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The synod which met at Elgin in 1634 was informed by the moderator of the presbytery of Aberlour that many of the 'loose' people of that presbytery, especially of the parishes of Aberlour and Inveravon, convened at a well called *Tapper Donigh* in Kilnmaichlie (in the latter parish) on four sundry Sabbaths, where there was nothing but abuse and profanation of the Sabbath – a particular irony, of course, as the Gaelic name means 'Well of Sunday' or the 'Sabbath'. The first edition of the 6-inch map marks a *Chapel Well* at Chapelton of Kilnmaichlie (opposite Drumin Castle) and this may be the very *Tapper Donigh* to which resort was forbidden in the 17th century, for at the same site are the foundations of what is reputed to be an ancient Catholic church – there were still old headstones visible in its graveyard in 1794 (OSA), and the adjacent steep-sided bank of the Avon is still known as *Craig an Donich*, which the OSNB entry translates as "Craig of the Chapel," quite rightly noting that in earlier Gaelic, *donich* could mean 'church, chapel,' as well as 'Sunday' – i.e. 'the Lord's house,' as well as 'the Lord's day.'

One of the instructions to the Presbytery of Dingwall from the Commission of Auldearn in 1649 was to compel parishioners *to refraine from goeing to wells on the Lordes day*, and there is evidence to show that the "four sundry Sundays", alluded to by the moderator of Aberlour, were the first Sundays in each quarter of the traditional Celtic year, the first in the months of November, February, May and August, and especially the two latter, around Beltane and Lammas. Similarly, particular Sundays were also favoured for visits to St. Fergan's well (near Kirkmichael), especially the first Sunday in May and Easter Sunday. In my area, the first edition of the 6-inch map marks a *Tobar na Sabaide* (Well of the Sabbath), just south of Grantown – a beautiful sylvan spring, seemingly quite forgotten.

One of the instructions issued to the First edition OS field-examiners was to ascertain whether any well they recorded was regarded as a *holy* well. As might be expected, several wells in my area were, and bear the name of some – usually obscure and very local – saint. Such a saint is Luag or – with hypocoristic prefix – *Mo-luag*. There was a croft named after him at Raitts in Badenoch, and he was the patron of churches at Mortlach, Clatt and Tarland in Aberdeenshire, as early as the twelfth century. There was also a chapel and well dedicated to him near Clova in the same county, though – inevitably -- both were assimilated to the far better known St. *Luke*. Lachlan Shaw, the eighteenth-century historian of Moray, states that Luag was patron of Cromdale too, and marked on the 1st ed 6" OS map at Boat of Cromdale is a *Tobar Ma Luaig*. It is a small, natural spring, close to the River Spey, and was, until recently, used by the occupants of the Boat of Cromdale, as a water supply. It has since silted up, and appears as a damp patch of sand, through which a small trickle of water seeps. "Was it regarded as a holy well?" one of the OS revisers has asked in the Name Book – but answer came there none. Given the saintly connexion, however, it seems certain that it was.

Malcolm Jones (from his talk at the May 2013 conference)

AIDAN MACDONALD M.A. (Cantab), M.Litt. (Oxon), F.S.A. Scot., 1941-2013

The archaeologist and early medieval historian Aidan MacDonald died on 4th June 2013. What follows is in no way a full obituary, but rather a short tribute, focussing on his toponymic work, and a first attempt at presenting a full bibliography. Most of the following biographical details are taken from his Groam House Lecture publication (1992). He was brought up in Cambridge, studied first at Cambridge, then completed a two-year post-graduate diploma in Celtic Studies at Oxford. His first publications (1968 and 1970) were a direct product of his work at the Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works in Edinburgh. He was involved in research work for a number of years, being attached to the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh. From 1978 until his retiral in 2000 he worked as a lecturer in Archaeology at University College Cork, and made his home in the town of Carrigaline (*Carraig Uí Leighin*), 14 km south of Cork. He had strong family connections with Cromarty, where he inherited a house, where he spent most of his time in the vacations, and which, in his Groam House Lecture publication, he also describes as his home.

Over his long career, Aidan made a unique and enduring contribution to our understanding of the early medieval insular world. A brief glance at his bibliography shows that he had a special interest in Iona, and the way in which this pre-eminent early ecclesiastical and political power-

house interacted with the material world. He also had a nuanced and sophisticated approach to place-names, and early on recognised their importance as a way of understanding the pre-documentary age of Scottish political, social and ecclesiastical history. Between 1973 and 1979 he wrote articles on three ecclesiastical place-name elements which continue to exercise scholars today: *annat*, *cill* and *papar*, the last of which, Old Norse *papar*, has inspired a whole project, the Papar Project (see http://www.paparproject.org.uk/). His series of articles in the *Bulletin of the Ulster Place-name Society* (later *Ainm*) on various elements in Scottish place-names, such as *dùn*, *lios* and *ràth*, written at a time when the study of place-names was seen as more peripheral by the archaeological community than it is today, deserve to be far better known than they are. Aidan had in fact agreed to revise them for publication in the *Journal of Scottish Name Studies*, and this is a project I would still very much like to see come to fruition. While his discussion of individual names can often be augmented and refined in the light of more recent findings, his basic argument, that Pictish substrate influence can be identified in the usage and application of Gaelic elements in the place-names of eastern Scotland, remains valid and worthy of extensive and robust testing.

Aidan MacDonald is the kind of scholar whose work will increase, rather than decrease in relevance and value as the present renaissance of interest in early medieval Scotland continues to flourish. SPNS members who attended the November 2011 conference in Dingwall will remember his talk 'Curadan-Boniface Revisited'. Because of his poor health, he asked for a chair to sit on while he was speaking, and the only one that could be found was a grand, wooden, throne-like arm-chair, a *cathedra* worthy of Boniface himself. It was a most fitting platform for what may well have been the last time this unique scholar gave a public lecture.

As a token of just how highly his scholarship is regarded, former colleagues at University College Cork are in the process of bringing to publication his last work, a book on Iona and the shrine of Columba 800-1200.

A Bibliography of Aidan D. S. MacDonald

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I am most grateful to Cormac Bourke, Isabel Henderson and Máire Herbert for help in compiling this tribute and bibliography. If anyone is aware of any of his publications not included here, please let me know.

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PLACE NAMES OF BEAULY, THE AIRD AND STRATHGLASS

Plans are afoot for a new place name publication deriving from the 2001-2 AHRB Project by Barbara Crawford and Simon Taylor on "The Southern Frontier of Norse Settlement in North Scotland". The focus of that investigation was to identify and locate names of Norse origin in the Beauly, Strathglass and Aird area of Inverness-shire, in the hope of shedding more light on the extent and nature of Norse influence in this area. In the event, very little of Norse, or possibly Norse, origin was found to add to the southernmost certain example (Eskadale) which is located in that area, but a wealth of mainly Gaelic names were recorded and a valuable resource produced in the resulting Survey of the Place Names of Beauly, the Aird and Strathglass. The Survey has since been available online (http://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/beauly/) but it was always the hope that funding would be found to publish the survey in book form with the aim of making it more accessible to the general public both within the area and generally.

What is intended is an approximately 400 page book which, though not necessarily hard back would be robust enough to take out into the field. The data would be updated and arranged alphabetically by the three pre 1975 parishes covered by the survey: Kilmorack, Kiltarlity and Convinth, and Kirkhill. The book would also contain Simon Taylor's detailed Introduction, which would also have the maps provided in the present online Word version. An appendix would reprint for a wider audience the article: Crawford, Barbara E., and Taylor, Simon, 2003, 'The Southern Frontier of Norse Settlement in North Scotland: Place-Names and History', *Northern Scotland* 23, 1-76, which presents Barbara Crawford's Historical Introduction. The online pictures, showing various locations in the study area, would, it is hoped, be included in the book. Once estimates have been obtained funding will be applied for.

Working on the project are Simon Taylor, Jake King and Ron MacLean who at this stage will welcome any suggestions from members for additional material or corrections. All corrections and additions to the data on the website should be sent to Simon Taylor (email address as above).

Ronald MacLean

In Europe from northern Norway to the Balkans, road signs with names deemed alien by militant guardians of linguistic uniformity are notoriously liable to fall victim to ethnic, religious or political grudges and prejudices.

No surprise then to read that at Vukovar in Croatia, site in 1991 of a massacre by Serb militiamen, an attempt at reconciliation by providing signs with names in Cyrillic script as used by Serbs, as well as Roman as used by Croats, has been frustrated by destruction of the signs; perhaps more remarkable that the introduction of Gaelic to trunk road signs in Caithness has apparently been found so offensive that nothing less than blasting with a shotgun would suffice as punishment or deterrent.

GAELIC PLACE-NAMES WORKSHOP AT ULVA PRIMARY SCHOOL, MULL

This pilot workshop on Monday 13 May 2013, organised under the auspices of the Gaelic on Mull (GOM) project, a schools and community cohesion initiative exploring Gaelic language and culture on the island, was held in Ulva Primary in the parish of Kilninian & Kilmore (KKE). The school has a roll of eleven pupils, eight of whom were present on the day. The morning session involved discussion on the value of place-names in understanding history, language and landscape, on place-name formation and on some of the sources available for the local area, including the available online mapping. Before lunch, the pupils were invited to talk about the place-names in their own individual areas and some of the stories surrounding them.