Language: Gaelic-Speaking in Perthshire, 1698 – 1879’ (1983), furthered by the manipulation of the Ordnance Survey mapmakers reinventing the landscape for their own power in ‘Authorising Landscape: ‘Authority’, Naming and the Ordnance Survey’s Mapping of the Scottish Highlands in the Nineteenth Century’ (2000). Peter Drummond’s *Scottish Hill and Mountain Names* (1991) has been a useful resource of straightforward reading with an element of mirth, and Dwelly’s *Illustrated Gaelic ~ English Dictionary* (1993), has been a challenge to say the least.

The next phase of research was to harness the work of Doctor Peter McNiven, an experienced place-names researcher for the Scottish Toponymy in Transition at Glasgow University. His methodological, but hugely daunting, in-depth research processes are currently weekly newsletters being utilised by the Callander Landscape Partnership, Gaelic Walk Guide volunteers to hone their skills. It takes considerable practice reading the Old Scots spelling in the *Old and New Statistical Accounts* and then decipher the *Exchequers Rolls* from 1451 and the *Rentalia Domini Regis* from 1480, and as of now, these are still in the early stages for we non-Latin speaking beginners, who are also learning Gaelic and relearning map-reading skills. Therefore, it was more logical to refer to Peter’s easier to read, fully-comprehensive, extensively researched PhD Thesis (2011), *Gaelic Place-names and the Social History of*
Gaelic Speakers in Medieval Menteith, filled with more than enough information covering a wider area than intended for this research, but nonetheless very suitable for fact-checking with other resources. Peter also kindly assisted with personal email communications and readily admitted to being ‘out of his comfort zone’ when it came to the ‘Irish mythological sagas and cycles’. However, Meg Bateman’s paper provided a rich resource in ‘The Landscape of the Gaelic Imagination’ (2009), alongside the addition of John Murray’s, Literature of The Gaelic Landscape (2017) and his new and fully revised second edition of Reading The Gaelic Landscape (2019) to the mix of song, poetry, tale and history, both of these books were of enormous benefit. They are descriptively colourful, laced with tales, and full of information, with easy to decipher tables of place-names. Alongside, An Lasair: Anthology of 18th Century Scottish Gaelic Verse (2001), edited by Ronald Black with notes to follow the theme of each poem and background on the poet, although I was surprised to find a discrepancy with Dugald Buchanan’s burial ground, from personal knowledge of the location (Appendice 15). However, Donald Meek’s (2009) ‘Evangelicalism, Ossianism and the Enlightenment: the many masks of Dugald Buchanan’. In Crossing the Highland Line. Cross Currents in Eighteenth-Century Writing. ed. by Christopher MacLachlan gave further confirmation of the error. Michael Newton’s Bho Chluaidh gu Calasraid (2010) provided light-hearted tales relevant to Callander and The Trossachs, with an obelisk theme from A. Lacaille’s (1929) ‘Ardlui Megaliths and Their Associations; Crosses at Luib and Alloway and a Short Cist at Ednam, Roxburghshire’. Embellished with The Lore of Scotland (2009) from J. Westwood and S. Kingshill, woven with traditional skills from Mary Beith’s
Healing Threads (1995), and Scottish Customs (2004) courtesy of Margaret Bennett, supported by Martin Martin’s (2018 [1703]) A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland circa 1695, bolstered by Isobel Grant, who lived with the more modern version of the Gaels, in Highland Folk Ways (1975 [1961]). As did John Cameron (2019 [1900]) in The Gaelic names of plants (2019 [1900]) with his nemesis, Alexander Forbes (2019 [1905]) in Gaelic Names of beasts (Mammalia), aided by a touch of river-lore from J. MacKinlay (1896) in ‘Traces of River-Worship in Scottish Folklore’ all wrapped up in J. F. Campbell’s (1862) Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Vol. III.

Reserves in Medieval Scotland gives further accounts on the changes with forests, hunting and nobility.

All of these resources combined together makes an interesting and social unity for Gaelic life.

The eight small chapters’ intentions are to evoke the intimacy of the interpretation of the place-names, intertwined with the poetry and folklore, in a parallel world embodied into a narrative sewn with natural threads, and thus woven into the tapestry of conclusion.
For the purpose of this dissertation, the focus will be on the interconnected landscape in the wider periphery of the town of Callander and its environs.

1. Callander and the Highland Boundary Fault

The area between Loch Lomond and Stirling is home to some of the most diverse landscapes in Scotland. There is spacious flat land, long since manipulated for widespread agricultural use around Stirling, surrounded by volcanic hills and craggy Highland summits, interspersed with lochs, fed from dynamic river courses that dissect their way through hidden gorges and deep ravines. This natural beauty reflects the underlying geology and the dramatic effects of ice, which have all helped shape the landscape that has been around for a very long time (McNiven 2011: 15). Festooned with towns and villages, such as Comrie and Callander that are straddled along a natural geological fault which can often catch the unsuspecting, unaware with a sudden, startled leap of faith into the unknown, when the tectonic plates collide.

The town of Callander, *Calasraid*, ‘Harbour-Street’ (Appendice 1) (Murray 2019: 88), is in the area of Scotland known as The Trossachs, *Na Trosaichean*, ‘the cross-hills’ (Nicolaisen 1986: 55), in the environs of the district of Menteith. It is, and has been, a long-known popular tourist destination as written by Reverend Mr. James Robertson in his report for the *Old Statistical Account* (henceforth OSA 1794, XI: 622). Callander stretches out from, and along the Highland Boundary Fault (henceforth HBF), for it is this extreme feat of an almost mountain-birthing formation, which roughly
began about 375 million years ago and took about 50 million years to form, from the Middle Devonian period until the Late Devonian period, called the *Acadian orogeny*, that gives the area its extremes of impressive grandeur (Appendice 2) (Tanner 2008: 915 - 921).

“This geological map in the vicinity of the Highland Border Complex, Scotland, showing location of analysed samples A265, A266, A472 and NE148” Tanner & Sutherland (2007)

Figure 2. Image uploaded by Renaud E Merle (2012)

This almighty geomorphological interaction has shaped the land and created the rugged and mountainous terrain to the north of the HBF, with the undulating, fertile plains of the mosses to the south (Harrison 2008: 5 – 19).

The Ordnance Survey (henceforth OS) mapping contributed the HBF to the division and the differences of the Highlands (Gaelic) and the Lowlands
(Scots) languages, aided and abetted from various political ideologies depicting colour in the printed mapping collections, highlighting the type of agricultural activity, from arable (green), to pastoral (green-brown), but it was the Gaels who collectively defined the HBF as a linguistic, cultural boundary with their orally descriptive mind-mapping of the landscape for their own social and cultural needs (McNiven 2011: 15). Nowadays, Callander is considered to be the Gateway to the Highlands.
Modern-day Callander is often a forgotten about Gaelic-speaking area, partly due to its proximity within the central lowlands, and to Stirling, one of the main royal centres of medieval and early modern Scotland. Nevertheless, the language hung on stubbornly until the twentieth century – it may no longer be the everyday language in the Callander area, but in Scotland there are about 57,000 speakers to date (Kavanagh 2019) – and can be visually interpreted
by the HBF of place-names on the OS maps (McNiven 2011: 53). The common thought, albeit changing, for the modern-day location of Callander, is that Gaelic was not spoken there as it is not in the Highlands and Islands, compounded by the notion that the Western Isles is the heartland of Scottish Gaelic. However, during the medieval period, there were three languages which all contributed to the toponymic landscape:

1. p-Celtic, possibly Pictish, maybe Brittonic, though, the chronological timeline is still to be determined
2. Gaelic, thought to have become dominant, c. ninth century
3. Scots, which followed Gaelic (more often called “scoticisation”) (McNiven 2011: 45).

Three languages, that were often combined with the widespread influential Norse input still evident in place-names today. It seems likely that Norse was the language of the far North East and the Western Isles in the tenth and eleventh centuries, with Gaelic, the dominant language for central Scotland in the twelfth century given by the place-names and personal names recorded in charters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Woolf 2007: 328). Unfortunately, the evidence is limited, mainly due to the lack of documentation, although plenty of documents exist on the language’s decline, and written in Latin or Scots, until the late seventeenth century, when the new and improved recording techniques were implemented (McNiven 2011: 52).
2. Leaps to Tales

Interestingly, where rivers cross the HBF, they channel their way through gorges, whereby the associated waterfalls can be a natural barrier to the ancient and traditional salmon migration, causing the salmon to take on great leaps of athleticism with nigh on impossible heights in their quest to return to their spawning grounds (The Atlantic Salmon Trust 2011: 44 – 46).

Coincidentally, or contrarily, salmon and leaping – as in ‘summersault’, a possible corruption of ‘salmon-sault’ – are synonymous in the Fenian tales and lore that have stood the test of time, and not dissimilar to the ancient salmon migration. The tales are refreshed and rejuvenated with a variety of narrations spanning many generations, absorbing centuries, of The Fianna and Fionn Mac Cumhail: the heroic leader who gained his wisdom from accidentally burning his thumb, then licking it, whilst cooking the ‘salmon of knowledge’ eo-fiosach (an expression from an Irish tale) for Angus Og. This fish reputedly dined on certain nuts, favouring the fruits of the hazel tree, calltair, which apparently gave the salmon its red spots, and for those who made the fish their repast, a veritable gift of knowledge and second sight (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 380, 381). The tale has many variations and was reincarnated in Neil Gunn’s, The Silver Darlings, with Finn’s seafaring epic. Just one of the many for the storyteller’s repertoire lending an enjoyable topomnemonic flavour to the research (Murray 2017: 173).

It could be, that the annual salmon migration to their spawning pools contributed to these elaborately embellished narratives, eo, for salmon was
also applied to ‘hero’, *gaisgeach*, as the humble salmon does lead an almost heroic lifestyle in its lifelong quest to return to its spawning grounds (Dwelly 1993: 473). Eo, can also be given to the long-lived yew tree, or lends itself to a Scandinavian flavour with *Lex or Lax: Lax* an element in *Gravlax*, an ancient repast of cured salmon with herbs (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 381). Whilst Loch Lubnaig, *Loch Lùdnaig* (NN585116), possibly ‘loch on the bend’ to fit *lùb*, with the *naig ‘leap’*, but maybe misinterpreted with *naid*, ‘Lamprey’, and could be ‘Loch of the Lamprey’, as the loch is the habitat host to tiny stone-licker eels, once said to be an epicure that killed a King who devoured too many (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 369).

Stobie’s map (1783) has the contemporary spelling, so this is perhaps clutching at straws with the definition

Either way, the hero-tales were hugely important to the fabric of Gaelic life resplendent in the cultural landscape. A stranger’s first question would often be, as written by General Stewart of Garth in the early nineteenth century of his boyhood in Perthshire, “*Bheil dad agad air na Fheinn? Do you know anything of the Feinné*” (Grant 1975 [1961]: 131)? The Fianna landscape representation is depicted by a cluster of Fianna place-names located on the south shores of Loch Lomond: *Uaigh Fhinn*, ‘Fionn’s grave’, Glen Luss; *Dùn Fhinn*, now Dumfin, ‘Fionn’s Fortress’; *Suidhe Fhinn*, ‘Fionn’s Seat’, Glen Fruin and near Cashel by Inchlònaig, *Caisteal nam Fiann*, ‘The Castle of the Fianna’ (Murray 2019: 79).
A favoured Fenian narrative is ‘The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Gràinne’. A story that has translocated its way through the interconnected landscape of traditional oral Gaelic Society, from Irish to Scottish culture, with various versions from Kintyre to Skye, to accompany a popular ballad included in the Book of the Dean of Lismore from c. 1539, Laoidh Dhiarmaid, ‘The Death of Diarmaid’ (Appendice 3), his resting place said to be at Ben Gulabin, Beinn Ghulbhainn, ‘Snouty Mountain’ by Glenshee, Gleann Siodh, ‘Fairy Glen’ (NO102722).

There are many locations associated with ‘The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Gràinne’ (Appendice 4) throughout Scotland, and Ben Gullipen (NN595046), also a ‘Snouty Mountain’, combined with the hybrid Scots/Gaelic name of Brig o’ Turk, Ceann Drochaid (NN534067), torc, ‘boar’, nearby, and Alt nan Sliseag (NN595081), ‘burn of the wood shavings’, where the whittled shapes peculiar only to Diarmaid tumbled down the burn right under Fionn’s nose and gave their hiding-place away. Translocate this, and Callander has its own tenuous tale (Meek 1990: 345), with perhaps, a hint of Fionn’s favourite dog Bran, in Coire Molach ‘Corrie of the rough-haired dog’ (NN603118), interconnecting with Creag a’ Mhadaidh ‘Crag of the dog/wolf/fox’ (NN586162).
3. Improvement by Mapping

The layers of languages from place-names are multifaceted and continue to be unravelled with research by experts in the field using common generic elements: sliabh, ‘moor, hill’, achadh, ‘field, farm’, and baile, ‘farm’ (toun – old Scots) from the tried and tested Scottish Place-Names by W. Nicolaisen (1976: 122, 123). The distribution maps help to construct a narrative of linguistic change, although he expresses ‘caution’ as to the reliability of the resources. Nevertheless, what can be derived from pulling together similarities in the generic elements from the distributions, is that Gaelic was spoken sufficiently to leave its toponymic Gaelic heritage in the landscape (Clancy 2010: 363).

On the other hand, the landscape became a mission of mapping for the improvement-minded estate owners at the dawn of the era of change, for the lairds to reap the profits from the Agricultural Revolution with large-scale, map-making surveys commissioned for their estates. It was also the “Age of Reason” (Murray 2019: 19), as the chart-style survey of Blaeu’s Atlas omitted many prominent landmarks, and after the 1745 Jacobite uprising the Highlands and the people had to be brought into line with British authority (Murray 2019: 19). The cartographic evidence of farm-touns, kirk-touns, woods and topography thus mapped on William Roy’s military survey from 1747 to 1755, at a scale of 1000 yards to the inch, would be the template for the origins of the OS mapping established in 1791. Roy’s map, on the other hand was more of a military sketch of personal vanity, rather than one of accuracy (Murray 2019: 20). It covered the Scottish mainland but not the
islands and was a visual aid for the scope and viability of the land for agricultural improvement. Combine the visual, with the *Old and New Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, written by parish ministers in 1794 and 1845, to give a semblance of evidence that discusses the changes in rural life and the variable depths of agriculture before and after the improvements.

Improvements, to include, roads, plantations, sheep.

However, once the sheep market plummeted towards the end of the 19th century (Caird 1964: 72), it was a return to the deer forests, but not for the common good as in the medieval free or royal forests whereby the *Tuath*, the common people, had common land for grazing their beasts, common wood for fuel, foraging, and common hunting even if woods were owned privately, “man trespass” (Gilbert 1975: 236, 243) was only committed if certain trees were cut. There was no special connection between the protection of timber and the possible reservation of game (Gilbert 1975: 236, 243). The British rule of armed empiricism evolving from Romanticism, improved not only the deer forests as sport for the elite, but also other practices which are discussed further on and paradoxically enabled the inclusion of Gaelic place-names in the new, printed mapping system.

The OS mapping was first initiated in Ireland by the British government in order to maximise tax revenue, “it took on a prolonged act of cultural displacement and textual processing in which ancient place-names and boundaries were incorporated and reinscribed” (Hamer 1989: 190). The
British government then did the same in Scotland. Collecting rules were commissioned for authorities with religious and historical backgrounds to authenticate the place-names, rather than the very people who lived with the landscape (Murray 2019: 20). Many dialect misinterpretations were collated as factual by the collectors, others painstakingly interpreted “to the local sound and pronunciation” (Withers 2000: 547), whilst many more were channelled into phonetic spelling to suit the mapmaker to reduce the expense (Withers 2000: 547). However, fast forward to today, and the mapping of estates has given a colourful heritage of OS maps which, and herein lies a touch of irony, as the accuracy of translations are only as good as the interpretation of the translator, and very possibly, the true nature and work of the place being surveyed, was never revealed (Murray 2019: 21).

Nevertheless, the maps do signify many elements of Gaelic culture, and with the keen interest in learning the language nowadays, the layers in the toponymy are keeping many enthusiasts busy, whilst academics continue to research obscure and often misleading historical records that tend to focus on social superiors, rather than the ordinary person (Woolf: 2007: ix).
4. Activity under the Canopy

From the written records, Medieval Scotland retained many forests, some were owned as hunting reserves, others more wild and rugged. Callander Parish was a popular hunting ground for Scottish Kings and Barons, with Aberfoyle nearby and both sides of Loch Lubnaig favoured for the hunt. Glenfinglas, *Gleann Fionn-ghlais*, ‘glen of the white stream’ was the main royal hunting area in Menteith in the 15th and 16th centuries (Gilbert 1975: iii), after it came into the hands of the Crown in 1425 when James 1 confiscated the land from the nobles, who failed to assist with his release when imprisoned in England from 1406 – 1424 (McNiven 2020).

There are a number of place-names within the interconnected landscape to describe the means of transporting game down from the slopes of Glen Artney and Glen Finglas by harnessing the use of large ungulates from the herds of feral ponies that once used to roam freely, *Blàr an Eachraidh*, ‘Plain of the Stud’ (NN558153), *Beinn Each*, ‘Horse Mountain’ (NN602158), *Bealach nan Searrach*, ‘Pass of the Foals’ (NN577124 and NN597129) (Murray 2019: 136).

Horses featured prominently with the Gaels, the family name *McEacharn*, depicts ‘horse-owner’. Plant names such as *Meacan-each*, ‘horse-radish’ and *each-siamar/seamrag*, ‘horse-clover’ suggest grazing fodder, while *Luan-lus*, ‘Moonwort’ is held in superstitious reverence that horses may well lose their shoes where it grows (Cameron 2019 [1900]: 7, 127, 139). A mare’s, *Capull*, milk, cures whooping cough, but the dung is not good on the corn. The many
tales suggest the fairies rode milk-white steeds, as did the Clan Chiefs, heralded by the bards in the *Ossianic* poems, and *Fionn MacCumhail* hated a slow horse. Then there are the famous horses of *Cù Chulainn, Duhb-sron-gheal*, ‘black-white-nose’ and *Dubh-srannal*, ‘black-snorter’, with another of the *Feinné, Liathmara*, ‘grey sea’. The twelve-eyed-legged ‘eel-horse’ *Biasd-an-da-shuil-deug* was said to frequent Loch Awe in the west, whilst *Daire* at Ardnamurchan had a flying horse. Not to forget the fearful *Each-Uisge*, ‘Water Horse’ that patrolled the coastal areas and inland lochs (though hindsight suggests mistaken identity for a Walrus) (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 173 – 184, 370).

Loch Earn, *Loch Èireann* (NN590235) ‘Loch of Ireland’, possibly named by early Gaelic speakers (Maclean 2019), though Dwelly suggests Earn as *iolair-mhara*, sea-eagle (384, 545) and *eòrna*, barley (384, 394), has a reputation for the crafty *Each-Uisge* that could shapeshift from a *boobrie* – giant bird – into a horse, or take on the form of a handsome man whose passionate, but murderous intent, lured womenfolk into the loch to be drowned. Whilst at Loch Venachar, *Loch Bheannchair* (NN575055) ‘Horn-shaped/ tapering’, John Leyden wrote in his travelling memoirs, “of fifteen children said to have been carried away on the back of the *Each-Uisge*, who were drowned on the 15th July 1800 at *Corlevann*”, ‘wood of woe’, with the modern mapping of *Coille a’ Bhroin*, ‘wood of lamentation’ (NN567063). A tragedy that bore an underlying parochial morality of religious instruction whereby the group of children had broken Pace Sunday to enjoy time by the loch on a hot summer’s day (Westwood and Kingshill 2011: 91).
The place-names, as well as being reminders of unhappy events were mind-maps for the hospitable, and the inhospitable landscape.

*Mòine nan Each* ‘Moss/Peat of the Horse’ (NN503134). This may have been a place whereby the horses were required for carrying the peat down the hill. It could also have been a warning to keep the horses away from the mossy terrain. The hunting grounds too could offer a warning of danger for the ill-equipped on *Dùn Damh*, ‘Stag Fort’ (NN571133), and *Àird an daimh*, Ardnandave Hill, ‘Hill of the Stag’ (NN567124), *Àth an Fhèidh*, ‘Ford of the Deer’, and *Bealach na Frithe*, ‘Pass of the Deer Forest’ (NN455230) (Murray 2019: 114, 158).

The *damh, daimh* is also used to describe ‘young ox’ or ‘bullock’, *damh-nartaidh*, or ‘drove’, *Ealt-dhamh* (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 70). While the mythical versions include *Lochan an Tairbhuisge*, ‘Little Loch of the Water-Bull’ (NN592398), and the natural rock feature of *Clach nan Tarbh*, ‘Stone of the Bulls’ (NN326136) Glen Falloch, *Gleann Falach* (Appendice 5).

Within this tale, there is a great similarity to a scene from the ancient Irish tale that features *Cù Chulainn* as the great warrior in *Táin Bo Cuailgne*, ‘The Cattle Raid of Cooley’, a bloodthirsty battle between two kingdoms, with their warrior bulls taking the stage (Newton 2010: 87). Meanwhile, the “largest boulder in the three realms” (Lacaille 1929: 335) legend, suggests a time in the past when “Scotland was divided into the three kingdoms of Strathclyde,
Dalriada and Pictland” (Lacaille 1929: 335) when bull mythology and sculpture was most notable.

On the other hand, the Scottish Gaelic narrative of *Clach nan Tarbh* composed by John Dewar, *Iain Mac an Dèoir* (1802 – 1872) (Appendice 6) has a moral take to it and demonstrates the confidence and strength of the Gaels when faced with adversity (Newton 2010: 87 - 89), and of heroism, depicted in names such as *Meall na Gaisge*, ‘Hill of the Bravery’ (NN726181) (Murray 2019: 209).

The religious theme of this popular attraction has yet another place-name, that of Pulpit Rock, and was an improvised preaching site, early nineteenth century for about 75 years, until the kirk was built in the Parish of Ardlui (Appendice 7) (Ancient Monuments n.d.).

*Pulpit Rock, Loch Lomondside*

![Pulpit Rock, Loch Lomondside](image)

*Figure 4. by John Ferguson 2011*
5. Life

The unique topography provided sheltered slopes that led to dense scrub on the higher more exposed hillsides, while the heavily forested, poorly drained river basins created meadows and wetlands, *Lag Luachrach* ‘Hollow of rushes’ (NN555134). These fertile meadows would be rich in plant species diversity to provide materials for roof-thatch, floor covering, light-tapers (Appendix 8), and when combined with fresh tree-tops and *còinneach dhearg*, ‘red moss’, makes *tri cuilcidha na bh-Fiann*, the ‘three beddings of the Fianna’ (Cameron 2019 [1900]: 113, 129).

The ubiquitous *mòinteach liath*, ‘Bog-moss’ (Cameron 2019 [1900]: 129) was picked, cleared of debris, dried-in-the-sun and used as an all-round antiseptic and sanitary essential for wounds, women, babies and fatigued feet (Beith 1995: 243). Add fruits, nuts, medicinal herbs and oral knowledge to the environmental larder, *Lag a’ Chailtuiinn* (NN646135), ‘Hollow of the Hazel’, *Cnoc nan Oighreag* (NN742153), ‘Hillock of the Cloudberries’, *Tom a’ Mhuilceinn* (NN580106) ‘Mound of Spignel or Baldmoney’, a highly aromatic, *muil*, ‘scent’, *ceann*, ‘head/top’, edible hot-flavoured, mucous clearing root vegetable, and ‘Bog Myrtle’ *rideog*, which makes a yellow dye and purges intestinal worms, transformed the outdoor kitchen into an accessible pharmacy. Medicinal herbs required separate treatment from the other popular essentials such as ash, used for preserving cheese and the all-important yeast for bread and brewing ale (Appendices 9 & 10) (Dwelly 1993: 676; Cameron 2019 [1900]: 42, 98; Grant 1975 [1961]: 303; Murray 2019: 122, 124).
The meadowland gave way to small areas for cultivation, *Tom an Eorna*, ‘Round Hill of the Barley’ (NN635113) (Cameron 2019 [1900]: 119), and stretched into the hinterland of rough moor, bog and fen, and forests. Both *lèana* or *lon* mean meadow, and can be found in the anglicised Stroneslaney, Balquhidder, Braeleny (NN636110), and Callander, with a possible connection to dairy farming (Murray 2019: 143).

Interestingly, Arivurichardich (Appendices 11 & 1) (NN643138) Àirigh Mhuirich Cheàrdaich (the latter, ‘tinker’) (Maclean 2019), ‘Moray’s’ or ‘Murdo’s Smithy Shieling’, ‘the shieling of the Moravian tinker’ (OSA 1794: 615), a smiddy for bog iron smelting, a popular process in medieval times, with the built wall, perhaps a boundary, located not far from the deer and horse place-names mentioned previously, and *Meall Innein* (NN693191), ‘Hill of an Anvil’ all within the interconnected landscape (Murray 2019: 149, 179).

Arivurichardich may well have been a place to rest up and attend to weary horses and saddle-sore riders as they traversed the interconnected hills.

The following two images are titled ‘The Track to Arivurichardich’. These give an insight into the vivid contrast in colours and shades the different seasons and variable light projects onto the land, as well as an indicator for crop growing and animal reproduction, essential to the life of the Gaels. Colour is an important element in place-names – *dubh*, black/dark, *Cnoc Dubh* ‘Black Hill’ (NN637088), *dorch(a)*, dark (rare), *geal*, white/bright/brilliant, *Liath*, silver-grey/grey-blue/light blue, *uaine*, green/yellow-green (usually associated with
water bodies), *dearg*, red of blood, between pink and purple, *òr*, gold (in the landscape as a noun *Òir*) – and many more. As are wild plants, herbs, trees and insects – *Aiteann*, Juniper, *Darach*, Oak, *Fraoch*, Heather – that give the pairings of descriptors such as –Àrd, High, Ìosal, Low, *Tuath*, North, *Deas*, South with *Mòr*, Big and *Beag*, Small at *Allt Mor’s spùt beag* ‘small waterfall’ (NN555135), and spùt mòr ‘big waterfall’ (NN557136) that has a very intriguing interpretation from the rushing of the waterfalls (Appendice 12) (Maclean 2019).

*‘The Track to Arivurichardich’* (NN6312)

“Ahead is *Gleann a’Chròin* with the long ridge to *Stùc a’Chròin* on the north side of the glen and *Sgiath an Dòbhrain* to the left being the start of the southern ridge leading to *Beinn Each*” (Fitchett 2012).
Stùc a’Chróin (NN617174) is an imposing, prominent hill seemingly intertwined with Ben Vorlich, Beinn Mhùrlag (NN628188) (Murray 2019: 14). Both can be seen and admired on a clear day throughout the scenic periphery of the central lowlands. One such Victorian meaning was believed to be ‘the hill of moaning’ – ‘a lesser hill jutting out from the greater one’, that of Ben Vorlich – though Stùc can mean ‘projecting hill’ and is by no means inferior, with but a mere 10 metres difference in height from Ben Vorlich ‘mountain of the sack-shaped inlets/bag-shaped bay’ above Loch Earn (Drummond 1991: 135). On the other hand, Reverend J. B. Johnston (1934), in Peter Drummond’s Scottish Hill and Mountain Names (1991: 131) considered Chròin derived from crann, ‘tree or plough’ (Dwelly 1993: 260), or perhaps from the old Irish word of cron or cronail, ‘harm or danger’, or cròthan, considered to be ‘sheepfold’ (Dwelly 1993: 278, 279). The underlying element however, may well be a different recorded spelling, Stuc a’Chroan, possibly from comraich, ‘protection, shelter’ (Dwelly 1993: 249; Forbes (2019 [1905]: 212) has the same definition, whilst cròthadh (aidh) gives enclosing, and
A’cròthuan, ‘enclosing lambs’, not cròthan, meaning ‘cribbage’ (Dwelly 1993: 279), as Reverend Johnston suggested. Though this error may have been a misinterpretation of dialect. In the meantime, this natural crag-ringed formation stands at the head of Gleann a’Chròin, nestled below Meall na Caora ‘hill of the sheep’ (Drummond 1991: 131, 135).

Sgiath interprets as ‘shelter’: Creag nan Sgiath ‘Shelter Hill’ (NN488143), Sgiath an Dòbhrain, (NN623410), possibly ‘wing of the otter’, with ‘wing’ as ‘shelter, protection’, and that of Dòbhrain, is dobar or doboir an or aon meaning the ‘water-one’. Doboir appears in the Book of Deer as Aber-dobboir for Aberdour, and the Old Irish word for water has three names – Bior, An, Dobair, with tobar (dobar), a well (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 195, 196). The otter was said to have “a magic skin that was used as a charm, gave power to heal burns and scalds to those who licked the warm liver of a newly-killed otter, as recorded by Father Allan MacDonald in Ersikay, 26 Feb. 1896” (Beith 1995: 180). It was hailed as an antidote against fever and smallpox, prevented drowning, used as protection during childbirth, and gave luck to those who lined their targes (shields) with it. It was said that the legendary Rob Roy MacGregor’s favoured sporran was made from otter skin (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 195, 196).

Slightly further afield, but no less as one with the interconnected landscape for the Gaels sits Beinn Dorain (NN325378), eulogised in Gaelic verse with Duncan Ban Macintyre’s (1724 – 1812), Moladh Beinn Dòbhrain, ‘The Praise of Ben Dorain’, composed between c. 1751 – 1766. This poem reflects the
social and autocratic changes of the land ownership being abused as a mere hunting reserve for nobility, the inhabitants forcibly removed from their ancient right to land possession, and the leaders sacred obligation to their people to uphold a sustainable environment for the preservation and conservation of life, traduced and ignored (Black 2001: poem 49, 267 – 278, 490 – 493).
6. Legendary and Notable

The aforementioned Rob Roy Macgregor, *Rob Ruadh MacGriogar* (1671 – 1734) has a colourful red-haired theme to his name and many notorious hero-style tales to be told, mainly related to ‘cattle lifting, resetting and protecting for the payment of *màl dubh*’, black rent (Black 2001: 433). However, there are also those of irony, such as the one at *Druim Leathan*, ‘broad ridge’ (Dwelly 1993: 579), anglicised to ‘Drumlean’ (NN480022), Kinlochard, near Aberfoyle, when he relieved the bailiff of the rent monies he had taken from many, but chiefly from the pocket of the poor old widow who was everybody’s friend, and returned her rent money to her, with a tasty profit for his own sporran (Newton 2010: 229). Rob Roy made Inverlochlarig his final home. He died in 1734 and is buried in the local kirkyard at Balquhidder. ‘An Elegy for Rob Roy MacGregor’, *Marbhrrann do Rob Ruadh MacGriogair* is an Anonymous, *Gun Urra*, poem composed by somebody who held him in very high esteem (Appendice 13) (Black 2001: poem 27, 145 – 149).

In the meantime, an Episcopalian Reverend, Mr. Robert Kirk, whose father was minister of Aberfoyle, born in 1644, the seventh son of a seventh son, reputed to have da-shealladh, ‘two sights’ (Thompson 1997: 47), could see the fairies – though his visions may have been symptomatic of Charles Bonnet syndrome, a condition amongst visually-impaired people which manifests in visual hallucinations (RNIB 2014 – 2018; Henderson 2007 - 2020) – was the author of the first complete translation of the Scottish metrical Psalms into Gaelic, *Psalma Dhaibhidh an Meadrachd*, Edinburgh (1684), presided over the parish of Balquhidder from 1664, then Aberfoyle in 1685,

Superstition and religion were daily social practices for the Gaels. They perceived the fairy world as an otherworldly presence that used the portals of hills, well, lochs and caves to traverse their passage to help, hinder or create fear in people. A deep-rooted fear, but respect of *am fàsach*, ‘the wilderness’, drew a line with the security of, *am baile*, ‘the home’, and the anthropogenically constructed arable landscape by the use of iron, where ‘man has dominion over nature’ (Bateman 2009: 142 – 152). Though the very same dominating iron was used as a protective talisman, especially during childbirth when the fairies were said to be at their most pernicious (Bennett 2006: 6, 7). Could it be, that Robert Kirk was instrumental in pursuing the fairy theme of the ‘sepulchral howes inhabited by the fancy people with their flying arrows’ (Kirk 2008 [1893]: 19) to boost the flagging attendance for his sermons, in a time whereby the Reformation was questioning his Parish’s faith, “to uphold the belief in the existence of angels, the Devil, the Holy Spirit and, ultimately, of God” (Henderson 2007 – 2020). Perhaps this was all part of the wider “social transformation” (Woolf 2007: 327), which was later recognised by John MacInnes when questioning people’s reaction to fairy belief, “it is they, rather than the fairies who have changed” (Bateman 2009: 150). Either way, Reverend Kirk and the Fairies are forever memorialised with ‘Doon Hill’, now the popular ‘Fairy Knowe’, *Dun Sithean* (NN521009), Aberfoyle, *Obar Phuill* (NN518012) (Appendice 14).
Certainly, another source of ‘Fairy Mountain’, interconnected landscape passageways of aspiration is Schiehallion, *Sìth(dh) chailleann*, ‘the fairy hill of the Caledonians’ (NN753556). This conical-shaped hill has been given a variety of spellings according to the recorder’s interpretations since 1642, such as ‘Schachalzean’ (the z as old Scots y) (Drummond 1991: 128). It was also for a time, the home and workplace of the schoolmaster (considered to be a lowly position) of Rannoch, Dugald Buchanan, *Dùghall Bochanan* (1716 – 68). Buchanan, highly skilled in biblical languages, attended Divinity College in Glasgow, and possibly did not graduate, but he was instrumental in the supervision of the printing of the Gaelic New Testament in 1765 – 1767. He may even have assisted with the actual translation, though this accolade is given to the Reverend James Stewart of Killin as ministerial powers were order of the day above the lowly profession of an underpaid schoolmaster (Meek 2009: 101). Dugald Buchanan is at least buried with his forefathers in the *Little Leny* (NN621076) Buchanan Burial Enclosure and Burial Ground, with a granite plaque stating: ‘Gaelic poet, teacher, evangelist. This monument marks his resting place and commemorates his gifts of inspired language and sacred song by which the literature of his native highlands has been enriched’ (Author 2019). *Little Leny* is located in the meadowland at the confluence of the *Eas Gobhain*, ‘Blacksmith’s Waterfall’ (NN612075) and *Garbh-Uisge*, ‘rough water’ (NN614080), Callander.
However, there is ambiguity to the burial location as some literary resources suggest Balquhidder (Black 2001: 484), though this may have been an overlooked error from the edited work (Appendice 15). Meanwhile, the bilingual sacred bard Dugald Buchanan embraced the social changes to suit “the many masks” (Meek 2009: 97) of the “Enlightenment man” (Meek 2009: 111), with his reinvention and thirst for Gaelic literature and English prose which he took to new heights with a collection of eight spiritual songs written in Gaelic, ‘The Dream’, Am Bruadar is but one (Black 2001: poem 45, 247).
Eight songs to give elevated status as Gaelic Scotland’s spiritual poet. A reasonable acknowledgement of status for a lowly schoolmaster whose poetic gift in his songs, *An Gaisgeach*, ‘the Hero’, connected the people with the imagery of the “Christian Warrior” (Black 2001: 483) and the Gospel (Meek 2009: 98, 99).
7. Respectful

The Gaels who lived in this environment believed from their ancestors that there was no distinction between the natural and the supernatural. Earth, air, water and fire were living spirits endowed with individuality, to be respected (MacKinlay 1896: 69 – 76). They had learned how to survive in the wilderness they inhabited, and in return gave due homage to the landscape, often in anthropomorphic terms (Bateman 2009: 142). The personalised place-names would have created a more harmonious balance of life, to reduce the daily fear of the unknown along with the oral mind-maps as the navigational aid.

The many place-names for topographical features are the same as those for human and animal anatomical features. There are over a hundred generic terms for hill, mountain or elevated ground, here are but some:

*Beinn*, originally animal’s horn, *Meall Biorich* ‘Mass/Lump of a hill

Pointing/Horned, Branching Antlers’

*Céann*, ‘head, end’

*Aoddann, Aghaidh*, ‘face, surface’

*Gualann*, ‘shoulder, mountain ridge’

*Bràigh*, ‘upper chest, uplands’

*Cioch*, ‘breast, pointed hills’

*Druim*, ‘back, mountain ridge’

*Tòn*, ‘buttocks, Eminence’

*Bod*, ‘penis, stone pillar’

*Feith*, ‘vein, bog-channel’

*Fiacail*, ‘tooth, toothed ridge’
Glùn, ‘knee, rounded knoll’, *Tuim Bhroc* ‘Round Hill of the Badger’  
(NN616093)

Màm, ‘breast, gap between hills’, *Lag a’ Phuill* ‘Hollow between two knolls of the peat bank’ (NN506147)

Sàil, ‘heel’

Sròn, ‘nose’


Reinforcing the sense of the landscape as a living entity, to give a rich, creative, anthropomorphic and zoomorphic imagination “using the thing most familiar to us, the body” (Murray 2019: 191 – 197) and adapting the body anatomy into place-names to synchronise with the environment and dwellings (Watson 1995: 154, 155).

The following examples from Albert Bil’s 1989 paper on ‘Transhumance economy, setting and settlement in Highland Perthshire’, are but a few of the many that can be found mapped out for Perthshire. They give an intimate relationship of the combined working life delineating both boundary divisions and social groups (Bramwell 2018: 277). These could be natural formations such as burns and rivers, *Allt na Plaidean*, ‘the burn of the plots of ground’, but also make use of existing built structures such as walled enclosures, *Ruidh Feith an Duin*, ‘the small stream shieling of the old man/fort. That describe work, *Sron Ruighe Clomhaiche*, ‘the nose of the shieling of the blacksmith’s tongs/wool/scab’. Animal husbandry, *Bhealaich Bha Airidh*, ‘the cattle pass shieling’, *Allt a Choilich*, the ‘burn of the cockerel’. Arable production, *Bothan Ruidh Sron nan Dias*, the hut of the nose of the corn ears...
shieling, *Ruidh Chail*, ‘the kale shieling’, and acknowledge the individual shieling occupants, such as the farmer, or the elders – ‘the old man’, ‘bodach’, or ‘the old woman’, *Ruidh Moraig*, ‘Morag’s shieling’ – in the community, though the shieling elements do vary: *Airigh*, possibly lower, rocky terrain shieling activity, rising up to the *Ruighe*, shieling activity at higher levels of the hill, but all within close proximity to the water course elements, *Fèith*, bog-stream, *Caochan*, slow flowing hidden by vegetation, *Allt*, burn, Àth, ford as in the five fords mapped in *Stank Glen* (NN570110) (Appendice 16), *Cuing-leum*, place of crossing a river by a standing jump, *Inbhir*, confluence of rivers, *Fuaran*, spring, well, green spot, and many more (Bil 1989: 162, 163,166, 167). The shielings were settlements of seasonal work to provide food and clothing for the winter ahead, and to give the homesteading on the lower ground rest in preparation for the menfolk to till. There were also improvised huts, tents (‘benders’), cottages known as *Bothans, Bothan am fasgadh nam fuar bheann*, ‘a hut in the shelter of the bleak mountains’ (Dwelly 1993: 111). Other purposes could be hunting, whisky distilling, even used for isolation in times of sickness, *Bothan na Plaighe*, ‘The little hut of the Plague’ (Bil 1989: 159, 162).

Personalised place-names to give holistic interpretation intrinsic to identity and boundaries for the social groups that formed the Gaelic psyche within the Gaelic culture (Robertson 2009: 154).

“We were after the past, the invisible past, and that required imagination, just as past people also used their imagination to live in their world. Understanding
is always a cultural act. This process of understanding is the cultural situation of humankind, for the struggle to understand is the work of the imagination” (Hastorf 2017: xv).

People, who once thrived in their self-named landscape of heritage throughout the Highlands and Islands (Martin 2018 [1703]: 138), turned into a misty-eyed image of the lone shieling at the head of a secluded glen, for the enlightened and the romantics to feed the social change of the new culture of nostalgia-tourism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Thomas Pennant, a Welsh antiquarian, thought it notable to add to his recorded journey the extended hospitality he was offered when he “partook in goat’s milk whey, Glen Tilt” (Murray 2019: 157) on his travels during 1769. Whilst (Sir) Walter Scott simply effervesced with poetic enthusiasm for his ‘Lady of the Lake’ composition in 1810. He erred evermore by creating a ‘Ben’ that was not a Munro, colloquially known as ‘The Trossachs Little Mountain’, and gave it a whole new pronunciation of ‘Ben A’n’. In reality, Scott’s new-found ‘Ben’ may originally have been Am Binnean ‘small pointed peak’ (NN509070) and is a pointed bump on the shoulder of Meall Gainmheich ‘sandy hill’ (NN509095) overlooking Loch Katrine, Loch Ceiterein (Drummond 1991: 107). On the other hand, looming above the loch like an eerie shadow sits Ben Venue, A’ Bheinn Mheanbh (NN505068), possibly ‘small mountain, milk mountain’, more likely, ‘abounding in caves’ (Drummond 1991: 135). With its own tale to tell of the annual meeting of the Ùruisgean – goblins, also he-goat, in the form of long-haired, half-man, half-goat beasts, with protracted nails and claws (Appendice 17), that could also be tamed to help with the work – at
Coire na(n) Ùruisgean, ‘corrie of the spate, Goblin’s cave’ (NN483077) (Murray 2017: 13).
8. Improved Transhumance

Thus, the landscape so aptly named by the transhumance economy of the Gaels who lived in it, not just with it (Bil 1989: 163), was to be manufactured into improved and ‘unimproved’, under the umbrella of agriculture, moving on to crofting tenure, then planned villages with the Industrial Revolution.

Subsistence run-rig systems – ‘ferm-touns’ – derided by the ‘improvers’ such as Sir John Sinclair, also editor of the Old Statistical Account who stated: “the houses were not built according to any plan but scattered in every direction” – most likely to suit the purpose of the building and the township’s precious infield cultivation (Grant, 1975: 44) – “the roads and alleys were inconceivably bad, especially in wet weather, as few of them were paved, and what added to their miserable state was the abominable practice of placing the dunghill, before their doors”. The dunghill, most likely cow dung, bo ghaorr, was a source of fuel when dried, therefore it made sense to have this close by (Forbes 2019[1905]: 106).

The township’s improvements evolved into larger, single farmsteads, with but one or two families, already favoured tenants chosen to rent the greater areas of land. The various Enclosure Acts passed by the pre-1707 Scottish Parliament meant the lairds could enclose their estates without due consideration to tenancy agreements. This increased at a pace during the 18th century and the transhumance economy of the Gaels incurred many evictions and displacements, as did their livestock (Caird 1964: 72 – 80).
Their ancient breed of sheep, *caora*, with the leader termed as *Ceannciorra* or *Caoracheann* (see Appendix 18), described by Dr. Walker in Alexander Forbes *Gaelic Names of Beasts (Mammalia)*, ‘as the smallest of its kind, of a thin lank shape, with short straight horns, face and legs white, tail extremely short, and the finest quality wool of various colours, black and white, bluish grey, brown, deep russet. Though an all-black sheep was considered to be the form of a witch’ (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 213). The *caora* were treasured as family retainers and kept close for milk and wool. The ewes, when on the hill, were kept under the care of a shepherd (Black 2001: 477), and at night, given shelter in the house. It was said that “sleeping among sheep was a good remedy in cases of lingering disease” (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 213). Such was the high regard for the sheep that when Duncan Ban MacIntyre lost his ewe that was gifted to him into the jaws of a fox, he composed a thigging song, *Òran do Chaora*, ‘A Song to a Ewe’, in her memory (Appendice 19) (Black 2001: poem 41, 223 – 233, 477, 478). Sadly, and not for the good of the people nor the environment, these too, were displaced by the coarse-woolled sheep of the Borders. The new, and hardier sheep could stay out on high ground all year round, thus reducing the manpower, whilst simultaneously creating an unsustainable, pastoral habitat regime. The Borders sheep-masters were not in this for the good of the environment or the people, but the obesity of their sporrans. Overgrazing cleared the high pastures from the selective herbs and grasses essential for the cattle when they were herded up the glen to the summer shielings. The ‘flitting’, *imriche, Bealach na h Imriche* ‘pass of the flitting’ (NN484111 and NN598117) allowed the adult menfolk to attend to the home pastures, while the younger boys and girls, the elder
womenfolk, the cattle, the hens, the spinning wheels, the paraphernalia for processing the milk and other essentials, piled high in the carts and driven up the hills for the summer growth and reproduction season, away from the confines of the township and the watchful eye of the kirk (Grant 1975 [1961]: 50, 129; Forbes 2019 [1905]: 216).

But, herein lies climate change. It is a part of the past, it is now, and it is the future.

During the later medieval period the effects of the Little Ice Age, c. 1650 – 1850, compounded by the eruption of Laki Giga (1783) (Appendice 20) (Beith 1995: 260), would probably have contributed to wetter and waterlogged conditions (Bil 1989: 162) forming “cold soils” (Ping 2005: 268 – 276) in an otherwise upland tundra environment. This could be indicated by Stank Glen (NN571110) Stank Burn (NN568109) and the Old Shielings (NN565111). Stank denoting standing water/ditch/trench (Appendice 16) (Dwelly 1993: 898). Whilst other place-name elements such as Bruach, Leathad and Brae illustrate well-drained hillside and prevent the livestock from being boggled down and succumbing to disease (Bil 1989: 162).

The transhumance economy of organised pastoral husbandry is recorded on the six inch to the mile series of OS maps surveyed and printed in the late 1850s and 1860s. Perthshire maps document nearly 300 names and settlements, most are found north of the HBF where the custom survived the longest (Bil 1989: 159).
Conclusion

In contemporary society today, the social norm is ‘Alexa’ reigns indoors, ‘Siri’ and satellite navigational devices give directions, and smartphones are attached to facial expressions. Very often, spatial awareness does not enter the framework of human minds with their smart devices doing the thinking for them in almost every capacity. While smart (or foolish) hillwalkers trek up the hills with the metal ends of their walking poles sticking out of their rucksacks, acting as prime targets for sudden lightning strikes ricocheting across the walls of steep glens, unaware of the hard life their ancestors lived in the very environment they see as their hobby. The weather forecast is on an app, no need to look for a red sky at night, or recognise that on a cloudy day, a sudden drop in the temperature forewarns of rain, or know that bird migration heralds both the onset of warmer weather, and that of colder. Why would anyone in the modern western world give credence to guidance from the stars, or that the solar cycle triggers procreation in the natural world? While the waxing moon and high winds not only influence the Spring and Neap tides, but human bodies too, and the moon on the wane gives the best time to cut peat, build dykes and cut trees (Martin 2018 [1703]: 122). That terrain is not always a manmade concrete pavement, and vegetables do grow from seeds and not from supermarket shelves.

To even begin to understand mind-mapping the landscape as a means of navigation and recognition, and understand the societal significance of the Gaelic place-names inherited from the “Gael of Erin” (Grant 1975 [1961]: 67), not just for settlements, but names for almost everything in the landscape,
requires a little understanding of the Gaelic language, a part of Scotland’s rich heritage, and an almost tangible relic from the past. Gaelic was once spoken more widely than it currently is, but a series of cultural, political and economic decisions made by the British government had a resounding effect on its decline. Not only was there a mapping mission, there was one of institutionalising the remaining population of Scotland with an anglicised mono-language. Old Scots was the fashionable mode for a while, but even this did not escape the change that was on the agenda. Nevertheless, Gaelic survived. It may no longer be the everyday language in the Callander area, but in Scotland there are about 57,000 speakers to date (Kavanagh 2019), with many active learners having some knowledge of the language, coupled with a thirst to learn more about the life and the landscape of the layered and humble beginnings through the multiple stages of occupation over hundreds of years (Withers 1983: 125 – 142).

The process of scoticisation (McNiven 2011: 45) was almost complete by the twentieth century, however, an intrepid quartet of octogenarian Gaelic-speaking men born near Callander could contribute their lifetime experiences of place-name knowledge to the records (Watson 1993: 113). Fast forward to today, and the people are waking up to Gaelic word recognition, aided by Paul Kavanagh’s 2018 Gaelic map and other Gaelic signage, as they go about their daily commute to work from Peairt, Perth to Sruighlea, Stirling, or by train from Dùn Bhlàthain, Dunblane to Glaschu, Glasgow (Kavanagh 2018), for without the names, where would they be?
The research has found a Gaelic society of communities spread out over Scotland. People who sang, composed poetry, reinvented tales and shared what they could. Custodians of the land, inventors of place-names, and teachers of the landscape, who were prematurely ousted by societal change, at a time whereby their own beliefs were being challenged by the hierarchy of control and was thus accelerated into an almost societal collapse.
Research Issues

My apologies for the lack of intensive critical engagement, even quantitative research, with no graphs, no interviews, not many maps and no surveys. However much of this has been included in previous work conducted by far more learned academics and researchers and may well have been inadequately transcribed by a mere novice place-name researcher. I feel I would have benefitted from being able to work alongside more knowledgeable people to gather momentum from mixing thoughts and existing knowledge. Perhaps this is something to consider for future research.

My aim however, was to combine the very being of Gaelic society within the place-names to create their life holistically. Whether this works for the reader or not, is down to individual imagination.

Undoubtedly, the Corona Virus pandemic has had an impact. It has hampered any fieldwork after lockdown, which in turn demotivated, unenthused, and even now, venturing out, is filled with dread, all on top of two, close family bereavements. Nevertheless, the study was a personal quest to learn more about life with the Gaels, and as a child of the sixties, it afforded me with an opportunity to learn some aspects of the culture, history, and language that was taken from our education, at an age that would have made learning, especially that of the language, far easier.
List of References


Martin, M. (2018 [1703]) *A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland circa 1695: And a Late Voyage to ST. Kilda* This edition 2018. Edinburgh: Birlinn Limited


**Academic Papers**


**Maps**


Ordnance Survey of Scotland (1859 - 64) *Loch Lomond*. Sheet 38, 3rd edn. Scale of One Inch to A Statute Mile


Website Resources


**Personal communication**


Appendices 1 – 20

Appendice 1. As written by the Rev. Mr. James Robertson, Minister of that Parish from the OSA (1794: 574, 612 - 614), though replacing the Old Scots f with s.

“The etymology of Callander is by some understood to be from Calla-straid, which is the Gaelic name given to it by the common people: Calla signifying the landing place at the Ferry, where the village is built; and Straid the street or avenue leading from the castle of Callander (NN629075) (Canmore n.d. site 24376) to the same ferry. By others it is thought to refer to a more remote period than the existence of the castle, or any avenue in this country, and to be derived from Caldin-doir, which is also a Gaelic word, and signifies the hazle grove. From the remains of hazle woods in the neighbourhood, and the aptness of this kind of soul to carry hazle and oak, it is probable, that not only this place, but other places, which have a similar name, originally abounded, or do still abound with that timber’ (574)”.

Dr. Peter McNiven has conducted extensive research into the toponymy of Lennox and Menteith and has 27 various spellings, with a further 10 accounts attributed to the modern-day spelling of Callander from 1238 up to 1866 with the early Calen/Caling, possibly relating to an estate by the River Teith, though equally, the obscure Calen – element can be found in nearby Coilhallan Wood to the west of the modern town, possibly Coille Chailin/Calltain (Hazel Wood) as suggested by the Reverend Robertson (McNiven 2020).
Mr. Robertson then goes on to say (612 - 615), “The etymology of every farm and hill in this country is Gaelic, and is descriptive of their situation, or of some other peculiar quality: a few of these shall only be given, because definitions of this nature may appear tiresome to those who have no knowledge of the language, while they afford (am?)usement and information to others. Any Gaelic words, that occur, are spelled accordingly to the English orthography, to render them legible by English readers:

**Leney, Lèn-nìh**, ‘full of wood’. The plains of Leney were formerly covered with stately alders, the skirts of the hills with oaks, the front and brow of the hills and glens with birches. The alders and birches have mostly disappeared; the oak woods are preserved.

**Laor**, ‘hoof’, (toe), signifying a cloven animal. This and other places of that name, exactly resemble that part of the animal, being encompassed by two rivulets, the one running in a stre(a)ight, and the other in a curve line, forming a very acute angle at the point where they meet.

**Kilmahog, Kil-ma-chug**, ‘St Hog/Chùg’. The festival of St. Chùg, is the 26th day of November, which is a cattle market in this country.

**Tom-bea**, ‘birch hill’.

**Aney, à-n-eib(?)**, ‘ford of the deer’, where they passed from the forest of Glenfinlas to the forest of Glenertney.

**Ardhùllury, ard-chul(?)**, ‘the shieling with a height at its back’.

**Glengyle, Clean-gowl**, ‘forked glen’.

**Coil-chra, Coil-chrà**, ‘wood of nuts’.

**Ard-mac-mùin**, ‘height for the brood of cattle’.

**Stron-garv-altry**, ‘nose at the rough or rapid brook’.
E(d)ir-a-leachdeach, ‘between the two brooks of flags’.
Le-tir, ‘the halt (half, bolt?) of the land’ with tir and terra the same word (generally a broad slope above water), let it suffice to observe, that the ancient Scythians, who spoke the Celtic language, of which Gaelic is a dialect, were a great and warlike people, long before Rome was built, or its founder born; and that this dialect of the Celtic has, in its constitution, a much nearer affinity to languages, which are acknowledged to be more ancient than Greek or Latin, than it has either to those or to any other language of modern date. Its construction, its genius, and its power bear the evident marks of a very remote origin.
Brea-n-choil, ‘above the woods’, also called Trosachs, ‘roughness’ – exhibits a most romantic scene.
Ara-ken-knochan, ‘height at the end of the hills’.
Glen-fin-glass, ‘fair green glen’, the green, long grass in the summer acquires a bleached and white appearance by the winter storms. A forest belonging to the Earl of Moray.
Ach-na-hard, ‘field of the height’. Ach is always applied to a horizontal field.
Dun-craggan, ‘mount of the rock’.
Osserans, Oir-roin(?), ‘side of the point’. Generally given to places at the side of a river, or enclosed land between two rivers, Ross.
Len-rich, La-rig, ‘place near water’. Ness signifies the same thing in Norse.
Port-an-eilean, ‘harbour of the island’.
Tar-an-dùin, “groin of the hill”.
**Bo-chastle, Mo-chasler, ‘town of the castle’, ‘plain of the castle’. Bo-chastle was also a significant ‘ferm-toun’ and did not just consist of a few families, but
could have 20 – 30 people staying there, with 84 people in Bochastle near Callander, of whom 35 were monolingual Gaelic speakers (McNiven 2020: PC).

Gar-chonie, Gar-choise(?), ‘inclosure of lamentation’, from a bloody battle between two clans.

Ach-an-lavich, ‘field of the industrious’. Heaps of field stones gathered off arable ground stacked into cairns.

Gart, ‘arable field’.

Ari-vuri-cheardich, ‘the shieling of the Moravian tinker’ (also Appendix 11**)

Possibly from a number of Moravians the government settled into the area, who brought with them their trade of working cast iron into implements and taught the local inhabitants. Gaelic applies the word which signifies ‘tinker’, to one who works in cast iron; and the word which signifies a ‘smith’, to one who works in malleable iron.

Broc-làn, ‘full of badger’.

Binean, a peak rising behind the Trosachs, which seems to be all that remains, in its original situation of the mountain from which the Trosachs were formed”.

The Reverend then writes: “Customs which are fast wearing out, not only in Callander, but all over the Highlands (620 - 622):

Bel-tan, Bál-tein on the first day of May. Used to be a human(devoted)-sacrificial fire festival of celebration in honour of the sun, come full circle, deisheal, whose return, gives genial warmth on the productions of the earth,
now the devoted person only leaps three times through the flames in a closed ceremony.

*All-Saints Even*, bonfires are set up in every village. When the bonfire is consumed, the ashes are collected in the form of a circle. A stone representing all the interested families is inserted near the circumference. Should the stone be moved out of place, the person represented by that stone is devoted, or *fey*; and is supposed to not live twelve months from that day. The Druid priests deliver the consecrated ash to the people the next morning, the virtues of which were supposed to continue for a year”. (Robertson 1794).

According to Watson (1993 [1926]: 106, 515), the name of Callander was *Calindrade*, the old name of Callander on Teith, the Teith being the river that flows through the town. Apparently, a name that was transferred directly from Callander, Falkirk when the ‘Livingstone proprietor of both places had his lands incorporated into the one barony of Callander, 1549’ (Watson). There has been a number of variations to *Calindrade*: *Calasráid*, shortened to *Caltráid* for *caladh* (hard)-sráid (street), meaning shore-street, ferry-street, then firm shore, beach, modern harbour, but nowadays, the Gaelic place-name is depicted in signage as *Calasraid* (Taylor 2011: 37).

The modern-day Gaelic name is defined as *Calastraid*

Appendice 2. HBF: It is thought the uplift of the Grampian Group was formed in a strike-slip fault with left-lateral motion, known as a *sinistral fault*, in conjunction with the Strathmore *syncline* – a sequence of folded rock layers -
to the south-east that usurped into a *transpressive* (strike-slip deformation within restraining bends), regime (Tanner 2008: 915 - 921). In more simplistic and natural terms, the HBF is a natural geological manifestation of colliding tectonic plates. The collisions have formed distinctive landscape features stretching from the Isle of Arran and Helensburgh by the Atlantic Sea, on the southwest coast of Scotland, to Stonehaven, a coastal town in the northeast where it reaches the North Sea (Worsley 1988: 34 - 5). The formation slices through two different geological terranes which give rise to two distinct physiographic terrains: The Highlands to the north, and the Lowlands to the south. In most places it is recognisable as a change in topography without too much preamble to the almighty temperatures and eruptions that moulded, deformed then reshaped, to form Precambrian and Cambrian metamorphic rocks, with marine deposits metamorphosed to schists, phyllites and slates, namely the Dalradian Supergroup and the Highland Border Complex (Tanner et al 2013: 216 – 222).

Appendice 3. *Laoidh Dhiarmaid*, ‘The Death of Diarmaid’ The ballad opens with the following lines:

*Gleann Siadh an gleannso rêm thaoibhi*

*mbinn faoidh éanagus lon;*

*minic rithidís an Fhéinar*

*an t-srath so an déidh a gcon.*

‘This glen beside me is Glenshee, where blackbirds and other birds sing sweetly; often would the Fian run along this glen behind their hounds’.
An glean so fá Bheann Ghulbainn ghuirm

as h-áilde tulcha fa ghréin,

niorbh annamh a shrotha gu dearg

an déidh shealg o Fhionn na bhFéin.

‘This glen below green Beann Ghulbainn, whose knolls are the fairest under the sun – not frequently were its streams red after hunts had been held by Fionn of the Fiana’ (Meek 1990: 352).

Diarmaid ua Duibhne was Fionn Mac Cumhail’s favoured legendary warrior of equal strength but became his nemesis when Fionn’s wife Gràinne, took a fancy to him and put a geasa (a vow to be honoured) on the handsome warrior who had taken her fancy. She drugged the men in the hall whilst feasting, then lured Diarmaid away (Murray 2019: 40; Meek 1990: 335 – 361).

Appendice 4. Brig o’Turk: Turk is the name of the river in the gorge, which causes ‘rooting-like’ erosion in the gorge. Nevertheless, the torc element may also refer to boar/pig which can relate to Diarmaid and Gràinne. There are so many Fenian tales and ballads but one of the most popular, ‘The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Gràinne’, which also has many versions, cuts through the swathe, just like Diarmaid whittling a piece of wood into a bowl, and thus into the tale of Diarmaid and Gràinne, as told by Alexander Macalister, recorded by J, F. Campbell (1862: 39 – 64), is in the Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Vol. III: to give the main elements:

- Diarmaid gets a ball seirc – ‘love spot’ – on his brow from Òige.
- Fionn weds Gràinne.
• Gràinne falls in love with Diarmaid because of the *ball seirc*.

• Diarmaid and Gràinne elope. The *Fianna* give chase.

• Diarmaid and Gràinne hide in a rowan (*caorann*) tree. Alas they are discovered, but escape!

• The cailleach (old woman) helps Diarmaid and Gràinne by misinforming Fionn.

• Gràinne turns traitor and plots with Ciofach Mac a’ Ghoill to kill Diarmaid. Diarmaid escapes.

• Many years pass and Diarmaid returns, does battle with Ciofach and kills him. He then flees again.

• Gràinne follows and finds him because of the heron’s cry at *Sliabh Gaoil*.

• They team up again. Diarmaid takes to carving wood to make a living.

• The *Fianna* come across *Allt nan Sliseag* – the burn of the (wood) shavings. They sound the *faghaid*, the ‘hunting cry’.

• Fionn challenges Diarmaid to kill the wild boar of Beinn Ghulbainn.

• Diarmaid kills the boar, Fionn insists he measures it from end to end - that is from head to tail, then back again, but its venomous bristle pierces the mole on the sole of his foot. Diarmaid dies, only because Fionn, after 3 aborted attempts, is too stubborn to give him the water from the well in his magical hands which would have saved him.

• Diarmaid is buried in sight of Beinn Ghulbainn.

*In the glen, below Ben Gulbin green,*

*Whose tulachs gleam in the sun,*
The river’s flow was stained with red
When deer fell to Fionn of the fairies
(Campbell 1862: 39 – 64)

Appendice 5. Clach nan Tarbh has the Red Bull from England, jeering insults across the water of Loch Lomond at the Black Highland Bull from Scotland quietly grazing on an opposite hill. The gauntlet thrown, the battle commences, after a rampage onto Ben Vorlich. Heads butting, nostrils flaring, stealth of power over rashness of brawn. The red bull is forced back and driven into a giant rock. The rock wobbles, starts to roll down the hill, gathers momentum and rests up five miles away near Ardlui. The black bull pierces the chest of the red bull with its crooked horn. The red bull dies (Newton 2010: 87 - 89).

Appendice 6. John Dewar Mac an Deòir, Iain (1802 – 1872) Clach nan Tarbh
A moral tale of bravery: Black Bull to the Great Big Red Bull, “where are you from?” The Red Bull answers, “from the land of your enemy!” The Black Bull asks, “on what do you stay alive?” The Red Bull answers, “wheat and wine.” The Black Bull answers, “I would drive you backwards.” The Red Bull asks, “where were you born?” “What food have you had since you were a calf?” The Black Bull answers, “in the cattle fold in the fortress.” “Milk and the top of the heather.” The Red Bull then retorts, “This curved horn in your chest!” The Black Bull replies, “I’m coming for you! I’m not afraid!”. According to Newton, “the original Gaelic words of the tale imitate the voices of bulls, but this is impossible to reproduce in an English translation” (Newton 2010: 87 - 89).
Appendice 7. Pulpit Rock:

‘Entry Name: Pulpit Rock, preaching site, south of Ardlui

Scheduled Date: 5 November 2004

Source: Historic Environment Scotland

Source ID: SM10972

Schedule Class: Cultural

Category: Ecclesiastical: open air preaching place

Location: Arrochar

County: Argyll and Bute

Electoral Ward: Lomond North

Traditional County: Dunbartonshire’

‘The monument comprises a large rock outcrop into which a vestry was excavated in 1825, to accommodate the parish minister while he conducted open air services.

Pulpit Rock, or Clach nan Tarbh (the stone of the bulls), lies some 2km south of Ardlui. In 1825 parishioners living in the northern part of the Parish of Arrochar complained of the distance that they had to travel to church services, some 13km each way. The Minister, the Reverend Peter Proudfoot, responded to his parishioners' complaint saying that if they would build him a vestry he would come and preach to them on certain occasions. The parishioners cut and then blasted a hole in the rock large enough to accommodate the Minister, an Elder and the Precentor.

The shelter in the rock formed the vestry. It had a wooden door and was reached by a flight of steps. A wooden pulpit was fixed to a platform bolted on
to the side of the rock. Services were held during the summer months for
about 75 years until 1895 when a mission church was established in Ardlui.
During the services the congregation sat on the ground around Pulpit Rock.
When the West Highland Railway was built it passed to the west of the rock,
so avoiding this religious landmark.
The area to be scheduled comprises an area 35m E-W by 32m N-S which
includes the rock and an area to the front of the rock, where evidence for the
wooden pulpit might be expected to survive, as marked in red on the
accompanying map extract’.
Source: Historic Environment Scotland

Statement of Scheduling
Historically the monument is of national importance as a relatively late
example of an open-air preaching site and is a rare example of the
modification of a natural site by blasting to provide a vestry’.
Source: Historic Environment Scotland


Appendix 8. Tom Bheithe ‘Round Hill of the Birch’ (NN599089), the birch tree
bark méillag/béillag was burned to give light, and the inner bark was used as
paper. The Birch is also the Clan Buchanan badge (Cameron 2019: 95).
Rush, luachair, ‘splendour/brightness’, also a commonly used source of
lighting, the rushes were stripped, bar one narrow stripe, of their green outer
skin, drawn through melted grease and laid aside to set (Cameron 2019
[1900]: 113).
Appendice 9. Yeast and Cheese: On the coast, burnt ashes of sea-ware were used to preserve cheese, instead of salt, there is every chance salt, and smoking was used inland. Yeast was procured from a twisted rod of oak, four – eight inches in length, bound by a withe, boiled in wort, staged twice over, wrapped in straw to ferment, and cut before the middle of May (Martin 2018 [1703]: 130, 133).

Appendice 10. Creag Chaoruinneach ‘Crag of the Rowan Tree Place’ (NN549134) Connects with meadows and ale and the mountain-ash with Caorann or fuinnseach coille ‘the wood enchantress’. A hardy tree that can survive and thrive in the most difficult of conditions. Was used in spirit making, and the fruits said to give longevity. It has long been believed to be a protection against witchcraft and a cow protected from disease if its tail bound in a small piece of mountain-ash. It can still be found growing from derelict shielings (Cameron 2019 [1900]: 32). Badge of Clan MacLachlan

Appendice 11. (and Appendix 1) The Canmore listing of Arivurichardich states: ‘A farmstead, comprising one unroofed building is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Perthshire 1866, sheet cxv), but it is not shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1977)’ (Canmore n.d.).

Appendice 12. Sal Beachan (NN559139) suggests ‘Heel of the Bees/Wasps Humming’. This feature is close by Spùt Beag (NN555135) and Spùt Mòr (NN557139) with Alt Mòr (NN555135) winding its way downstream. The
'humming' could be indicative of the rush of the waterfalls, the burn and perhaps a resonance echoing from the hills. Equally, this may have been a beehive pollination location (Dwelly 1993: 79)

Appendice 13. Rob Roy: the following are but a few of the three lined stanzas:

’All of your kinsfolk – Tha do chinneadh gu léir
Grieve at your passing – Fo mhulad ‘nad dhéidh
But the most affected by grief is your wife’ – Ach se as truaighe do chéile mnatha dheth.

’You were fierce in a fight – Bha thu borb an an stri,
You were tranquil in peace – Bhat hu ciùin ann an sìth –
You were backed by a thousand swords’ – Bu cheannard roimh mhile claidhe thu (Black 2001: poem 27, 145 – 149).

Appendice 14. When Reverend Kirk took an evening sojourn up the hill in his nightshirt, and apparently dropped down dead (1692) as he indulged with some fairy mischief. The fairies were said to have been infuriated with his questioning other folk’s fairy tale interpretations, with his belief they were not supernatural but part of the natural world, that they spirited him off to a pine tree (now bedecked in material tokens of spiritual adornment), secreted his body there for all time, and returned a changeling for burial in the cemetery. Though this tale has further metamorphosed into a stone-filled coffin (Henderson 2009: 112, 113).
Appendix 15. Little Leny: the dissertation author had reason to doubt the literary sources (Black 2001: 484) of the burial: ‘He died shortly after at the age of 52 on June 2, 1768 and was buried with his forefathers at Balquhidder’. The author gave due consideration to this ‘trick of the tale’ from personal location knowledge, but just needed to check on a private burial ground before the village of Balquhidder. Hampered by lockdown, a knowledgeable elder, and a source of inspiration for Balquhidder was duly phoned and the relevant information given and doublechecked on Canmore: the private burial ground before Balquhidder (NN555206) is the Macgregor Murray Mausoleum, Auchtubh with the earliest memorial stone dated 1822 (Canmore n.d.). Ambiguity resolved.

However, it could be the Parish at the time incorporated Callander in its boundary, or it could be Ronald Black’s references resources has a misinterpretation of the burial ground location. Either way, no evidence to the contrary has been found to date. This could also be an entire research paper on its own, or a simple error that has gone unchecked for some time.

Appendix 16. Stank (NN582105), was a farm/settlement which was in existence from 1480, the tenant or landowner was Colin Ferguson, as evidenced in the Rentalia Domini Regis documents (1480: 561) (McNiven 2020). This is a really interesting name as it could be the Scots language had already made an impression in the hinterland by the mid 15th century (McNiven 2020). Stank in Scots has a few variations: ‘a pond/pool/semi-stagnant water overgrown with vegetation’ (late 14th century), ‘to dam’, ‘a burn straightened to serve as a boundary, or as a drainage course’ (late 15th
century), ‘the ground around a pool or pools’ (late 16th – 18th centuries), or perhaps reinterpreted by the Gaels as passageway over the burn (Scots Language Dictionary 2017: 680). There are others, but the aforementioned resonates with the fords. It could also have been a misinterpretation of Scottish Gaelic Stang, ‘standing water/pool/pond’, maybe for fish, and in Irish Gaelic, Stang was from Old Norse or English, a ‘small unit of land’ (McNiven 2020). Most certainly though, Stank has stood the test of time in the mapping and readily features on the modern OS maps. It is a good sounding word. Coincidentally, and from personal experience, Stank for the locals in St. Just, Cornwall, means a ‘good walk’ and Stankyow is to ‘tread’, stamp of foot’.

Appendice 17. ‘He-goat’. Historically, the scriptural depiction of the ‘he-goat’, heuran was twofold: that of strength and of impurity. It was said that ‘Robert the Bruce was impressed with the fortitude of the wild goats allowing him to share their cave whilst he was in hiding, and that once peace was restored, he granted all goats grass-mail, ‘free-grazing’. This is open to ambiguity but makes a good tale nevertheless (Forbes 2019 [1905]: 163 – 168).

Appendice 18. Sheep: which may, or may not be, a different spelling for Caoracheann. Very similar to Creag Chaoruinneach ‘Crag of the Rowan Tree Place’ and Caorrunn, mountain ash. Most likely down to the intricacies of the Gaelic language making a non-Gaelic speaker consider there is a similarity.

Appendice 19. Thigging: Òran do Chaora by Duncan Ban MacIntryre (1724 – 1812). This song, in An Lasair (2001), edited by Ronald Black, is said to be
the greatest thigging song of all times. Thigging is a different variety of bartering: in this situation it was used as an exchange of his knowledge, song and stories in return for wool, drink, food, hospitality on his travels. He has lost his sheep; therefore, his wool source and he has plenty to offer the people on his rounds of Glen Etive (Black 2001: 477).

Appendice 20. Laki Giga: the volcanic eruption in 1783, were the layers of toxic gaseous clouds to top the 'Little Ice Age' which lasted from about 1650 – 1850. They were called 'noxious dews' which led to widespread leeching and seepage causing environmental damage to grasslands, trees and waterways throughout most of Europe, and a precursor to the discontent in the run up to the French Revolution. For Scotland, it was the culmination of the Highland Clearances. Perhaps the British state had a fear of peasant and urban revolt with the harsh measures already instigated: the various reforms, economy drives and declines, an increase in population and the Victorian expansion (Beith 1995: 114, 260).