

A lost Lancashire Place-Name: Lox(h)am

John Insley

The recent *Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland* has an entry relating to a surname *Lox(h)am* (HANKS/COATES/McCLURE 2016: [III]1633, s.v. *Loxham*). The editors of this work point out that the main location of this surname in the census of 1881 was in Lancashire and they take it to be a locative surname deriving from a lost place-name called *Luum* ‘probably in Lancs (perhaps near Leyland or Penwortham)’. Thirteenth-century forms are as follows:

- [Roberto de] *Loxhesum* (witness, document concerning property in Farington) early 13th century Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 485.
- [Roberto de] *Loxosum* (witness, document concerning property in Farington) ca. 1225-1240 Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 487.
- [Roberto de] *Loxissum* (witness, document concerning property in Farington) ca. 1230 Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 488.
- [Robert de] *Loxusum* 1251 LancsInquests 186.
- [Roberto de] *Loxohum* (witness, document concerning property in Hutton) 1216-1250 (copy, 1268) Cockersand 428.
- [Roberto de] *Loxham* (witness, document concerning property in Longton) 1242-1260 (copy, ca. 1395) Burscough 139.
- [ex prati Roberti de] *Loxum* (in Hutton) 1268-1279 Cockersand 447.
- [terram Galfridi de] *Loxum* (in Hutton) 1240-1256 (copy, 1268) Cockersand 427.

Subsequent examples include [Robert de] *Loxum* 1326, [Thomas de] *Loxhum* (Longton and Hutton, Lancashire), and the surname *Lox(h)am* is attested in the Early Modern period (sixteenth-eighteenth centuries in Croston, Penwortham Leyland and Blackburn (HANKS/COATES/McCLURE 2016: [III]1633). With the exception of Blackburn, all these places are situated in the Hundred of Leyland south of the Ribble. Farington, (Grid reference: SD 549232), Hutton (Grid reference: SD 494267) and Longton (Grid reference: SD 482258) are townships in Penwortham parish and it would seem reasonable to locate the lost *Lox(h)am*

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here as well. The first edition of the Ordnance Survey 1:10, 560 map, dating from the 1840s, has a *Loxam's* (Grid reference SD 48302594 ac) in Longton. It would be tempting to identify this place in Longton with the medieval *Lox(h)am*, but it is unfortunately the case that its name could derive from the surname *Lox(h)am*.

The etymology is difficult. The first element is clearly paralleled by two Somerset river names, the *Lox Yeo* ([on, & lang] *Loxan*, [into] *Locxs*, [of] *Loxs* 1068 [copy, 15th century] EKWALL 1928: 267) and the *Lox* (the old name of the stream running from near Priston to the Avon at Newton St Loë) ([innan, and-lang] *Loxan* 931 [copy, second half of the 12th century] S 414, [into, of, be] *loxan* 946 [copy, second half of the 12th century] S 508 [EKWALL 1928: 267]). EKWALL (1928: 267-268) suggests that the stream-name *Lox* belongs to a Celtic (i.e. British) **losko-* (< **loksko-*) with the sense 'crooked, oblique'. The metathesis of [sk] in **Losko-* to [ks] in *Lox* is an English development (cf. CAMPBELL 1959: 178 and n. 2 [§ 440]). Final *-um* is a dative plural ending and formally this can be either Old English or Old Scandinavian (see SMITH 1956, II: 224-226; FELLOWS-JENSEN 1985: 326-327). MAWER (1929: 11-14) pointed out that the English examples of the type are confined to Anglian and are especially frequent in the Northumbrian dialect area. I would argue that in northern England the type was reinforced by Scandinavian influence. I would suggest that the second element of the place-name *Lox(h)am* is the dative plural of OE *hūs*, ON *hús* n. 'house'. The reconstructed base would then be **Loxhūsum*, *-hūsum* 'at the houses associated with a stream called *Lox*'. On account of its unstressed position, [h] is lost (cf. JORDAN ³1968: 174-175 [§ 195]). For the same reason, [u:] in medial *-(h)usum-* is shortened to [u] which is then reduced to [ə] (cf. JORDAN ³1968: 132-134 [§ 142]). The graphemic realization of this [ə] presented difficulties for medieval scribes and hence we find it represented by <u>, <o>, <i> and <e> in the thirteenth-century Lancashire records cited above. Subsequently, the medial [ə] disappears entirely, this final phase being represented by the spellings *Loxum*, *Lox(h)am*. Final *-ham* is the result of substitution of the English element *-hām* 'village, homestead' for the grammatically opaque dative plural ending *-um*. Other Lancashire examples of the type *hūsum/hūsum* are: *Aynesom* (Grid reference: SD 384397) in Cartmel parish in Lonsdale Hundred North of the Sands (*Aynsom* 1491, *Ayneson* 1537, *Aynsam* 1592 < ON **ein hūsum* 'at the single houses' (EKWALL 1922: 198; FELLOWS-JENSEN 1985: 55, 327); *Wesham* (Grid reference: SD 417328) in Kirkham parish in Amounderness Hundred (*West(h)usum* 1189, *Westhusam* 1194), whose first element is OE *west*, ON *vestr* 'western' (EKWALL 1922: 153; FELLOWS-JENSEN 1985: 60).

As indicated above, the dative plural form in *-um* can be formally Old English or Old Scandinavian. However, the dative plural *húsum* is a well attested place-name element in Scandinavia (see HALD 1942: 114-115). Other Lancashire dative plural names formed from Scandinavian elements are *Arkholme* (Grid reference: SD 566726) in Melling parish in Lonsdale Hundred South of the Sands, a reflex of **érgjum*, dative plural of ON *érgi* ‘shieling’, a colonial Norse loan of Gaelic *áirge* (EKWALL 1922: 180; FELLOWS-JENSEN 1985: 49, 52, 61, 327) and *Lathom* (Grid reference: SD 457065) in Ormskirk parish in West Derby Hundred derived from **hlaðum*, dative plural of ON *hlaða* f. ‘barn’ (EKWALL 1922: 122; FELLOWS-JENSEN 1985: 52, 58, 327). *Lytham* (parish and township) (Grid reference: SD 327294) in Amounderness Hundred is formed from the dative plural of either OE *hlið* n. ‘slope, incline’ or ON *hlið* f. ‘hillside’ (EKWALL 1922: 155; FELLOWS-JENSEN 1985: 359 [map 20], 360 takes *Lytham* to be an English formation).

It should also be noted that Scandinavian personal names are also attested in the Farington-Hutton region. Examples are: ON *Gamall*: [Ricardo filio] *Gamell* (Farington) early 13th century Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 485; ON *Hrafnkell*: *Ramkellecroft*, *Ramkelcroft* (field name in Hutton) 1236-1242 Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 526, cf. [Johannes filius] *Ramkelli* [de Hoton (Hutton)] 1200-1220 Cockersand 453; ON *Ormr*: *Ormo de Hoton* (Hutton) [witness in a charter disposing of property in Eccleston] 1184-1199 (copy 1268) Cockersand 497; Anglo-Scandinavian **Burgifu* fem.: [de terra Swani filii] *Thurieu* (land in Farington) ca. 1225-1240 Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 487; ON *Úlfkell*: [ad terram Willelmi filii] *Vlfkel* (land in Farington) ca. 1225-1240 Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDF 487. This evidence for Scandinavian influence is reinforced by similar material from other local documents from this region. For example, a record dating from *circa* 1160 from the De Hoghton collection of deeds and papers, Lancashire Archives, Preston, DDHo F 286 (LUMBY 1936: frontispiece [facsimile of the deed], 1-3 [Latin text, notes and English translation]), and granting in fee eight carucates of land at Elswick, Clayton-le-Woods, Whittle-le-Woods, Wheelton, Withnell, Hoghton and Roddlesworth, contains the following Scandinavian personal names: ODan *Auti*: [Siwardo filio] *Avti*. [7 Ricardo fratre suo]; ON *Hrafnkell*: [Rogerio filio] *Raue*<n>*chi*<l>. [Ricardo filio suo]; ON *Magnús*: [Ormo filio] *Magni*; ON *Ormr*: *Ormo* [filio Magni], *Ormo* [filio Sueni]; ODan *Sighwarth*; *Siwardo* [filio Avti. 7 Ricardo fratre suo]; ON *Steinólfr*: [Waltero filio] *Stenulfi*; ON *Sveinn*: [Ormo filio] *Sueni*, *Sveno* [sacro Willelmi filii Alani]; ON *Úlfr*: *Vlfo* [de Walatona]. These personal names are linguistic relics of the period of Scandinavian

settlement in this region in the tenth century. As linguistic artefacts, they reinforce the evidence provided by the Scandinavian elements noted in Middle English field names. These personal names also indicate the survival of sections of the local Anglo-Scandinavian elites in the post-Conquest period. Here we can cite the example of one of the witnesses of DDHo F 286, Richard, son of Roger son of Ravenkil, who founded Lytham Priory (see FARRER 1902: 376).

The grantor of DDHo F 286 was a Norman, Richard Bussel, son of the first holder of the Barony of Penwortham, Warin Bussel. The orthography of the name forms shows some traces of the influence of the Latino-French system of post-Carolingian Neustria. So, *Raue*<n>*chi*<l> (genitive) < ON *Hrafnkell* has <ch> for [k] in accordance with early AN usage (see FEILITZEN 1937: 107 [§ 113]), while in *Sueni* (genitive), *Sueno* (ablative) < ON *Sveinn*, we are unlikely to be concerned with the East Scandinavian monophthongization of the diphthong [æi] (< Germanic [ai]), but rather with Anglo-Norman scribal practices in which <e> is used to render the unfamiliar Scandinavian diphthong [æi] (see FELLOWS-JENSEN 1969: 67-71).

I would argue that the place-names formed with the dative plural *-um* are a further indicator of Scandinavian influence in this region. Ultimately, it would be necessary to fit this evidence into a general picture using place-name evidence and the lexical material provided by dialect research.

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Abbreviations

- AN = Anglo-Norman
 ME = Middle English
 ODan = Old Danish
 OE = Old English
 OFr = Old French
 ON = Old Norse

[**Abstract:** Der verschwundene Lancashire-Ort *Lox(h)am* lag vermutlich in der Gemeinde (parish) Penwortham. Der Ortsname *Lox(h)am*, der als Familienname überlebt hat, ist ein Kompositum, das aus einem Fluss- oder Bachnamen *Lox* < britisch **Losko-* ‘der Verbogene’ und der Dativpluralform *hūsum* ‘bei den Häusern’, die formal sowohl altenglisch wie altskandinavisch sein kann, gebildet wird. Die Bedeutung wäre dann ‘bei den Häusern, die in Verbindung mit dem Flüsschen *Lox* stehen’. In diesem Beitrag wird vielmehr eine skandinavische Etymologie für *hūsum* bevorzugt. Die Anwesenheit von Skandinaviern in diesem Teil von Lancashire in der Wikingerzeit wird durch das Vorhandensein von skandinavischen Personennamen in mittelalterlichen Privaturkunden bestätigt.]