I.

OBSERVATIONS UPON SOME SCOTTISH PLACE-NAMES AS THEY APPEAR IN THE ACCOUNTS OF THE HOLY LAND TAX COLLECTED BY BOYAMUND IN THE YEARS 1274–1276, AS PRESERVED IN A MS. IN THE VATICAN.

By The Right Rev. JOHN DOWDEN, D.D., LL.D., F.S.A. Scot.

Those who examine the Papal records relating to Scotland, as printed in Theiner's *Monumenta,* or (in some cases) as given in abstract in the *Calendar of Papal Registers*, of which six volumes have now appeared, must be struck by the strange and sometimes grotesque transformations which Scottish place-names have undergone at the hands of the Papal scribes. But the phenomenon is not such as to cause any surprise. The clerks of the Roman Curia, when they had to engage in the task of transcribing documents coming from foreign lands, could without difficulty read the Latin text so long as the sense was a constant guide to the interpretation of the script. It was different when they met a proper name, be it of person or place. Then, more particularly in the case of obscure place-names, there was nothing but to attempt to decipher letter by letter. Our own every-day experience with our ordinary correspondence shows us that while the general drift of a badly written, or of a fairly well written letter may be gathered quite accurately, the names of unknown places are not easily read, and sometimes give rise to a good deal of conjecture as to what was intended. If we show the doubtful word to different persons, we are often furnished with a variety of different interpretations of the written cryptogram.

Dr J. Maitland Thomson has lately procured photographs of two pages of the Vatican MS. of Boyamund, and allowed me to examine them. It is plain that some few of the variants in the spelling of the place-names in Theiner's *Monumenta* are due to errors of transcription for which Theiner himself is responsible. But, if we may judge from the two pages photographed, the great majority of the strange forms of the place-names in Theiner's print are faithfully reproduced from the MS.

A careful examination of the forms of Scottish place-names, as presented in the Papal records, reveals the *sources* of many of the transmuted forms. In medieval script certain letters bear a close resemblance to one another, and may be easily mistaken. Again, certain groups of letters give rise to a variety of possible readings. Each of these sources of error may with advantage be separately considered.

I. *The confusion of* c *and* t. The close resemblance of these two letters in medieval script is perhaps the most frequent of the sources of variation in the spelling of the Roman copyists. Where there is nothing in the sense of the passage to indicate which is obviously the true reading, even an accomplished charter-scholar may be sometimes perplexed as to which letter is intended by the written symbol. It is fortunately an error which seldom affects the identification of the place. A few examples may be taken from the Accounts of Boyamund's collection of tenths in Scotland in the years 1274 and 1275, as printed in Theiner's *Monumenta* (pp. 109–116).

(a) Cases where *t* is printed, and *c* had probably been written. Abertorn, Aldtambus, Ertledon, Cotpen, Buthan (the district, earldom, and rural deanery in Aberdeenshire), Gerloth (Gerloch, Gairloch), Sanctus Calmoth (Calmoch, Colmoc) Lostrist (Loscrisc), and scores of similar cases could be added. (b) Cases where *c* is printed, and *t* had probably been written. Abernychi, Bochans (Bothans, St Bothans), Guchery (in the diocese of Brechin), Maricon (in the same diocese), Perch (the ancient capital of Scotland), Rocheven (Rotheven, Ruthven), Aberbrochoc (Aberbrothoc), Solcre, Lincon (in Haddingtonshire), Hereyec (Hereyet, Heriot), and many other cases which cause little difficulty might readily be subjoined.

II. A more perplexing source of error is the confusion of letters consisting of simple down-strokes, more especially when they occur in groups. There is often nothing in the manuscripts of the later medieval period to determine whether two down-strokes placed together signify *n* or *u*. I say the later medieval period, for generally in the twelfth and early part of the thirteenth century the writing is beautifully distinct. Errors

arising from this confusion are very frequent; but in the simple case just mentioned they seldom occasion any difficulty as to identification. Thus we have Kelco*n* (Kelcou, Kelso), Le*n*ingeston (Leuingeston, Levingeston), Tra*n*ernent (Tra*u*ernent, Travernent, Tranent), Kylgonery (Kilgoueryn, Kingoueryn in *Regist. Vetus de Aberbrothoc*, p. 236). But difficulties are often presented when three or more down-strokes follow in succession. The possibilities of various readings are rapidly increased. Thus what is written *m* may signify *in*, or *ni*, or *ui*, or *iu*, as well as *m*. A good example of such error, combined with the error of reading *t* instead of *c*, will be found in the shape taken (in the Accounts of Boyamund) by a well-known district in Aberdeenshire. "Garmath" is at first sight a puzzling word; but it yields readily on examination. The *m* should have been read *ui*, and the *t* should have been read *c*. "Garmath" thus becomes "Garuiach," the familiar form in early Scottish record of the name of the district now known as the Garioch. Again, an Aberdeenshire parish appears as "Damoth." The *m* is really *ui*, and we get "Dauioth" (Daviot).

When four down-strokes occur in succession several new possibilities of reading are open. Thus "Dim" is doubtless "Dun" (in Angus); and Diminaght is Duninaght (Duninach, or Duneynach, of the taxation of the diocese of St Andrews recorded in the *Registrum Prioratus S. Andree*, 34). "Limdy" is Lundy in Fife; "Glemlif" is Glenilif, in the diocese of Brechin; "Limtrechyn" is Luntrethin (Lumtrethyn in *Regist. Priorat. S. Andree*, 36) in Angus. The word given (at p. 114, col. 2) as "Bemmi" is puzzling. The true reading I take to be Benum, a valuable parish in the Mearns.[1]

III. (a) *Cases where* K *and* R *are confused.* The places named as Reth Undeby and Reth Marescal should be Keth Undeby and Keth Marescal, both in the deanery of Haddington. In one place (p. 113) we find Rech Marescal; here there is the additional confusion arising from the substitution of *c* for *t*. "Rarale" (p. 110, col. 1) is, I think, Karale (Crail), inserted in the Lothian list because Crail was appropriated to

[1] In *Regist. Priorat. S. Andree*, 37, it is spelled Bennum.

the Convent of Haddington; but this conjecture is offered with hesitation.

(b.) *Confusion of* B *and* K. "Bechimdeby" is a strange-looking word. It is really one of the places just mentioned, Keth Undeby. The *B* is an error for *K*; the *c* for *t*; and the four down-strokes, printed as *im*, are really *un*.

(c.) S *and* F, s *and* f *confused*. "Syntref," in the deanery of Garioch, is Fyntref (Fintray). In the *Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonenis* (i. 43; ii. 55) we find the forms Fyntreff and Fyntre. Again, the confusion being now the other way, "Flemanan" is Slemanan (Slamannan). Again, the small s and f are sometimes confused. Thus Culfamuel must be Culsamuel, and Kinkraf, Kinras (Kinross).

(d.) Occasionally *b* is read for what was meant for *h*. Coldingebam and Morbam may be taken as examples. In "Smalberme" (110, col. 1), beside the mistake of *b* for *h*, *a* was mistaken for *er*.

(e.) "Sf" at the beginning of a word seems to be "ff," as "Sfongu" (*n* for *u*), Ffougu, (Foggo), in the Merse.

(f.) G *and* T. "Gravernenthe," in the deanery of Haddington, must be Traverneuth (Tranent). "Gobermor," in the diocese of Dunkeld, is Tobermore.

Some cases of difficulty.—(1) "Simerkechin." In Boyamund's Accounts we find (p. 114) a place in the diocese of St Andrews, and in the archdeaconry of St Andrews (that is, in the part of the diocese north of the water of Forth), the name of which place, as given in print, is "Simerkechin." This name, which is certainly rather puzzling at first sight, will on a careful examination of the record be found to be the familiar Inverkeithing. There are some particulars as to the payment of the tax and the amount paid that point in this direction. This being so, we have only to examine the word "Simerkechin," and see whether it will yield its secret when examined with the light we now possess. It is obvious that the *c* may be read *t*; similarly the four down-strokes, which Theiner has printed as *im*, can be resolved into *nn* or *nu*. This much gives us all but one letter. We have reached as possible,

"nuerkethin." We infer, then, that the letter printed as S must be read as I.

Similarly, I think, "Sunersunan" must be read "Inverlunan" (p. 114, col. 1). "Suner" easily gives "Inner," and we must read *l* for *s*. A long *s* (a long stroke rising above the majority of the letters but not coming below the base-line) might be easily mistaken for *l*.

We have seen that the resemblance in script of *S* and *F* has given rise to confusion. This same place, Inverkeithing, appears in another place in print (p. 114, col. 2) as "Funerkethyn." The four down-strokes, which were taken to be *im* in the word "Simerkechin," are here given as *un*. But they are, I think, beyond question *nu*; while the letter printed F is really I. A reference to any work on Palæography shows how very closely some forms of capital *I* resemble some forms of capital *F*.

(2) "Ginpyr." This place is also in the archdeaconry of St Andrews. There are several instances in the record in which C and G are confused. I will not say that in all cases this confusion is due to erroneous copying. Spelling at this time and for some hundreds of years later was largely phonetic, and it may be that in some cases the original Scottish scribe wrote the C or the G which we in our day should call wrong. "Ecclesia sancti Guthberti sub Castro" is of course St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh; but the *sounds* of Guthbert and Cuthbert are not very unlike. "Greenlaw" and "Creenlaw" are not very unlike in sound, and what we call Greenlaw (in Berwickshire) appears on one occasion in the Accounts as Crenlan (the final *n* being doubtless, in the original, *u*).

"Graniston" (p. 110, col. 1), in the archdeaconry of Lothian, appears to be Craniston (Cranston). Glammis in Forfarshire appears in the second year's accounts (p. 114) as Clammes, while in the first year's accounts it appears as Glamnes (p. 110). Crathie in Aberdeenshire appears as Grethi (in the *Regist. Episc. Aberdon.*, ii. 55, it is Crethy). It is plain that the G of "Ginpyr" may be a C. Now in the first year's accounts, Cupar (*ecclesia de Cupro*) paid 22 shillings and 8 pence, and in the second year "Ginpyr" paid twice 11 shillings and 4 pence. Hence I

take it that "Ginpyr" should be perhaps read "Cuipyr," though one hesitates to say how the three down-strokes should be divided.

(3) "Oysard," "Oernesy," "Oimbulger," "Oimenath," "Ommianyn." One is led to conjecture that the accounts for the second year of Boyamund's collection of the tax (so far as the archdeaconry of St Andrews was concerned) were written in a particularly illegible hand. For it is here (p. 114) that the strangest perversions of place-names occur. The scribe had his own peculiarities, as every scribe has; and some of these we can gather from an examination of the printed document. His capital *D* must have taken a form which resembled capital O; and we are well aware that one of the forms of *O* in medieval script is singularly like one of the forms of *D*. When this fact is recognised there is no difficulty in interpreting such rather alarming names of churches in St Andrews, north of the Forth, as Oysard (Dysard, Dysart) and Oernesy (the *n* being an example of the common error for *u*; and the whole word being Deruesy, Dervesy, Dairsie). Again, the curious name "Oimbulger" is, one cannot but suppose, a form of the name of the parish which appears in *Registrum Prioratus S. Andree* (34) as Dunbulg. Here the *O* is really *D*; and the four down-strokes should have been *un* and not *im*. Again, while in the first year's payments for St Andrews we have a tax paid by the united parishes of "Donethac et Quilt" (p. 110), in the second year it is from "Oimenath et Quilt." These are evidently the same places. Part of the word "Oimenath" yields fairly well. The *O* is *D*; and the *im* is, doubtless, *un*; the *t* before the *h* is probably *c*. But still the squaring the *n* in "Oimenath" with the *th* in "Donethac" has to be accounted for. "Duneynach" is the form in Scottish record; and the parish is the modern Denino in Fife. "Ommianyn" (p. 113), beside the *O* for *D*, presents us with seven down-strokes in succession; and the true reading I take to be Dunmanyn (*Reg. Priorat. S. Andree*, 29) in the deanery of Linlithgow. It is the parish now known as Dalmeny.

(4) "Gingondrum." This odd-looking name appears (p. 112, col. 2) among the parishes of the diocese of Brechin. The second *n* should, I

think, be taken as a *u*. The whole is then a phonetic spelling of the place now known as Kingoldrum. The dropping of the L sound is of course very common in Scottish phonetics. We are familiar with "goud" for "gold." In the family name "Halkett" the *l* is not sounded. We find in Boyamund's Accounts (p. 111), "Afford" for "Alford," and "Aveth" for "Alveth," both in Aberdeenshire. Chalmers (*Caledonia*, ii. 351) says that Coldingham "is vulgarly pronounced *Cowdenham*." Compare also Halton, Almond, etc. This is a good example of how it sometimes brings us nearer to a solution to *sound* the word rather than to look at it. In the second year (p. 115, col. 2) the word appears as "Kyngoudru." The want of the final *m* in this latter case is perhaps due to the accidental omission of the bar or horizontal stroke over the *u*.[1]

(5) "Prior de Oustmot" (p. 114, col. 2). This is, beyond question, the Prior of Restennot. The two closing syllables are, I take it, "tinot." The *R*, being of the widely looped type, might be mistaken for *O*.[2] But speculation without sight of the script is of little value. For practicable purposes it is enough to know that no other word than "Rustinot" can be intended in the place where the word occurs.

(6) "Halaham" (in the deanery of Haddington, p. 113, col. 2). A comparison with the first year's payments suggests that this is Aldham, the second *a* being a mistake for *d*; the initial aspiration is not uncommon.

(7) "Cimbar" (p. 113, col. 2). Here we have "Cimbar et Pentheland" paying 7 lb. 13 sol. 4 den., evidently only for half the year. In the accounts for the previous year we find the Rector of "Dunbar and Pentland" paying 22 mks. (that is 14lb. 13s. 4d.). The C must be an error for D, and the four down-strokes should be read, not *im*, but *un*.

(8) "Forberwic" (p. 113, col. 2) must from the context be Northberwic.

(9) "Fercemoth" (p. 110, col. 1). This puzzling word is, as I conjec-

[1] The variants in the *Registrum Episcopatus Brechinensis* are Kyngoldrum, Kincoldrum, Kincaldrum, Kyncaldrum.

[2] At p. 110, col. 2, the form is "Rustinoth," and so in the Register of the Priory of St Andrews.

ture, what we now call Forteviot. The form of the word in *Regist. Priorat. S. Andree* (p. 34) is Fertheuieth. Examining carefully the word in Boyamund's Accounts we can see that *t* was mistaken for *c*, while the *m* is really *ui*. These changes give us "Ferteuioth," which in sound is scarcely different from "Fertheuieth."

After such attempts at explanation of the forms of place-names which yield to pretty well-known principles gained from experience in dealing with medieval hand-writing, there yet remain in Boyamund's Accounts a good many names whose forms may, perhaps, be best accounted for by supposing a very badly-written original, or a very careless transcription, or probably by both. There remain plenty of puzzles to stimulate the ingenuity of scholars.

There is no more valuable document in Theiner's large collection of papal documents relating to Scotland than Boyamund's Accounts (*Monumenta*, pp. 109–116), giving us, as it does, on the sworn evidence of the clergy, the revenues of the Church in the third quarter of the 13th century for a large part of Scotland. Unfortunately, the details for some of the dioceses (and among them the great diocese of Glasgow) are lacking. Still we have here a document of very great value; and it is in its present condition almost useless. It needs careful editing, with (if possible) a complete identification of the place-names. The work should be undertaken by some one familiar with the topography of Scotland, and familiar also with the older, commonly recognised, names of Scottish places. To such knowledge I cannot pretend; but there must be some among the members of this Society who could do the work and do it well. The object of this communication will be accomplished if I am so fortunate as to be able to induce some such competent enquirer to deal with Boyamund's Accounts.

Postscript.—It may be mentioned that the Council of the Society of Antiquaries has resolved to endeavour to procure photographs of the whole of Boyamund's Accounts from the Vatican Library. Already the two pages photographed for Dr Maitland Thomson have furnished some valuable results. Among others, it is now certain that a pen flourish

over the last syllable of words, which in the case of the word "Oimbulger" (discussed above) has supplied the final *er* in Theiner's transcript, is often non-significant.