

RESPONSE (12/06/2001) BY IWAN WMFFRE TO SOME POINTS RAISED
IN A REPORT (01/03/2001) BY THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES PRESS'S
ANONYMOUS REVIEWER OF HIS WORK

THE PLACE-NAMES OF CARDIGANSHIRE (PNC)

(awarded a doctorate by the University of Wales in 1998)

In the first place I would like to express personal satisfaction that the work was appreciated – this really is my main response to the reviewer's comments. However, I have to respond to a number of remarks made in the commentary which comprises most of the 5-page report (with numbers added on left margin by me for clearer cross-referencing).

(1) no glossary

That the work as presented lacks a glossary of elements is evident. This can be interpreted as a great failing (by the reviewer) or an unimportant one (by myself). My obvious response (as is clear in PNC viii,xiv) is that a future volume will rectify any misgivings felt at the omission of a glossary with the present work. Incidentally the working title of the future volume is at present WELSH PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS and not THE PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS OF WALES as was noted by the reviewer – which may explain the rather defensive and puzzling statement that such a book would “seriously compromise the integrity of Board of Celtic Studies Place-name Survey of Wales”, but despite being on a place-name committee with other Welsh academics I know of no work in progress on a Welsh county that has been commissioned by the emergent Place-name Survey of Wales and my research – begun before its existence – was never carried out under its auspices. What am I to make of the concluding statement?:

Finally, the author's reference to his 'forthcoming Place-name Elements of Wales' (sic) continues to trouble me. The Board of Celtic Studies is urged to give this unilateral declaration immediate scrutiny and consider appropriate action in order to protect the integrity of the Board's Survey of the Place-names of Wales.

WELSH PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS (about 500 pages, most of which is written) was conceived of at the same time that I was working on my doctorate and is a readable discussion of the meaning of elements commonly found in Welsh place-names arranged by theme and not a dry glossary of place-name elements. As it is based on my work on Cardiganshire place-names I am not wholly against retitling it CARDIGANSHIRE PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS, but it also discusses Welsh place-names from all over Wales and contains enough material to merit the name WELSH PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS: I would like to see a solid reason for changing and not using this title. I would also be willing to append this volume to THE PLACE-NAMES OF CARDIGANSHIRE though this would increase the size of that work to over 2,000 pages, and the Board of Celtic Studies may think this excessive.

Notwithstanding this criticism I gave priority to the establishment and publication of the corpus as even without a glossary it will constitute a most useful reference tool from which further research can be attempted by historians, linguists, geographers, etc.

(2) methodology of explaining elements

A fuller explanation will appear when WELSH PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS is finished. It is true that providing an analysis of the components in each place-name does not always constitute a satisfactory explanation for a number of place-names - but in such cases it still constitutes a necessary preliminary. Since the meaning of many place-name elements varies imperceptibly from place-name to place-name

<i>nant</i>	=	'valley'	or	'stream'	
<i>ffrwd</i>	=	'stream'	or	'rapids'	or 'waterfall'
<i>mynydd</i>	=	'mountain'	or	'moor'	
<i>rhos</i>	=	'headland'	or	'moor'	

and it will not always be possible to decide the exact meaning (which is also a problem that affects lexicographers even when dealing with common words), it seems hardly practical for a toponymist to assign a definite meaning under each place-name heading. The only practical option in tackling with the meaning of common place-name elements is in a discussion separate from the corpus (whether it take the form of a glossary or of an ordinary book). Since the place-names in my work are located with fairly precise 6-figure grid references the reviewer's question as to whether *aber* means i) 'mouth of a river', ii) 'haven', or iii) 'confluence of one river with another' can be resolved by resort to easily-obtainable detailed OS maps (incidentally it can also be partially resolved by

avoiding misleading terminology: the common equation of *aber* with E. 'estuary' misleads people to neglect the overwhelming majority of instances of the term where it simply means 'discharge (of a watercourse into another body of water)' – the meaning 'confluence (of one watercourse with another)' is not pertinent to *aber*, but to *cymer*, when it is not obvious which watercourse is discharging into the other).

(3) introduction too long

The Introduction of 75 pages is seen as too long for the "lay reader". I am afraid I intended the Introduction for scholars. In view of the complexities of which I treat I do not really see how it is too long. It is necessary to understand the corpus (despite the fact that the reviewer examines things that are explicitly explained in the Introduction without referring to them). If it is indeed proved "unbalanced" I would appreciate some indications as to why and where it is unbalanced.

(4) too many cited forms

One could pull out some 15 forms from the 61 forms cited under *Aberteifi* but I contest the term "excessive" used by the reviewer. There are 34 forms for *Aberteifi* (of which the 9 repeated are in bold):

Aber Teiui *fl.*1150-90(c.1400), Aberteivi *c.*1191, Teifi Aber *fl.*1150-1200(c.1400), Aber Teiuy *fl.*1215(c.1400), Abertewy *c.*1286, Abertewi *c.*1286, Aberteiui *c.*1286, **Aberteivi** *c.*1286, Aberteyui *c.*1288, **Aber Teiui** 1300\$4, Caer Aber Teiui 1300¼, Aber Teifi 1300¼, **Aber Teifi** *c.*1400, Cardigan als Abertive 1448, **Aber Teifi** *fl.*1470, **Aberteivi** *c.*1475, **Aber Teifi** *c.*1566, Aber Teivi, **Aber Teifi** *c.*1569, o dre Aberteivi *c.*1600, Tre Aberteivi *c.*1600, **Aberteivi** *c.*1600, Aberteifi 1610, Abertive 1650, 'by the vulgar called' Abertivi 1684, Cardigan als Aber Teifi 1811, Cardigan, W. Aberteivy 1833, **Aberteifi** (Llandysul dialect) 1896, Abarteifi (Newcastle Emlyn dialect) *c.*1900, Aberteify 1907, 'Berteifi 1934, Abyrteifi 1990, Ybyrteifi 1990.

and 27 forms for *Cardigan* (of which the 5 repeated are in bold):

Kardivan 1214, Kaerdigan 1218, Kaerdinan 1223, Kardinan 1223, Kardigan 1229, 'villa' Cardigan 1231, **Cardigan** 1241, Cardygan 1253, 'castellum' Cardigan *c.*1286, Kardygan 1291, **Cardygan** 1300, Gardigan 1304, Villa de Cardigan 1352-53, Cardican 1407, Kerdigan 1422, Cardigan als Abertive 1448, 'vic.' Cardigañ 1497, Cairdigan 1539, Cardyganne 1539, Cardigan-town 1675, Caerdigan 1684, Cardgan 1759, **Cardigan** 1803, Cardigan als Aber Teifi 1811, Cardiga (sic) 1822, **Cardiga** (sic) 1832, **Cardigan**, W. Aberteivy 1833.

The reason for other apparent repeats are: i) I distinguish breaks/spaces or hyphens between elements, ii) an entry that contains an alias, iii) a further definition such as tref, castell, caer, villa, castellum, town, vicaria (in the corpus *Aberteifi* is a rather special case as it can refer to the county, the estuary, the town, the castle, the parish). In general I do not repeat a place-name form in the corpus except for map sources (from the eighteenth century onwards) or if the etymology is obscure and statistical differences in the incidence of various forms may help to formulate an etymology. If it comes from a toponymist the question "After all, how many ways of spelling *Aberteifi* and *Cardigan* can you have?" is strange: I have 25 for *Aberteifi* and 22 for *Cardigan*.

One should not forget that a place-name corpus can constitute an excellent starting-point for historical research and that a place-name corpus is more than just an etymological directory.

(5) discussion of etymologies

I fully accept that the derivation of *Cardigan* from *Ceredigion* should be discussed in a little more detail, and especially that the name *Ceredigion* itself be discussed more fully with comparable names (all this is straightforward for a Welsh toponymist, so much so that I forgot that it should be important to clarify to other people not aware of the construction).

I do not accept that going into (some) detail into the controversy on how *Ceredigion* rather than *Sir Aberteifi/Cardiganshire* became the official name of the county in 1972 and 1996 "has its proper place in a publication on regional history or in a chapter on linguistic politics". Rarely is such knowledge forthcoming as to how a certain name came to be used, and it is very enlightening as to the concepts people have on place-names. In this particular instance I am criticised for being out of focus or out of balance, but this is the viewpoint of an etymologist, and, as I will not tire of reiterating, the reduction of toponymic studies to mere etymologising consigns many important aspects of this science to an academic limbo.

(6) inappropriate language by author

The reviewer seems upset at my criticisms of aspects of others works (he writes "perilously close to transgressing conventions of academic propriety") because I wrote that "I felt it ... imperative ... to highlight imperfections" in B. G. Charles's *Place-names of Pembrokeshire* (PNC xli-xliv) and I show examples to demonstrate this:

- i) assignments of cited place-name forms in the wrong place which I termed 'sloppy'.
- ii) finding fault with the methodology adopted to explain the place-names.

I am also censured by the reviewer for disagreeing with opinions expressed by G. O. Pierce in 1953 and J. Loth in 1908 (PNC xxxi-xxxii) - but I stand by my criticism of these opinions. Somewhere I write of a “deplorable habit by some writers” and I name two authors “guilty” of this deplorable habit. The adjective “guilty” may be a little strong, but I do find some practices by other toponymists deplorable to a better understanding of place-names (however, as this particular piece no longer forms part of the present draft in my possession, I shall not elaborate any further).

In general terms, I do not accept that I can be faulted for criticising methodical failings (the terms I use can be discussed, but to deny voicing a criticism that results from research goes against scholarly integrity).

I fail to see what is wrong with explaining that collected newspaper cuttings in Aberystwyth Town Library are:

sometimes chaotic for reference purposes, but usually [found] under centre of population headings

There may be grounds for a change of phraseology concerning the 1843 Tithe Map of Llanwenog which is described as:

in a chaotic state, and one must go to the PRO to see another original duplicate, the NLW photocopy does not show the colour distinctions of the hamlet boundaries very well

Maybe I should have written that the map “is fragile and crumbling” instead of “in a chaotic state”.

(7) misleading statements by author

I agree wholeheartedly with the criticism that I give the impression that I have devised terms which for the most part already exist (notwithstanding that my definition of them may be novel), therefore I have changed:

“*specifier* is a term I have coined” & “*qualifier* is a term I have coined”, etc (i.e. *referent* & *positioner* also)

to the more neutral and less misleading

“I use *specifier* as a grammatical term to refer to ...” & “I use *qualifier* as a grammatical term to refer to ...”, etc

(8) uncommon abbreviations

I am censured for using different abbreviations from those found in the English Place-Name Society’s volumes (and those volumes that follow them in Wales). Despite not being quite satisfied with them as I would prefer abbreviations based on Greek terms such as *toponym*, *hydronym*, *hodonym*, which could then be easily adapted in other languages such as German, French, etc, I accept it may be rather premature at the stage when this book goes to the printers and I am quite willing to change the abbreviations in line with the reviewer’s recommendations, i.e.

<i>p.n.</i>	rather than	<i>tn.</i>
<i>r.n.</i>	rather than	<i>hn.</i>
<i>f.n.</i>	rather than	(<i>c</i>)
<i>pers.n.</i>	rather than	<i>pn.</i>

(9) traditional pronunciations

The reviewer dislikes the form taken by some of the headwords, my “personal interpretation occasionally impinges on, or appears to fly in the face of, (i) the perceived historical or philological data or (ii) standard modern forms”. I respond to these accusations of the reviewer below:

The reviewer criticises my use of the form *trympege* rather than *turnpike* (the English word from which it is derived). He is right to point out that with *Trympege-bach* (PNC p.62) the cited documentary forms all give *Turnpike bach* 1832, what he fails to realise is that the form of 1832 is clearly a Welsh place-name (because of the following specifier *bach*) and that the only form for ‘turnpike’ in Cardiganshire Welsh is *trympege* and not **tyrnpeic*, he is misled by the outward aspect of the extant documentary forms of the period which favoured English over Welsh despite local realities - it has been a fundamental aim of my research to scratch beneath the surface of appearances. In repeating the criticism in the case of another place-name noted *Trympege* as head-word (PNC p.1243) against the documentary forms *Turn Pike* 1814, *Turnpike* 1841, the reviewer ignores the fact that I collected [trəmpege] locally. The reviewer clearly does not understand the import of traditional pronunciations, and congratulates himself in having illustrated several times from examples in my work “the dangers of according undue weight to the modern forms at the expense of the documentary evidence”.

I am also censured for writing *Laca* (PNC p.27) rather than *Llaca* and for not understanding it as containing the term *llaca* ‘mud, dirt’. The reviewer convinces himself of the veracity of his interpretation by conveniently ignoring the fact that the pronunciation of this place-name is [laka] whilst the common enough word for ‘mud, dirt’ is [ħaka]. One cannot ignore the fact that the securely attested local pronunciation is *Laca* and not *Llaca* as the development of initial <ll-> to <l-> is not a normal development in south-western Welsh (the historical forms by which the reviewer puts so much store would have us write **Llochdyn* rather than *Lochdyn* [lɔxtɪn] (*Llochdyn* 1750/51, 1750/52 vs. *Lochdyn* 1752/53, obscure etymology, PNC p.307) and is patently incorrect in

the case of a number of historical documentary forms of the common place-name *Logyn* [lɔɡɪn] – derived from *Halogyn* – e.g. *Llogyn* (1811 N.Carlisle sub Tre Castell), *Velindre Llogyn* 1635 (1992 PN Pembs. pp.15, 75-76)). I am fully aware that whether the original etymology is based on **laca* or *llaca* we are facing the same word, in origin, derived from E. ‘lake’, it is unfair of the reviewer to make it seem as if I rule out the meaning ‘mud, dirt’ altogether, as a defence I will here repeat the entry under *Laca* in full as it appears:

This has obviously been interpreted as *llaca* which means ‘loose mud’ [1860 AC p.61]; and this seems to suit its coupling with *gwydd* ‘goose’, cf. *Waunbawgwydda* 1809 (Gwaun Pentir, Llanddeiniolen, Cams.) [in 1952 D.Thomas p.50]. However, the pronunciation *laka*, rather than *laka* (cf. Trellaca, 2-a), may point to this place originally being named E. *lake* (OE. *lacu* ‘stream’), which was “the usual term for a stream in Pembrokeshire where it is commonly found in place-names. It also occurs in Glamorganshire.” [1938 B.G.Charles p.291], the stream in question being the tributary of the *Mwldan* (d) that descends from *Laca*, past *Ty-hen* (1-a) to *Cwmbared* (1-a); cf. *Llec* (80-b).

I write *Blac-hors* (PNC p.67), the reviewer contends the only historical form is *Black Horse* 1855 - though I should say *Black Horse Inn* to be pedantic. However, he ignores [blak'hɔrs] the collected spoken form which deserves equal consideration with the 1855 form. In fact there is no real conflict as I followed a policy, clearly explained in the introductory chapter on Spelling Guidelines (esp. lxx-lxxiv), that I would welshify spellings when I felt certain that this was their form amongst the native Welsh-speaking community. The reviewer either ignores this policy or rather he disagrees with it (it is not made clear) and this explains his unease at the spelling of *Pen-hul* (PNC p.199) and *Rhos-hul* (PNC p.213) for what is respectively found in the historical record *Penhill* 1801 or *Pen-hill* 1834 or *Pen-hil* 1891 and *Rhos-hill* 1982 – quite simply *hill* is the English spelling of the word which must be respelt *hul* (or even better *hül*) to accord with Welsh orthographic conventions (the Flintshire *Rhyl* shows such an attempt at welshification, though it would be better written *Rhul* or *Yr Hul*). The logic for such a spelling may not seem clear to the casual reader, but it is explained and justified in the chapter on Spelling Guidelines (lxiv-lxv). The only argument against such a spelling is conservatism which favours an English spelling, in the vocabulary of the Welsh language such conservatism has in the twentieth century slowly been giving way in a number of words now commonly spelt according to Welsh orthographic conventions as with *Y Ffôr* (Caernarvonshire) for what was once *Four Crosses* (see PNC lxxii-lxxiii).

Concerning *Laca*, the reviewer’s concluding sentence: “The author [i.e. myself] is obliged to explain the modern pronunciation *Laca*, not base an etymology on it.” seems to show that he does not think a “modern” [read ‘traditional’] pronunciation has anything to do with finding an etymology for a place-name. My contention – and this was proved to me long ago by J. Loth’s seminal study of Breton saints that appeared in volumes 29 and 30 of the *Revue Celtique* (1908, 1909) – is that traditional pronunciations can be all-important in deciding upon the etymology of an obscure place-name, a fact that was evident to such eminent Welsh scholars as J. Rhys, E. Phillimore, Ifor Williams, etc. It is incorrect to assume that I base my etymology on the traditional pronunciation alone, I have based my etymologies – as is abundantly clear in my corpus – on both documentary forms and traditional pronunciation. One could compare my method to standing upon two feet whilst ‘traditional’ Welsh toponymists for the most part seem to prefer standing upon one foot. My feeling – based on dealings with most contemporary toponymists in Wales - is that if they have by-and-large mastered the documentary approach the same cannot be said for their approach to fieldwork. They seem content to bypass this rich source which gives information not only about pronunciation, but actually leads to discoveries of new place-names, new aliases, ignored by documentary evidence, as well as new insights as to the meaning of words. This oversight (it cannot be described as anything else when one considers the new developments in the discipline of toponymic studies since the 1980s) goes against the background of risking losing access forever what will prove to be irretrieval information concerning place-names. Faced with such a loss of information I have a duty to criticise what I consider incomplete and faulty methodology on the part of fellow toponymists (despite the risk of being seen only as “chiding, berating” as does the reviewer).

(10) standard modern forms

I am also censured for using a dialectal form *trympeɡ* (rather than *tyrpeɡ*?) and not that found in GPC. This is – I’m afraid – an amateurish argument that betrays the reviewer’s lack of knowledge concerning this particular word:

- i) the relevant entry for Welsh forms of ‘turnpike’ have not yet been reached by GPC who have at present only reached *teithi*, which means that there is as yet no guidance from GPC as to which spelling constitutes the form of reference.
- ii) *trympeɡ* is labelled “dialectal” (it is south-western), but then so is *tyrpeɡ* (northern) and *tyrpiɡ* (south-eastern). And whilst I agree that not all dialectal variation can or needs to be shown when spelling place-names, it is important to note that in this case the three forms *trympeɡ* ~ *tyrpeɡ* ~ *tyrpiɡ* are independent developments from E. ‘turnpike’: therefore *trympeɡ* is not derived from *tyrpeɡ* (nor vice-versa) and thus deserves a separate entry in GPC in much the same way as *chwarel* and *cwarre* have separate entries in that dictionary.

Why should there be such problems with the terms *ffyrndy*, *cwarre*, *crwys*, *magwyr*? They are all found in GPC. It is true that in certain cases I do not agree with GPC or commonly accepted Welsh literary conventions, the reviewer notes this much under the following place-names:

- iii) *Nantpopdy* (PNC p.211): why not *popty* as in GPC asks the reviewer. The answer is given in (PNC lxviii-lxix) and has to do with reducing the inconsistencies of Welsh orthography which generally has stops following unvoiced consonants.
- iv) *Meudrfair* (PNC p.16): why not *Feudrfair* asks the reviewer. This is fairly easy to explain. Since about the early eighteenth century Welsh feminine nouns in place-names have demonstrated what I term 'anomalous lenition', that is to say an unjustifiable or ungrammatical soft-mutation, thus *cors* + pers.n. *Einion* should in southern Wales give *Corseinon* though we find *Gorseinon* (Glams.). In each case I have reinstated the radical consonant in the appropriate grammatical context thus agreeing with Welsh grammar and going back to the system that obtained in the seventeenth century and before (*Gorseinon* is never found mutated as **Orseinon*). The same obtains with the word *meudr*, *feudr* simply being the 'anomalous lenition' of the word, the attested plural *meidri* stands for *meudrydd* and means that the radical consonant is <*m*-> (that it was originally *beudr* should be of no more consequence than that the words *bawd* & *moes* were originally *mawd* & *boes*). *Meudrfair* and (Y) *Feudrlas* are the correct forms of *meudr* (pl. *meudrydd*) the place-names in the same way as *Corswgan* and (Y) *Gorslas* are the correct forms of *cors* (pl. *corsydd*). That the spoken language turned *Meudrfair* and *Corswgan* to *Feudrfair* and *Gorswgan* is not without interest, but should be relegated to a sub-literary usage unless we want to further complicate Welsh mutation rules.
- v) *Rhydlywys* (PNC p.161); why not *Rhydlewys* asks the reviewer. Simply because *Lewis* is the late and anglicised form of what was formerly *Lywys* and the Medieval spellings *Lewis* found even in Welsh documents are simply carrying over from English as was the spelling *Thomas*. That the ending was <*-ys*> is shown by the correct spellings of *Morris*, *Francis* in Welsh *Morys*, *Ffransys*, that it became <*-is*> is due to the preceding <*w*> as we find in the colloquial northern pronunciations of *llewys*, *blewyn* as *llewis*, *blewin*. There is a tendency to go against such a spelling as *Lywys*, and those who would advocate a form more consonant with Welsh orthographical conventions have to demonstrate why *Lywys* is preferable to *Lewis* and in this case this was done (see PNC lxvi). It is nobody's fault that the reviewer did not see this, for the work does contain 1,663 pages – but I hope that it demonstrates that in every case (barring some slips) I have a reason for any variant spelling.
- vi) *Graigddu* v. *Graig-goch* (PNC pp.972,938). why the discrepancy in the hyphenation of these two names asks the reviewer. The answer is given in (PNC li-lv) where I demonstrate the limitations of placing hyphens to mark the accentuation and decide to opt for dispensing with the hyphen as a marker of accentuation in place-names (I am not alone in having reservations on the use of hyphens in Welsh place-names). Nevertheless, the hyphen is still needed in a number of cases such as separating identical consonants, thus I write *Graig-goch* rather than the unsightly *Graiggoch*.
- vii) *Felinlif* and *Felin-wynt* (PNC p.947). Mea culpa! The form should have been written *Felinwynt* by me.
- viii) the reviewer states that I write "*aplab* I write indifferently" whereas what I actually write is "I write *ab* indifferently [for *ablap*]" (PNC lxviii).
- ix) *Talsarn* [tal + y + sarn]; [tal'sarn], *Tal-sarn* 1891 (PNC p.149): the reviewer asks why have I put the definite article *y/yr* in the lexical breakdown of this place-name. This is a fair question, but one which unfortunately leads to a complex and vexed discussion as to the appearance of the definite article *y/yr* in Welsh toponyms. I devote a chapter to this question in my *WELSH PLACE-NAME ELEMENTS*. Nevertheless I should give a succinct answer to the query. It is possible that there was never a definite article in this place-name, however I think 1891 is too late a date to enable one to conclusively assert that there was no definite article. In deciding whether there was an article or not I therefore fell back on analogy with other identical and similar names. The better attested *Talsarn* (PNC p.695) has the article in numerous examples since 1541, and the numerous examples of *Talbont*, *Talfan*, *Talgarreg* all presuppose *tâl* to be followed by an article, thus despite no actual attestation of the article I decided, on the balance of probabilities that there indeed was an article here at an earlier date.

The view of the reviewer is akin to regarding the *Gazeteer of Welsh Place-names* (1957), and *Welsh Administrative and Territorial Units* (1969) as unquestionable authorities for the spelling of Welsh place-names (the main difference, to do with hyphenation, is treated above under (11:vi-vii)). As to the authority of these books I beg to differ and demonstrate this by pointing out some obvious failings in the 1957 book (PNC li). It seems improbable that there have been no advances in knowledge since 1957 and 1969, and it is hardly scientific method to unquestioningly accept certain 'facts' of yore that have gained wide acceptance. The reviewer's aims are obviously to have a standardised form of spelling place-names and the head-words in toponymic books must adhere to the standardised forms (in fact, he wants my work to be "more authoritative"). I, on the other hand, do

envisage my head-words as constituting an authoritative form, but rather to constitute as true a reflection of the place-names as I can manage with reference to Welsh orthographic conventions and the traditional Welsh of Cardiganshire. In a very few cases I have differed from GPC and commonly accepted twentieth century Welsh literary convention, but there has always been a reason and it is always clearly stated by me (the subtraction of the circumflex from a few examples of <wy> – i.e. *gwydd* ‘goose’, *gwyl* ‘festival’, *wy* ‘egg’ (reasons given PNC lxi) can hardly be taken as constituting insuperable difficulties for someone looking for the word in a dictionary as the GPC form is always given in the lexical breakdown (as is made clear in PNC lxxv), i.e. *Carreg Gwylfihangel* is analysed as [carreg + gwyl + pn. Mihangel]). I am accused of “unilaterally determining an alternative system” – when – I argue – that I am in fact “proposing” a few differing “conventions”. Now it is true that no committee helped me come to these conclusions, but my conclusions are the result of much reflection and wide research over a period of over 15 years, and, without casting aspersions on the few contemporary Welsh toponymists known to me, it is evident from my research that I am more of a phonetician, a dialectologist and a historical philologist than they. The great reverence in which the English Place-name Survey (EPNS) is held by a number of Welsh toponymists seems to reflect a constricted horizon that does not look further than England. I have been inspired by toponymic work carried out in the other Celtic countries and in North-America rather than by the English Place-name Survey (see PNC xxxii). Indeed the EPNS is fine but it is a fallacy to state, as some Welsh toponymists have done, that it has established a methodological pattern that needs no improvement, the past twenty years have seen criticism of the EPNS from within. The reviewer insinuates misleadingly that “following the author’s practice would lead to each county devising its own philosophy and its own convention” - my proposals in noting Welsh place-names are not bound to the confines of Cardiganshire and are equally applicable (if found acceptable) to the rest of Welsh Wales. The threat of atomisation, balkanisation of Welsh implicit in this particular sentence seems to imply that my work once formed part of a greater Welsh Place-names Survey and that I had seceded unilaterally: this has no relationship to reality, my work was undertaken ‘independently’ and never had a connection with the since established Welsh Place-name Survey (indeed ‘independently’ is the wrong word, as I am hardly aware of its existence and, despite being on an academic Welsh place-name committee, I have no idea what new research that Survey is planning).

(11) pejorative or ‘loaded’ adjectives used by reviewer

I very much dislike being described dismissively as a “young scholar” – I am 35 at present – who comes to decisions “unilaterally” and who needs to enter into a constructive dialogue with “another, perhaps more experienced, place-name scholar”. Without questioning others’ experience in this field I can quite confidently state that I am as experienced as any place-name scholar in Wales, due – not in the least – to:

- i) the extent of my collection of place-name forms (methodically covering 10% of Welsh place-names).
- ii) having thoroughly absorbed and minutely assessed all the writings of my predecessors (barring some inevitable oversights).
- iii) having given my collection a far sounder linguistic basis than is usual in toponymic surveys.

At the very end of his report is the reviewer’s call for the Board of Celtic Studies to take “appropriate action” – against me (?) – just because I have mentioned the title of a book I am working on. This is most bizarre. Have I broken and betrayed the code of honour of some sort of terrible secret society? This was certainly not on my mind when I embarked upon the study of Welsh place-names in the mid 1980s.

(12) author’s conclusion to his response

Let me conclude that what I have attempted to do with my research is to collect Cardiganshire place-names to the satisfaction of historians, geographers, and linguists, as well as demonstrating new approaches to toponymy chief of which as can be guessed is the incorporation of fieldwork and the methodical collecting of data (not only linguistic) from inhabitants of the locality. I believe I have demonstrated in the above pages that far fewer changes are required to this work than the reviewer recommends. Indeed, some of his recommendations would entail losing advances in toponymic method that I would like to see widely adopted in Welsh toponymic studies and would impinge on scholarly integrity.

I am not at all closed to discussing points concerning my conclusions and presentation and would like to insist that despite my criticisms of some aspects of other people’s work that I am not at all unappreciative of their work, whether published or still in progress. I must end by thanking the reviewer for such a substantial report that is obviously the result of much thinking and work on his part, and I also thank him for graciously granting permission for me to see it and think it only right and proper that he in turn should see my response.