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CAISEAL, CATHAIR, DÙN, LIOS AND *RÀTH* IN SCOTLAND: 3*

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3. Lios.

As a lexical item, early Irish *les* (masc.) is, primarily, "the space about a dwelling-house or houses enclosed by a bank or rampart", and is so used in both secular and ecclesiastical contexts; then, sometimes, "the bank or rampart" itself (*Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language* L, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin 1966: 2 *les*). In modern Scots Gaelic, *lios* is: garden; house. habitation; palace; fortified place; enclosure or stall for cattle (all these meanings, except the first, are obsolete); court (Armstrong's Gaelic Dictionary—mid Perthshire): it is usually fem., but seems to be dialectally masc. (Dwelly 1949, *lios*).

As a place-name generic, *lios* does not seem to be at all common in Scotland, though a systematic search of the Ordnance Survey Name Books would undoubtedly add to the list. As usual, the basis of collection here has been Watson (1926) and the 1 in. index of the Place-Name Survey, School of Scottish Studies. This gives a maximum total of thirteen names only, distributed by counties as follows: Aberdeeen (5); Argyll (1); Ayr (2); Banff (1); Lanark (1); Moray (1); Midlothian–West Lothian (1); Wigtown (1). There is thus a NE group—Aberdeen, Banff and Moray—accounting for seven of the names; and a SW group—Ayr, Lanark and Wigtown—accounting for four; with a single instance each in the W (Argyll) and the SE (Lothian). It should again be emphasized that all these names have been identified on the basis of their modern forms in the first instance; and that, while the majority seem quite

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Both the present article and 'Notes on Scots Clachan' (pp. 83–95 below) were submitted to the late Deirdre Flanagan for publication in the *Bulletin of the Ulster Place-Name Society* shortly before her death in 1984. The author would now like to dedicate both papers to her memory.

safe, one or two of the more obscure names may have to be rejected (see below).

In the descriptive treatment of the *lios* names that follows, a general reference to the OS Archaeology Division's 6 in. working sheets and accompanying card index system is to be understood, save where explicit references are given in the text. The writer has, once again, the pleasant duty of acknowledging his indebtedness and expressing his gratitude to Mr. Jim Davidson and his colleagues in the Archaeology Division, George Street, Edinburgh, for their unfailing courtesy, not only in allowing him access to their archive material, but also in terms of the time they have so generously given him in discussion, help and advice.[1] No attempt has been made here to standardize measurements. "6 in." stands for both the OS 6 in. to 1 mile sheets and their metric equivalent.

RMS below is *Registrum Magni Sigilli Regum Scotorum: The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland.* Ed. J.M. Thomson, J.B. Paul, et al. 11 vols. Edinburgh 1882-1914. No attempt has been made here to collect earlier name-forms systematically, let alone exhaustively.

The NE group.

1. **Lesmoir** (Rhynie), Aberdeen. Pronounced Les-more, stressed on -more; old spellings, Los-, Lis- Lesmoir (Alexander 1952, 320). Lesmoir, 1561 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 2637); Losmoir, 1543 (1578), 1576 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 2814). Gaelic (or gaelicized) *lios mór*—cf. Lismore (below).

At Castle of Lesmoir (site of), NJ 470280, is (1967) a probable motte and bailey—the motte now badly damaged and overgrown, the raised bailey better preserved and now retained by a drystone wall—later replaced by a stone castle, of which very little survives. 450m to SW of Lesmoir Castle is Essie church (site of), NJ 466278, a medieval parish church (Cowan 1967, 62), later merged with Rhynie: there is apparently no trace of the church now, but the graveyard was still in use in 1967.[2]

[1] Since this was originally written, the OS Archaeology Division has been closed down. Its staff and most of its archive have been transferred, if the writer remembers correctly, to the National Monuments Record of Scotland.

[2] According to Scottish regnal lists DFG and I, and the Verse Chronicle inserted in the Chronicle of Melrose, Lulach, who reigned briefly in Scotland 1057–58, between Macbeth and Malcolm III, was killed at Essie in Strathbogie: *Esseg*, DFG; *Esseth*, I (A.O. Anderson, *Early Sources of Scottish History, A.D. 500 to 1286*, Edinburgh 1922, I, 603–04). Essie is Esseg in Strabolgin, D; Essei in Strathbolgi, F (Esseg in Strathbologia—variant reading in Harleian 4628); Esseth in Strathbolgin, I (M.O. Anderson, *Kings and Kingship in Early Scotland*, Edinburgh and London 1973, 268, 276, 284). In Strathbolgyn aput Essy, with the variant reading Esseg, in Skene's edition of the Verse Chronicle (W.F. Skene, *Chronicles of the Picts, Chronicles of the Scots, etc.*, Edinburgh 1867, 180).

2. **Lessendrum** (Drumblade), Aberdeen. Stressed on -drum: Lessyndrom, 1364; Lessindrum, 1551 (Alexander 1952, 320). Lossyndrum, Lossindrum, 1413 (RMS, 1306–1424, no. 942); Laschindrum, 1493 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 2152); Lossindrum, 1403–13 (1512) (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 3799); Lossindrum, 1516–17 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 129); Lessindrum, 1567 (RMS, 1580–1593, no. 339); Lessindrum, 1612 (RMS, 1609–1620, no. 774). Gaelic (or gaelicized?) *lios an droma*: this name looks like a fairly recent formation; possibly an older specific has been replaced.

The mansion house of Lessendrum, at NJ 578415, is said to date as far back as 1470, but it was enlarged in the early 19th century: it was ruinous in 1961. Lessendrum is situated on the NW slopes of a ridge running NNE–SSW, at the foot of the E slope of which is Drumblade church, rather over a mile to SE at NJ 588402. Drumblade was a medieval parish (Cowan 1967, 48). If the ridge is the *druim* that gives the parish name its generic (and the name Drumblade does not appear to be attached to any other natural feature in the vicinity on the present OS 6 in. sheet), then Lessendrum may well be the *lios* of Drumblade, with the church site across the ridge from it. "It (Lessendrum) is upon the same ridge as Drumblade presumably gets its name from" (Alexander 1952, 320). "... the Drum- in Drumblade probably refers to the conspicuous ridge in the centre of the parish. Lessendrum, situated on this ridge, seems to also contain reference to it" (ibid., 261). Compare "terras baronie de Drumblate, cum superioritate de Laschindrum ... in baronia de Drumblate, vic. Abirdene" 1493 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 2152). As to the specific element in the name Drumblade, the name is pronounced in the local dialect Drumblate, -blade, -blate taking the stress. It is ... Drumblate, 1438; Drumblaitt, 1567; Drumblate, 1696. Alexander regarded the -blade element as obscure and, beyond suggesting possible comparison with Monbletton, Plaidy, Forest of Platane, ventured no etymology. (See Alexander 1952, 261). It is also "baronia de Drumblathe, Drumblate", 1413 (RMS, 1306–1424, no. 942); "baronia de Drumblate", 1493 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 2152); "baronia de Drumblate", 1403–13 (1512) (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 3799); "Baronia de Drumblate", also Drumblait, 1516–17 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 129); Drumblait, 1549 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 623); Drumblate, 1612 (RMS, 1609–1620, no. 774). It seems to the present writer that the element might conceivably be related to that also appearing in Pitbladdo, Fife—Petblatho, 1481, 1492; Petblado, 1494—containing either

Gaelic *bláth-*, or, originally, a word more closely cognate with Welsh *blawd*, "blossom, bloom", or "flour". Compare probably Bladebolg, 1144—Blebo in Fife—and Romano-British Blatobulgium. (See Watson 1926, 410–11; on Blatobulgium, "flour-sack"(?), the Roman fort at Birrens, Dumfries, see further Rivet & Smith 1979, 268–9). The reference might be to an early function of Drumblade as a centre of collection for local dues in agricultural produce, or of milling, or both.[3]

3. **Auchterless** (Auchterless), Aberdeen. Uchtirlys, 1211; Ochterlys, 1358; Ouchtirlys, 1366; Uchterles, 1499; Ochterless, 1606 (Alexander 1952, 157). Also, Ochtyrless, 1163 (a spurious charter: Barrow 1960, 258–9, no. 237); Vchtirlys, 1203 × 1206, prob. 1205 (Barrow 1971, 430, no. 466); Wictirlys, 1203 × 1207 (ibid., 439, no. 477); Wechterlis, 1209 × 1211, prob. 1211 (17th cent.) (ibid., 452, no. 497). Gaelic *uachdar lis(e)*, *leas(a)*, *lios(a)*, "upland of the lios". *Lios* here may at one time have had a qualifying element: but the fact that it has not been qualified in the whole of the record period may underline its local importance.

Kirktown of Auchterless is on the R. Ythan, the church being situated at NJ 713415. Just to NE of the church, at NJ 714416, is "Moathead"—reputedly the scene of a baronial court where criminals were tried and taken to Gallows Hill for execution, according the the New Statistical Account, 1840. It is (1973) the ploughed-down remains of a motte on the brink of a steep, SE-facing escarpment and consists of a denuded mound about 27m in diameter and 1.5m in height, surrounded on NE, NW and SW by an ill-defined ditch averaging 15m wide and 0.6m deep, which is overlaid in the NW sector by a farmyard extension. Auchterless was a medieval parish, the church being confirmed to the bishop of Aberdeen in 1157 (Cowan 1967, 10).

[3] Compare, perhaps, Druimm-Derg-Blathuug, the site of a battle between Picts on both sides in 729 (Anderson, *Early Sources* (as above, note 2), I, 226). The site was in Pictland—Bellum Dromo Dergg Blathuug in regionibus Pictorum, Annals of Ulster 729.3 (ed. S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill, Dublin 1983, 182); and cf. Annals of Clonmacnoise as quoted by Anderson, l.c. Skene mentions the Redhead of Angus, near Kinblethmont, as a possible identification of 'Dromaderg Blathmig' (*sic*), though the suggestion does not seem to be his own originally (Skene 1876–80, i, 289). He draws attention to the fact that "Dromaderg Blathmig means 'the red ridge of Blathmig'" (n. 21): actually, the name Kinblethmont may contain the element under discussion here—"Kinblethmont, Inverkeillor, is Kinblathmont, 1531 (RMS), 'head of Blathmont', i.e. *blàthmhonadh*, which may mean either 'smooth mount' (*blàith*), or 'flower mount' (*bláth*)" (Watson 1926, 403). Otherwise, the writer has not come across a suggested identification of the site. It is Cath Droma Deirg Blathuug in the Annals of Tigernach (W. Stokes, ed., *The Annals of Tigernach, Rev. Celt.* 17 (1896), 119–263 (Third Fragment), 235).

4. **Lescraigie** (Monquhitter), Aberdeen. Loscragy, 1408; Loscraigie, 1718: "Presumably *lios*, a garden enclosure" (Alexander 1952, 82). Also, Loscregy, temp. Robert I (1306–29) (16th cent.); Loscragy, temp. Robert I (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 36). The name may be something like *lios creagaich* (*-aigh*), "lios of the rock-place", with place-suffix *-ach* (cf. Watson 1904, xxxiv–v); or *liuscreagaich* (*-aigh*: dat.–loc.), "at rocky lios", with adjectival *-ach*.

Lescraigie is a farm at NJ 757455 and there is nothing to note here from the OS 6 in. (1970–73).

5. **Leschangie** (Kemnay), Aberdeen. This name is listed as Lochshangie by Alexander (1952, 324): "A wooded ridge with farms, Pronounced Lochshangie or Leshangie; both these sounds are in use. 1644, Leschangis ... 1660 etc., Lashangie, Lochshangie ... 1696, Laschangie ... The word -shangie is as in Burnshangie, Strichen, and may mean something like narrow, lean. There is no loch here; the first syllable may be from *leachd*, a slope." Compare Burnshangie, Strichen (ibid., 28): "1649, Burnschangie ... There is a small stream here with a crooked valley. For the second element, cp. Leschangie, a hill near Kemnay; also Delshangie, Glenurquhart, etc. Modern Gael. *seang* means slender, skinny. In Glendye there is a hill burn called the burn of Auld Hangy, i.e. Gael. *allt* with aspiration of the following *s*". It is also *lie* Laschangie, 1591 (RMS, 1580–1593, no. 2124).

Leschangie is at NJ 740142 and there is nothing to note from the OS 6 in. (1968–70). It seems an improbable instance of *lios*.

6. **Lesmurdie** (Cabrach), Banff. Losmordy, 1527 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 555); Lesmordy, 1549 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 390). *Lios Muiread(h)aich*, (*-aigh*)?—cf. Kilmurdie (Dirleton), E. Lothian; Kilmorich in Cowal, *Cill Mhuirich* (Watson 1926, 293); and near Dunkeld, with St. Muireach's Well (*ibid.*, 293, 329). The Muireadhach in question here was, however, most likely a secular personage.

Lesmurdie House is at NJ 384313: Mains of Lesmurdie at NJ 391323, something under a mile to NE of it. At NJ 388318 is Chapel (remains of): the remains of a chapel and burial ground, there being nothing of particular significance to note about the site. It is about equidistant from Lesmurdie House and Mains of L. and on the axis between them. Lesmurdie House lies at the foot of a hillslope at the edge of the haugh of the R. Deveron, about half a mile NE of the junction of the Black Water and the Allt Deveron; and close to the junction of the Charach Water with the R. Deveron. The chapel site and Mains of L. are on the Deveron downstream from the house.

7. **Lesmurdie** (St. Andrews Lhanbryd), Moray. No older forms encountered. Lesmurdie House is now shown at NJ 226636, on the NE outskirts of Elgin. There is nothing to note from the OS 6 in. (1978). The *Original Name Book* (Elgin 21, parish of St. Andrews Lhanbryd, p. 5—survey of 1868–70) lists Lesmurdie Cottage and Lesmurdie Wood, the cottage being in the wood; and there is nothing else to note herein. Lesmurdie Wood is now shown just to W of Lesmurdie House. It is possible that the name Lesmurdie here is a transference of no. 6.

The SW group

8. **Lissens** (Dalry), Ayr. No older forms encountered, but compare: "terras de ... le Lessens ... in dominio Galwidie, senesc. de Kyrkcubrycht" 1487 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 1702); "... Lescens ... in parochia de Monygoif, senesc. Kirkcudbricht" 1539 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 2002); "... Lessence ... in parochia de Monygoiff, senesc. Kirkcudbrycht ..." 1573 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 2330); "... Lessence ... in parochia de Monygolf, senesc. Kirkcudbricht" 1573 (RMS, 1580–1593, no. 628); "... Lessennis ... in parochia de Monygof, senesc. de Kirkcudbrycht ..." 1591–92 (ibid., no. 2013); "... Lessens ... in parochia de Monygo(i)ff, senesc. (de) Kirkcudbrycht ..." 1614 (RMS, 1609–1620, nos. 1063, 1149). If -s, -ce, -is represent the English plural ending, these names might possibly be *na liosan* (plural) originally, rather than *liosán* (diminutive).

The farm of North Lissens is at NS 326478; that of South Lissens at NS 322472, about half a mile to SW. There is nothing to note from the OS 6 in. (1970).

9. **Lessnessock** (Ochiltree), Ayr. "... the Lesynasach ... liand wythin my baronry of Uchiltre and the schyrefdome of Are, ..." 1441 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 302); "... Lesnessok ... in baronia de Uchiltre (vic. Are) ..." 1530 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 980); Lesnessok (in the barony of Uchiltrie, vic. Air), 1586 (RMS, 1580–1593, no. 1030); Lesnessok (in the barony of Uchiltrie, vic. de Air), 1615 (RMS, 1609–1620, no. 1248). If the specific element here is a personal name, one might compare Clach Mo- Neasáig, "a boulder on Loch Etive side at Taynuilt", Mo- Nessóc from Nessán (Watson 1926, 308), though there is nothing to suggest ecclesiastical association in the context under discussion. The 1441 form, however, if it at all accurately reflects the contemporary (anglicized) pronunciation, may militate against such a derivation. The generic is probably *lios*.

Lesnessock is a farm at NS 481196. There is nothing to note from the OS 6 in. (1978).

10. **Lesmahagow** (Lesmahagow), Lanark. Lesmagv, 1159 × 1160 (Barrow 1960, 192–5, no. 131); Lesmahagu, prob. *c.*1165 or 1166 (Barrow 1971, 166–8, no. 63); Lesmahaggu, 1189 × 1195, poss. 1193 (ibid., 362–5, no 367); Lesmahag', 1195 (ibid., 373–4, no., 379); Lesmahagu, 1195 × 1207 (ibid., 379, no. 387); Lesmachugu, prob. 1208 × 1214 (ibid., 440, no. 480); Lesmahagw, 1144 (temp. Robert I: Haddington MS; Sir Lewis Stewart's Collections) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 1, no. 98); Lesmahagow, temp. Robert I (16th cent.), Lesmahago, temp. Robert I (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 605: refers to Appendix 1, no. 98); Lesmahago, temp. David II (1329–71) (16th cent.), Lesmahagu, temp. David II (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 848); Lesmachu, 1315–16 (RMS, 1306–1424, no. 75); Lesmahu, Lesmahagw, temp. Robert I (16th cent.), Lesmahago, temp. Robert I (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 189); Lesmahagow, temp. Robert I (16th cent.), Lesmachutis, temp. Robert I (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 669: as Appendix 2, no. 189); Lesmahago, temp. David II (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 858: as Appendix 2, no. 848); Lesmahagw, temp. Robert III (1390–1406) (16th cent.), Lesmahago, temp. Robert III (17th cent.) (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 1868); Lesmahago, 1532 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 1220); Lesmahago, 1532, 1533 (1538–39) (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 1885); Lesmahago, 1534 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 2008); Lesmahago, 1533 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 1330); Lesmahago, 1542 (RMS, 1513–1546, no. 2855); Lesmahago, 1576 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 2652); Lesmahago, 1580 (RMS, 1580–1593, no. 15); Lesmahago, 1565 (1587) (RMS, 1580–1593, nos. 1200, 1201); Lesmahago, 1587–88, 1592, 1593, 1588 (RMS, 1580–1593, nos. 1489, 2205, 2270, 1597); Lesmahago, 1594, 1596 (RMS, 1593–1608, nos. 288, 444); Lesmago, 1596 (RMS, 1593–1608, no. 478); Lasmahago, 1587 (1605) (RMS, 1593–1608, no. 1561); Lesmahagow, 1602 (RMS, 1593–1608, no. 1341); Lesmahago, 1607 (RMS, 1593-1608, no. 2003); Lesmahago, 1614 (RMS, 1609–1620, no. 1055).

Watson (1926, 196–7) gives the form in King David's charter of 1144 as Lesmahagu (thrice), it being the same in the charter of the same year by the bishop of Glasgow confirming the grant to Kelso: he takes these instances presumably from the *Liber S. Marie de Calchou* (Charters of Kelso Abbey: Bannatyne Club)—cf. the form quoted from RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 1, no. 98 (above). The personal name Gille Mohagu appears several times in early charters of this district: Gilmalagon mac Kelli (in error for Gilmahagou), 1147–60; Gilmagu mac Aldic, 1180–1203; Gilmehaguistoun in Fincurroks, i.e. near Corehouse in Lesmahagow parish, 1208–18.

"These forms establish the vernacular pronunciation of the twelfth century, when Gaelic was doubtless spoken in the parish." But King David's charter of 1144 gives the saint's name as Machutus and this is the regular form later. ("... Sancto Machuto de Lesmachugu ...", prob. 1208 × 1214, Barrow 1971, 440, no. 480; "... Sancto Machuto, ac monachis de Lesmachu Deo et Beato Machuto servientibus ...", 1315–16, RMS, 1306–1424, no. 75; "... Sancti Machuty de Lesmahu ...", temp. Robert I (16th cent.), RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 2, no. 189; cf. the form Lesmachutis, temp. Robert I (17th cent.), quoted above). Mahagu and Machutus are clearly independent and different names: Watson thought that Machutus was probably British. In 'Ma-hagow' now "the *a* of *hagow* is long and sounded like *ai* in English 'maiden'; *gow* is sounded *go*. The name can hardly be other than *Mo-Fhécu*, later *Mo-Fhégu*, the reduced affectionate form of the name of Féchín of Fobhar or Fore. With *o* elided, *Mo-Fhécu* became *M'Écu*, later *M'Égu*, which is seen in the short forms *Les-magu*, *Gil-magu*. Lesmahagow is for *Lios Mo-Fhégu*, 'my-Féchín's enclosure'. St. Féchín's day was Jan. 20; in Oengus' *Félire* he is *Mo-Écu* (three syllables)".

In 1144 King David I and John bishop of Glasgow in turn granted the church and lands of Lesmahagow to Kelso Abbey, so that a prior and monks might be instituted in that church. The priory is said to have been burned by English troops in 1335. Its history is obscure: a prior occurs in 1477 and five monks are mentioned in a rental of 1556; but before 1550 the commendatorship had been assumed by the commendators of Kelso. (See Cowan & Easson 1976, 69). After the grant to Kelso of 1144, both parsonage and vicarage teinds were devoted to the uses of the cell, the parochial charge being served by a curate (Cowan 1967, 130). Lesmahagow Church, at NS 814398, stands on the site of the priory. The buildings of the priory are said to have been completely destroyed in 1560, but the restored church was used as the parish church until 1804, when it was rebuilt. The church, which is in use, is completely modernised and shows no signs of antiquity (OS 1955). At the church there are—or were—two sculptured stones belonging to Romilly Allen's Class III. No. 1 is a cross-base of sandstone (*in situ*(?)); no. 2 a cross-head, also of sandstone, which was found in 1866 at Milltown of Lesmahagow between 400 and 500 yards from the parish church. (See Allen 1903, pt. 3, 472 and fig. 502 (no. 2); the discovery of no. 2 was reported by Greenshields (1866–8, with illustration, 261). Neither stone was seen by the OS in 1955. The church's right of sanctuary, marked physically by four crosses, may already have been of longstanding

in 1144: "Quicunque autem propter vite vel membri periculum evadendum ad predictam cellam confugerint vel intra quatuor cruces circumstantes pervenerint, ob reverentiam Dei et Sancti Machuti firmam pacem meam eis concedo" (RMS, 1306–1424, Appendix 1, no. 98)—"And whoever, to escape danger to life or limb, flee to the aforesaid cell or come within the four surrounding crosses, to them I grant my firm peace through reverence of God and of Saint Machutus". There is also reference in the OS archive to a bronze bell, possibly of Early Christian date, found on the farm of Garngour (NS 8039: on the NW side of Lesmahagow town). Its present whereabouts seem to be unknown and the OS could find no further information concerning it in 1955. Lesmahagow lies on the R. Nethan.

11. **Leswalt** (Leswalt), Wigtown. Leswalt, 1426, 1427, 1463, 1476–77, 1487–88, 1488-89, 1499–1500, 1506, 1507, (RMS, 1424–1513, nos. 86, 183, 762, 1286, 1718, 1821, 2525, 2954, 3144); Leswalte, 1482–83 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 1545); Leswalt, 1540–41, 1545–46 (RMS, 1513–1546, nos. 2271, 3198); Lessualt, 1581, Lesualt, 1589, Leswalt, 1591 (RMS, 1580–1593, nos. 172, 1711, 1915); Leswalt, 1595, 1600 (RMS, 1593–1608, nos. 366, 1019): Leswad(e), 1614, Leswalt, 1617, Leswald, 1617 (RMS, 1609–1620, nos. 1138, 1665, 1723). Watson (1926, 180) makes Leswalt British, "grass enclosure", and mentions also Drumwalt, "grass ridge".

The medieval parish church of Leswalt was annexed to Tongland Abbey by Michael, bishop of Galloway (*c.*1355 × 59) (Cowan 1967, 131). In view of Watson's etymology, it may be relevant to draw attention to two earthwork sites in the near vicinity. About a mile uphill and to NW of the old church is a putatively Iron Age hillfort on Tor of Craigoch, occupying the summit of the hill at NX 008646. On the S and W, where the slope is slight, there were four earth and stone ramparts, three of which are now scarps. The remaining sides, apart from the NW where steep natural slopes and a rock face afford protection, were defended by three ramparts, now scarps. The interior is about 170 ft. in diameter (OS 1968). Situated on the top of a high bank in the angle of a burn, at NX 008635, is a small, putatively Iron Age promontory fort known as "Kemp's Graves". It is formed of three ramparts, enclosing a harp-shaped area, roughly 129 ft. by 45 ft. This fort is on the lip of a small glen at its upper end: at the glen mouth and on the same (N) side is Leswalt old church, something over half a mile to ENE. It is also worth drawing attention to Dinduff, about a mile to NE of the old church, though nothing of archaeological interest is associated with the area on the OS 6 in.

record sheets. A hill called Dounan Hill (50m) is flanked to N by High Dinduff and to S by Mid Dinduff on the OS 6 in. 1978; and also to SE by Low Dinduff on the OS 6 in. 1957. Dinduff seems, in fact, to be the general name of the locality of these farms and Dounan Hill. Dounan is pretty certainly *dùnan*, diminutive of *dùn*; whether or not Dinduff contains British *din*—rather than Gaelic *dùn*—is a question that requires further investigation in order to be answered—if it can be answered. These sites and names notwithstanding, it would seem safest in the first instance to look for the original *lios* here at or near the site of the old parish church. Leswalt Church (remains of) is situated at NX 015638.

12. **Lismore** (Lismore and Appin), Argyll. Notices in an early Irish context (without further regard here to the actual dates of composition or to the processes of MS transmission) are: Obitus Lugide Lis moer (AU, s.a. 591); Neman, abb Lis móir, décc (AFM, s.a. 610); Echuidh Liss moir obiit (AU, s.a. 634); Iamluoc glangelda/grian liss (MS liis) moir dealba (Rawl. 505, fo. 215)—Iamluoc anorba/grian lis moir de alba (Laud 610, fo. 65)—Iamluoc glan geldai/grian liss moir dealbai (Lebar Brecc, p. 90)—"with Moluóc pure, fair (var.: a splendid heritage), sun of Lismore of Alba" (Stokes 1880, xcv, June 25; with the note from Lebar Brecc, p. 90 (cvii)—Iamluoc .i. moluoc liss moir inalbain .i. cille delga inardgal).[4] Lesmor 1251 (1507), Lesmor(e) 1304 (1507), ecclesie Lesmoren. 1492 (1507), Roberto Lismoren. episc. 1492 (1507), Ecclesie Cathedrali et Sedi Episcopali Lismorensi 1507 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 3136); David Episcopo Lismorensi 1505–06 (RMS, 1424–1513, no. 2938); David episcopum Lismoren., episcopatui Lismoren., David Episcopo Lismorensi, episcopatus Lesmoren., David Lesmorensi Episcopo, 1507–08 (RMS, 1424–1513, nos. 3170, 3208); Lesmore 1540–41, Lesmoir 1542 (RMS, 1513–1546, nos. 2305, 2814): Lesmoir 1571–72 (RMS, 1546–1580, no. 2013); Lesmoir 1580 (RMS, 1580–1593, no. 25); Leismoir 1595 (RMS, 1593–1608, no. 296); Lesmoir 1610, 1611 (RMS, 1609–1620, nos. 265, 587); Jacobi episcopi Lesmoren., episcopatus Lesmoren., capituli Lesmoren., 1612, Andree episcopi Lesmoren., de episcopis Lesmoren. 1615 (RMS, 1609–1620, nos. 760, 1243).[5] Gaelic *lios*

[4] La m'Luóc glan ngeldae/grian Liss móir de Albae, "with my Luóc pure, brilliant, the sun of Lismore of Alba" (142, 25 June); la Mluoc .i. Molúoc Lismoir i n-Albain: Rawlinson B 505 (158, note): W. Stokes, ed., *Félire Óengusso Céli Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*, London (Henry Bradshaw Society) 1905 (reprinted, Dublin 1984).

[5] Additional forms, not from RMS, are:– Ecclesia Lismorensis, *c.*1410 (*sic*: the Breviary of Aberdeen was published in 1509–10); Lismoir, 1549, 1629; Lesmoir,

mór, "the great lios": cf. Lesmoir (above).

The writer has discussed Lismore in some detail elsewhere (MacDonald 1973). The island lies in the mouth of Loch Linnhe, where it opens into the Firth of Lorn. A monastery seems to have been established here probably during the second half of the 6th century: the obit of its traditonal founder, Lugaid or Moluoc, is entered by Irish annals at *c.*592. Obits of later abbots are similarly entered at *c.*611 (Neman) and at *c.*637 (Eochaid). There seems to be no further historical notice (surviving or hitherto recognized) of Lismore during the pre-12th century period. But an ecclesiastical settlement of some kind may well have survived late enough to influence the choice of location of the cathedral church of the diocese of Argyll, formed by subdivision from Dunkeld 1183 × 89 (Cowan & Easson 1976, 210, who say further: "The see was located on the island of Lismore in Loch Linnhe apparently from 1225 and probably from time of erection of the diocese ...": see also Appendix below). It seems likely, therefore, that the early foundation lay at or near the site of the medieval cathedral church, the remains of the choir of which form the present parish church at Clachan (Kilmaluag), a hamlet just under three miles from the N end of the island and pretty well centrally placed between the two coasts. Three bronze pins from Lismore, now in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, were probably found near the church in 1841. Two are held likely to be of 8th century date; the third could be earlier. But if all three are contemporary, a date for them all in the late 8th century or slightly later would probably be acceptable. Otherwise, there seems to be no certain archaeological evidence for Early Christian occupation, ecclesiastical or secular, of Clachan or its immediate vicinity. The writer has, however, argued that the essentially rectilinear enclosure of some ten to eleven acres around the church and graveyard that is largely preserved in the modern field walls, represents originally the line of enceinte of a pre-12th century *vallum monasterii*. If so, this is presumably the *lios mór*. The enclosure seems in fact to have been laid out so as to take in as much as possible of a slight natural hollow, in which the graveyard knoll is more or less centrally situated. In view of the fact that many early church sites were usually known, not by an ecclesiastical name but by what was the (presumably) pre-existing name of the site or locality—Iona (Watson 1926, 87–90; Anderson & Anderson 1961, 154–5); Applecross (Watson 1904, 201–03); Dunkeld (Watson 1926, 19–22; Jackson 1954, 14–16); St. Andrews

1596; Lismoir, 1662 (C. Innes, ed., *Origines Parochiales Scotiae* (3 vols., Edinburgh 1850–55), vol. 2, part 1 (1854), 159): Lesmore, 1551 (*ibid.*, vol. 2, part 2 (1855), 828).

(Cennrígmonaid: Watson 1926, 396–8; MacDonald 1979, 18–19), e.g.; and discussed for Ireland by Flanagan 1979, 6–8—it seems quite likely that here, too, *lios mór* originally denoted, not the enclosure as *vallum monasterii*, but as defining a, perhaps pre-Christian, ceremonial and assembly site, for which the hollow with its knoll would be an eminently suitable setting. In which case, *lios mór* here may be an early gaelicization of an originally pre-Gaelic, P-Celtic name.

13. **Liston** (Kirkliston), Midlothian—West Lothian. *Liston*: Listona 1163–78, Listun 1165–78, Liston 1203–33, Listone 1218, Listoun 1409; Lyston 1235, Lystoun 1290–1, Lystone 1296, Lystoune 1377–8 (Macdonald 1941, 39–40). Dixon (1947, 213) cites, in addition to Macdonald: Listo(u)n(e) 1257, Lyston(a) 1320. *Kirkliston*: Kirkliston 1358, Kirklistoun 1451, Kirklistoune 1473, 1581, Kirklistone 1601; Kyrkliston 1419, Kyrklystoun 1447, Kyrklistoun 1507–08 (Macdonald, *ibid.*). Only the earliest recorded instance of each form is given here.

Macdonald (1941, 39–40) discussed two possible interpretations of the name Liston. 1. "Lissa's farm" (*tūn*), cf. Liston, Essex: Lissa was regarded by Ekwall as possibly a hypocoristic form of Old English *Lēofsige*. Macdonald objected that none of the forms here shows any trace of inflexion such as would follow a personal name; and that there is no real evidence for the form Lissa. 2. A hybrid compounded of Celtic *lis-* (W. *llys*, G. *lios*) and OE *tūn*: he compared Helston, Cornwall, citing Gover (1928). "Presumably *llys* denoted the residence of some chieftain ...". Macdonald pretty clearly favoured the second interpretation; and he was followed by Dixon (1947, 213). "Helston (Henlistone 1086, hen, 'old') is the name of two places, a town in West Cornwall and a hamlet in East Cornwall. The eastern one was perhaps the chief place of the Pagus Tricurius (Note: So called in the Life of St. Sampson. Now Trigg hundred), the land between the Camel estuary and Devon, the centre being shifted later to Lesnewth (neweth, 'new'), about seven miles distant" (Gover 1928, 323). Jackson (1953, 285–6, 343) notes Liss, Hampshire, Liscard, Cheshire and probably Leece, Lancashire, as from British **lisso-* (W. *llys*, "court").

According to Macdonald, the barony of Liston, from which the parish of Kirkliston eventually evolved, belonged originally to the Knights Templars, then to the Knights of St. John. It lay partly in West Lothian, partly in Midlothian; the capital messuage in the 16th century, Hallyards Castle, is in Midlothian. This large barony split up eventually into smaller and more easily worked parts. The original centre, Liston, began to serve only the eastern or

Midlothian part; a new centre being created, known as Newliston to distinguish it from the older centre, called Auldliston from 1447 onwards. (See Macdonald 1941, 39–40). Old Liston is A(u)ldlystoun 1447, etc. (Dixon 1947, 213); Newliston is Newliston 1461, etc. (Macdonald, ibid.). According to Cowan (1967, 121), the church lay within an episcopal barony by the early 16th century, when both parsonage and vicarage pertained to the archbishops of St. Andrews: it was to have been annexed to the mensa of the bishop of St. Andrews in 1387, but it is doubtful whether this was ever effective.

Old Liston is on the S side of the R. Almond, at NT 121723; Kirkliston Church is about one and a half miles to N, on the N bank of the Almond, at NT 124743. Hutchison (1864–6, 191) mentions the discovery of stone cists similar to those found near the "Catstane" in Kirkliston parish at, among other places, Newbridge and Lochend, just to N of Old Liston. His account is somewhat vague and unsatisfactory, but he appears to be referring to long-cists that might, therefore, be of Early Christian (5th to 8th century?) date: "... stone cists, much akin in construction to those now under notice, have been found, both in groups and in solitary instances, in the neighbourhood of the 'Catstane', and scattered over a wide extent of the surrounding country ... These scattered cists, in so far as I have seen them, present analogous, but not identical, features to those found around the 'Catstane'. In all other cases—for example, as at Cramond ... Lochend ... Newbridge ... and Broadlaw—the *materials* of their construction appear the same; but in no other instance that I have been able to find out have so many cists been found together—most of the barrows consisting merely of a few graves, which were hardly so methodically arranged, although somewhat similar to those under notice". (For a useful general discussion of the long-cist cemeteries, see Henshall 1955–6, 265–76 and 278–81 (Appendix II); for their possible broader historical significance—Thomas 1968, 103–08 and 111–16; and for recent work on the "Catstane" and the associated cemetery, see Rutherford & Ritchie 1972–4, Cowie 1977–8). Kirkliston parish church, much modernised and still in use, contains considerable portions of the original fabric of *c.*1200. Hallyards Castle (remains of) is a now ruined mid 17th century mansion at NT 129732. The building is situated on a slight promontory and seems to have been enclosed by a courtyard wall, of which only the S and E sides remain. Hallyards Castle is about equidistant SSE of Kirkliston Church and NNE of Old Liston. It is to be noted that the river here, so far from forming a boundary, has served to unite the territory on either bank into a single

administrative district.

It is noticeable how much variety there is in the orthographic representation of the vowel of the (unstressed) generic element in not a few of the foregoing names: suggesting that, in the colloquial speech of many areas in many periods covered by the written record, this vowel tended towards neutral quality. Most Scottish names have, in fact, ended up officially as *les-* rather than *lis-*, for whatever reason(s). From considerations of caution, however, only the possible (modern) spelling forms *lis-*, *les-*, *lys-* and *lios-* were searched for in the present context.

The distribution of these names alone would give grounds for a reasonable suspicion that, in many if not most of the names just discussed individually, the generic is originally P-Celtic (Pictish or British) rather than Gaelic. In only one instance, admittedly—Leswalt—has the specific also been referred explicitly to a P-Celtic (in this case British) origin; but such an origin seems quite likely also with regard to Lesmoir (1.), and Lismore (12.). In the case of Lesmahagow, the replacement as specific of a British saint by a Gaelic one, but without the complete supplanting of the original cultus, may perhaps still be discernible in the extant documentary record. Similarly, the *lis* of Lessendrum, of Auchterless and of Lesmurdie (6.) may have been P-Celtic (Pictish) rather than Gaelic originally. In Liston, lis- is certainly more likely to be British than Gaelic.

More significant, however, is the fact that so many of the Scottish *lis-* names seem to be those of centres of administration of some sort, secular or ecclesiastical or both. Lesmoir, Lessendrum, Auchterless, Liston and probably Lesmurdie (6.) all show evidence of the juxtaposition, or at least close proximity, of seat of local secular administration and of church site, in all but one case (Lesmurdie), the latter being parochial. Leswalt was the site of a medieval parish church also. Lesmahagow, as well as being a parochial centre, was also the site of a priory and had pre-12th century ecclesiastical antecedents of some kind. Lismore was an early monastic foundation, attested to some extent in Irish sources; and was later the site of a cathedral church. It was argued in the case of a comparable group of *rath-* names (Macdonald 1981–82, 41–2) that, on *a priori* historical grounds, a Celtic generic was unlikely to arise (in lowland Scotland at least) to denote an originally Anglo-Norman system of organisation—at any rate insofar as the official written record was concerned. Thus, even without the fairly explicit evidence of Lesmahagow and Lismore

(though in the Highlands and Isles new Gaelic names *might* have arisen and been used officially in the 12th and post-12th century period), it would be reasonable to propose that these *lis-* names reflect the pre-12th century origins of the settlement complexes to which they refer, in terms not only of location but also of function.

The broad connotation suggested here, furthermore—aristocratic residence as administrative centre, with perhaps the ecclesiastical dimension as (usually) a secondary development chronologically speaking—seems more appropriate to British *lis-* than to early Irish *les*. Welsh *llys* is usually rendered in English "court, hall" (Evans & Thomas 1971; Davies 1975, xxxiv—llys): Pwyll ... yd oed yn Arberth, prif lys idaw, ... "Pwyll ... was at Arberth, a chief court of his, ..." (Williams 1951, 1; Jones & Jones 1949, 3). "*Les* is a name applied to strongholds of a much more recent date. It is the Welsh *llys*, 'court, palace', and probably denoted the residence of some chieftain in the pre-English days, when the county was still divided up into numerous petty principalities. For this reason names in *les* are not common, and as a rule there is about one to each hundred, the Cornish hundreds corresponding as a rule to old tribal divisions." (Gover 1928, 322–3). Neither as lexical item (see above), nor as place-name element (Flanagan 1972–3, 165–7; 1980–81, 21–3) does Irish *les/lios* seem generally to have this force or such apparent historical importance. *Lios* seems, moreover, to be markedly rare in all the main historical Gaelic-speaking areas of Scotland: cf. Flanagan (as above) 165, 21 and distribution maps, 172, 27.

As with the comparable *rath-* names (Macdonald 1981–82, 41–2), it seems idle at present to speculate about the archaeological characteristics of these sites in their pre-12th century form—with the possible exception of Lismore. It seems likely that more or less impressive enclosing elements, of greater or less extent and constructed in a variety of media, delimited a variety of ground-plans and building types: *lios*, like *dùn* and *ràth*, cannot be taken to reflect neatly modern archaeological typologies. It, like them, is denotative of function in this context, not of physical form. Nor would it be profitable at this stage to try to differentiate more precisely proposed P-Celtic *rath-* and P-Celtic *lis-*—if, indeed, any precisely definable relationship existed historically.

In terms of toponymic function, such names as Lesmoir and Lismore, which denote explicitly the (enclosed) settlement in origin; Lessendrum, which, like Lesmoir, was not also the name of its parish; and Liston, where both generic and specific denote (enclosed) settlement, might indicate that *lis-*, to a greater extent than *rath-*, referred more narrowly to the settlement site rather

than, by extension, to the settlement site and its dependent district (cf. Macdonald 1981–82, 34–42). Certainly no *lis-* name seems to be qualified by a district or kindred name. But it would be unwise to attempt to interpret such apparent nuances of meaning in terms of broader historical significance—especially as so few *lis-* names are available for study here.

Despite what was observed a little above, it would be surprising if no *lis-* names could be referred to original Gaelic *lios*. And it seems likely that such instances as Lescraigie, Lissens and Lessnessock, where there seems to be no trace of the historical status and function just discussed, refer simply to enclosed settlement sites of more "private" character—to isolated farmsteads, in fact, of the kind or kinds that appear to be integral to the agrarian economy of Early Christian (and later?) Ireland and, probably, of contemporary Gaelic Scotland. Compare also Rathliesbeag (Macdonald 1981–82, 47). Nevertheless, it does look very much as though Gaelic *lios*, in this more restricted sense that it probably shares with its Irish counterpart, was not commonly employed as a toponymic generic, even if the OS Name Books should produce, as they undoubtedly will, more examples.

Appendix

Among the genealogies printed by Skene in the Appendix to his *Celtic Scotland*, Vol. III, is one of the MacLeans, from MS 1647 (*sic*: 1467?), MacFirbis and MacVurich. "Genealach mhic Gilleoin. Lochloinn mac Eachduinn mhic Lochloinn (Hector and Lauchlan apparently have charters from the Lord of the Isles of Dowart: Skene does not say which Lord of the Isles, but it seems to be both John, first Lord, and his successor Donald, who fought the Battle of Harlaw in 1411—Keltie 1875, 2, 223–4) mhic Eoin mhic Giollacolum mhic Maoiliosa mhic Gilleeoin mhic Mecraith mhic Maoilsruthain mhic Neill mhic Conduilig .i. Ab Leasamoir mhic Raingce ... Tri meic Raingce .i. Cucatha a quo Clann Chonchatha iccric Leambna (Lennox) agus Cusidhe a quo Clann Consithe a Bhib (Fife) agus Cuduiligh a quo Clann Conduiligh .i. Clann mec Gille-Eoin in oilenaibh Muile (Mull) ... Giollacolum mac Maoiliosa tri meic les .i. Domhnall Niall agus Eoin (Dofnaldus MacGilhon, Johannes et Nigellus filii Gilhon appear in the Exchequer Rolls in 1326) ..." If it be assumed that Giollacolum's *floruit* was *c.*1300 and allowing 25 to 30 years to a generation, Cuduiligh's *floruit* could have been roughly the first half of the 12th century. He was very likely a hereditary lay abbot, holding not only the island of Lismore, but also the adjacent district of Appin on the mainland

(see Watson 1926, 124). This suggestion depends, admittedly, on the essential reliability both of the information contained in the genealogy and of Skene's edition and notes. At the least, however, it indicates a tradition of a clerical kindred holding the abbacy of a (possibly defunct) ecclesiastical settlement in Lismore—a state of affairs by no means improbable in itself—one of whose members was regarded as the ancestor of the MacLeans. See Skene 1876–80, 3, 480–2. Perhaps it is time that the abbots of Lismore in Co. Waterford were subjected to critical scrutiny? The writer is indebted to Mr. David Sellar, University of Edinburgh, for drawing his attention to this reference.

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