

# Etymology of Place Names in the Yorkshire Dales with Particular Reference to the Area of Wharfedale

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*English*

**Abstract.** This paper looks at the origins of terms for topographic features and place names in the Yorkshire Dales area of England, in particular, in the Wharfe Valley district. The majority of terms for topographical features and towns in Yorkshire can be traced to Old English (OE) origins but some derive from Celtic, Latin, Old French, or Old Norse roots. The influence of Old Norse is second only to OE in the region, and toponyms used in the Yorkshire area sometimes have origins in both languages. Historical factors relating to the origin of the place names are noted, and an analysis is made of the origins of topographic terms used in the district, of the names of prominent topographic features in the area, and of all town and village names in one of the Dales, the Wharfe Valley.

## Introduction

It is common knowledge that the English language spoken today has borrowed much of its vocabulary from a number of different languages. According to one recent statistic, 70 percent of modern English consists of loan words from 80 different languages, the majority of loan words coming from Latin and French. If one goes back to Old English one finds a much lower percentage of loan words; according to Schendl, only three percent of Old English is made up of borrowed terms (Herbert Schendl, 2001, p. 26). One area of vocabulary where one can still find a majority of words descended from the Old English language is that of toponyms, or words related to place, in particular, in place names of the British Isles.

Words from Old English (OE) are retained in terms for towns, cities, and topographical features in many parts of Britain. This examination of place names from the Yorkshire Dales and of one dale or valley in particular, that of the river Wharfe, reflects this predominance of terms coming from Old English, but also reveals toponyms with origins in other languages such as the earlier British or Celtic language, as well as names from Latin, Nor-

man French, and in particular, Old Norse, reflecting the pattern of Viking and Danish settlement in northern England, which began in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Toponymy, or the study of place names, can reveal information about a region's distant past, and words which relate to place often tend to remain in use long years after words in other categories have been replaced by more historically recent terms.

In this study of place names in the Yorkshire Dales, place names of prominent features in the Dales region will be looked at first, followed by an examination of toponyms specific to a specific dale, the Wharfe valley. Numerous examinations of the origin of place names in the British Isles have already been undertaken, but perhaps by focusing on one small district in the Dales, terms may be touched on which have been overlooked in more wide ranging studies.

### **The Celts or Britons**

With the passing of centuries and historical changes in words, it is often difficult to know the original forms of place names, and specialists in toponomastics attempt to collect as many early forms of a name as possible and study them in thorough detail through phonological and morphological changes before drawing any definite conclusions. Going back to Roman times, the first people who inhabited the area around Yorkshire who had information written down about them while they were still the dominant culture, were the tribes that we refer to today as Celtic, but who were in those days called the Britons, and in the Yorkshire area, the Brigantes, by the Romans. The early Celtic language was unwritten, and several of its descendents, Welsh and Gaelic, were not written down until the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, after the Celts of the British Isles had been converted to Christianity. It is known that the Celts discouraged the writing down of their native tongue, and on the Continent writing was ritually prohibited among the Gauls (Mircea Eliade, 1982, p.140). Consequently, Celtic stories, rituals, and mythology were passed down orally and we rely on Roman written accounts of their culture for most of our information, though there is some evidence in the form of inscriptions on ancient monuments. It is thought that the Anglo-Saxons inherited place names from the Celts, as the Celts may have done from the people or peoples who preceded them in the British Isles; some place-names in Britain, especially the names of rivers, are thought to have possible pre-Celtic origins.

### Rivers in the Dales

In regard to rivers in the Yorkshire Dales region, there are nine, along with their tributaries, and the majority of them appear to have names with Celtic origins. The five river names with possible Celtic origins are listed below:

the River *Aire* – *Aire* is said to have come from a Celtic word meaning strong.

the River *Lune* – the river name *Lune* is thought to be connected with the Welsh *llawn* for full river.

the River *Nidd* – the river name *Nidd* is said to derive from a Celtic word meaning bright or brilliant.

the River *Tees* – the river name *Tees* may be related to a Celtic word for boiling or surging, or it may be pre-Celtic in origin.

the River *Ure* – the name *Ure* may come from a Celtic name related to the Gaulish river name *Usura* or *Isura*, meaning holy or strong.

Three other rivers in the Yorkshire Dales have names with Old English origins and one of those may have a Old Norse origin as well: the *Swale* has the meaning from OE of swirling, the *Wharfe* gets its name from the OE *weorf* or ON *hvefr* for winding; and the river name *Ribble* is said to be derived from an Old English word meaning boundary, though in the days of the Romans it was called *Belisama*, thought to be the name of a Celtic warlike goddess (Mitchell, 1994, p. 16). There is one other main river in the Dales, the *Eden*, the name thought to derive from a Celtic word meaning “flowing with sap”, but *Eden* is also a term from the Hebrew for *delight*.

### Celtic names for mountains and hills

Celtic names for mountains and hills are still in use today in the Yorkshire Dales. One of the three most prominent peaks in the Dales is named *Pen-y-Ghent*, a name which appears to be from the Celtic, as it has the Celtic prefix *pen* and the hyphenated *y* which is often used in Welsh place names as an article. *Pen-y-Ghent* seems to be an example of an inversion compound, with what is perhaps an adjectival element *Ghent* following the topographical feature *pen*. The term *crag*, found in place names in Yorkshire such as in *Kilnsey Crag*, is of Celtic origin, and is related to the Gaelic *-creag*, the Manx *-creg*, and *-cregg*, and the

Welsh *-craig* for rock, and the terms *crag* and *cragg* were both used in language in North England before 1300 for a steep or precipitous rugged rock (*Oxford English Dictionary, Volume II*, 1970). In the above term, the adjectival element comes first and the topographic word follows. There is another word from the Britons used to describe hills, the word *tor*, from the Celtic *torr*, used to describe a “hill of an abrupt or conical form, a lofty hill, eminence, mound, grave, or heap of ruins” (*OED, Volume XI*). In the Yorkshire Dales near the town of Kettlewell there is a ditch named *Tor Dike* which follows a mountain ridge and which is thought to have possibly been used by the Briganteans for self defense against the Romans.

F.T. Wainwright suggests that the Anglo-Saxons who later wrested control of the land from the Celts may not have known the meanings of common Celtic words which were used to describe the landscape as they referred to one prominent peak in the Ribblesdale valley as *Pendle Hill*, where the prefix *Pen-* comes from the Celtic *penn* meaning hill, and the suffix *dle* comes from the Old English *hyll*, giving *Pendle Hill* the meaning *hill hill hill*. (Wainwright, 1962, p. 62). *Pen* originally meant *head*, as in names such as *Penzance*, and is used as a separate word in the names of hills or peaks.

### **The Romans and York**

When the Romans, who gave us what scarce written information we have about the Celts of that time, withdrew from the Yorkshire area early in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the vacuum left by their departure was soon filled by Angles and Saxons, who invaded England from the Continent sometime in the 440's A.D. The Romans themselves appear to have left little in the way of place names behind in the Yorkshire area though today there are still many physical reminders of their presence in the way of forts, columns, walls, and other structures. The Yorkshire city of Ilkley in Wharfedale was built on the site of a Roman fort named Olicana. The roots of some words relating to place can be traced back to Latin origins, with *York* coming from the OE *Eoforwic*, which is an adaptation of the Latin *Eboracum*, the “place of Ebuuros;” the *wic* suffix to *Eofor* meant dwelling place, house, or farm in OE and is originally from the Latin *vicus* for a row of houses, a quarter of a city or village, or as a term for a hamlet, village, or town. *Vicus* also referred to the smallest unit of local government in the days of Roman rule. Under Viking influence, *Eoforwic* became *Jorvik*, and later the familiar *Jork* or *York*.

### Landscape terms from Old English and Old Saxon

Most of the words used today as place names or as terms relating to the landscape in the Yorkshire area can be traced to Old English or Old Saxon (OS) roots.

When the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes ventured into the British Isles following the Roman withdrawal in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D., they sometimes attributed prehistoric ruins that they found to gods and spirits, and they used specialized terms to refer to monuments of earlier cultures (Margaret Gelling, 1988, p. 131). For example, the terms *beorg*, *burh*, *hlaw*, *haugr*, *dun*, *bre*, *cruc*, *hoh*, *low*, and *law* were all used to refer to natural and artificial hills. The word *burh* or *byrig* was also used to refer to a defended place or watch tower type of structure, and often indicated prehistoric or Roman fortifications. *Beorg* or *beorh* was also used as a term for a barrow or tomb mound and in one of the earliest works of English literature, the tale of Beowulf, we find the verse “hwilum on beorh aethwarf, sincaet sohte,” which can be translated as “the barrow he entered, sought the cup” (Gummere, trans., 1910, lines 2300–301). According to David Crystal, as the Anglo-Saxons came from one of the flattest areas of Europe, they rendered close attention to even the gentlest of slopes and hills (Crystal, p. 141). The word *beorg* or *burh* is better known to us today in its suffix form of *-borough*, *-burg*, or *-bury*, and is used in many village or town names—*Scarborough* and *Canterbury*, are but two of many possible examples. Generally speaking, there tend to be more *burgs* in the south of England and more *boroughs* in the North.

### Lexemes with OE and OS roots

The following list presents examples of lexemes with Old English and/or Old Saxon roots, words commonly used to refer to the landscape in Yorkshire.

*acre* – from OE *aecer*, for a common unit of land measurement.

*brow* – from OE *bru*, meaning the edge of a steep place.

*cairn* – from OE *carn*, for a pile of stones.

*cliff* – from OE and OS *cleofu*.

*cote* – from OE *cot(e)*, for a small cottage, or a shelter for sheep or other domestic animals

*croft* – from OE for a piece of enclosed, arable land.

*dale* from OE *dael* and OS *dal*, meaning a deep or low place, or valley (valley itself being

from OF).

*dike* – from OE *dic*, for a ditch, a low wall or fence, or an embankment holding back water.

*ditch* – from OE *dic*.

*end* – from OE *ende*, for a tip or boundary.

*fall* or *falls* – from OE *feallan*, for a waterfall.

*field* – from OE *feld*.

*firth* – from OE for a deer forest or hunting ground.

*fold* – from OE *falden*, for a hollow, or fold in the mountains.

*ford* – from OE, for a place where a river is shallow enough to be waded across.

*grim* – from OE *grima*, which meant a spectre or goblin, and was associated with prehistoric earthworks or ruins attributed to gods and spirits by the Anglo-Saxons.

*ham* – an OE suffix meaning homestead; for example, the Dales town of *Malham*.

*head* – from OE *heafod*, for the forward projecting part or foremost part, as in head of a rock.

*hill* – from OE *hyll*.

*leah* or *ley* – from the Old Saxon for a forest clearing, used as a suffix or prefix, and seen in place names with *Lee* or *-leigh*; it is also spelled *lie*, *leye*, *legh*, *lighe*, *laie*, *lay*, or *laye*.

*linch* – from OE *hlinc*, meaning a ridge, a natural terrace, or an unploughed strip serving as a boundary between fields, as in the cultivation terraces found in the Dales called *lynchets*.

*mere* – the OE word for a lake (*lake* being from OF) or large stretch of water, as in lake *Windermere*, or the name for a boundary or boundary marker, for example, *Top Mere*

*moor* – from OE *mor*, meaning unenclosed wasteland, a heath, uncultivated land covered with heather, or a hunting ground.

*pot* – from OE *pott*, for a deep hole or pit.

*rigg* – from OE *hrycg* for a ridge.

*shaw* – from OE *scaga* for a small wood.

*shire* – from OE for an administrative district or a bishop or archbishop's see.

*ton* or "*tun*" – from OE, a suffix which came to mean town or village.

*wick* – from OE *wic* and OS *wic*, for a dwelling place or house (originally from the Latin *vicus*)

*wood* – from OE *widu* or *wiodu*.

In regard to several of the terms listed above, the usage of *dale* is generally confined to the area extending from Cumberland to Yorkshire, the area of the Yorkshire Dales, and *dale*

was reinforced in its usage in Northern England by the Norse language term “*dal*.” The usage of the OE *dike* was probably reinforced by the use of ON *diki* or *dyke* in the same region.

### **The influence of Old Norse**

The Norse language played a role almost as prominent as that of OE as the source of many of the place names and terms relating to the landscape of the Yorkshire Dales. Nearly half a millenium after the invasions of Angles and Saxons or Anglo-Saxons, came the incursions of Norsemen or Vikings, whose forays into Britain started in the ninth century, and whose settlements had a lasting effect on place names in northern England..

### **Old Norse words describing the landscape**

The Scandinavian or Viking invasions began in 835 (E.L. Woodward, 1962, p. 16) and the Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes gave us various words which are still used today specifically in the Yorkshire area to denote features of the landscape, terms such as the following: *gill* for a deep ravine, *beck* for a brook or rivulet, *fell* for an upland pasture, *thwaite* for a clearing or an open meadow (though this particular term might be more well known in its current brewery connection), and *scar* for a steep and rocky cliff face. The Norse invaders also gave us the suffix *-by*, used commonly in place names. The suffix *-by* was from the ON term meaning “to cultivate,” and though originally the term meant secondary settlement or expansion from an older village, in Denmark it came to mean a single farmstead, while in England it was eventually used to describe a whole village or town. Town names with the Old Danish *by*, Whitby or Derby, for example, are generally thought to indicate areas of heavy Danish settlement in England in the last quarter of the 9<sup>th</sup> century and first quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> (F.T. Wainwright, p. 78). According to Wainwright, place names with *by* indicated the boundaries of areas settled by Danes from the Great Army from 876 – 880A.D. (Wainwright, p. 87).

Other topographically related lexemes from ON, some of which are particular to the Yorkshire Dales, are the following:

bank – from Old Danish *banke* for a bank or ridge.

*cam* – from ON *kamb-r*, and used as a prefix meaning a long, low earthen mound.

*crook* – from ME *crok*, *croc*, but originally adopted from ON *kroks* or Danish *krog*, and used as a suffix in place names, for example, *Crookacre Wood*.

*fors* – from on for a waterfall, as in Hardraw force, the highest single drop above ground waterfall (waterfall itself being OE) in England. Also *known* as Hardraw Scour.

*gar* – from Scotch adopted from the ON *ger*, *gor*, or *gjor*, and used as a prefix for one of Yorkshire's dales.

*Swale* – the name for a Dales river, probably related to the ON *svalar* meaning “cool and shade,” “a shady place,” or from *svala*, to cool.

### **Toponyms with origins in ON and OE**

Many terms used in compound place names in the Yorkshire area have origins in both Old English and Old Norse, such as the following lexemes:

*arne* – from OE *earn* and ON *ari*, for eagle.

*dale* – from OE *dael*, OS *dal*, and ON *dal* for valley.

*haw* – from OE *haga* and ON *hagi*, for a piece of ground enclosed or fenced in.

*hawk*, – from OE *haauc* and ON *hawk-r*, for the bird of prey.

*holme* – from OE *holm*, meaning sea or wave, and from ON *holmr* meaning islet, creek, or lake.

*kiln* – from OE *cylene* and ON *kylna* (and which can also be traced to the Latin term *culina*), for kitchen or cooking stove.

*quern* – from OE *cveorn* and ON *kvern*, for a millstone.

*strothe* – from ON *stord*, meaning a small wood, or from the OE *strod*, meaning marsh.

*tor* – from OE *tour* and ON *torr* for a rocky peak.

*trough*, – from OE *trog* and ON *trog*, for the bed or channel of a stream.

The position of the Vikings eventually shifted from that of periodic raiders to permanent settlers and their language left an indelible mark in regard to place names and terms related to the land, especially in those areas of heavy Norse settlement.

### **The Norman influence on place – names**



The Normans, also descendents of Scandinavians, who settled in northern France, invaded England and brought the French language with them in 1066, just a hundred and fifty years after their earlier invasion of the area of France that became Normandy, but their impact on place names in the Yorkshire Dales doesn't seem to have been as great as the earlier Scandinavian Northmen, perhaps as the Normans came largely as political overlords, playing a role in some ways similar to that of the earlier Romans, especially in regard to northern England. After winning the Battle of Hastings in the south, William the Conqueror sent forces into the north of the country. In response to acts of rebellion he had the city of York burned to the ground, and much of the land in the north of the country was carved into estates under his direction. He also oversaw the compilation of the Domesday Book in 1086, a survey of his kingdom for tax purposes which was written over a twelve month period, and which is one of the most valuable and comprehensive sources in existence for information about England at that time in history. People of that time complained that the the survey tried to account for every piece of private land and how much it was worth (Wood, 1987, p. 20) but it did not require changing the place-names of the land, and subsequently, Norman influence on place-names in Yorkshire does not come close to that of the Vikings, with the exception of a few terms such as *valley* and *pasture*.

Most town names in the Dales have their origins in the OE and ON, though the name Richmond, for a town on the edge of the Dales, is from the Norman French and was changed from its original OE name of *Hindrelac* to *Richmond*, from the OF *Riche-Monte*, meaning *strong hill*. Richmond is the site of a large Norman castle which was a main source of Norman military strength in that region of northern England, so it is perhaps no surprise that the Normans would change the name of the town to emphasize the shift in power relations in the area. Under the Normans, support was given to monastic orders in the Yorkshire area and this is reflected in the French names of several abbeys such as *Rievaulx*, French for Rye Valley, and *Fountains*, the name which can be traced back to the OF *fontaine* and further back to the Latin *fontana* for a spring or the source of a stream.

### **Topographical Features in the Dales and their Word Origins**

Depending on how the area of the Yorkshire Dales is defined, and where one sets its perimeters, one can argue that there are nine valleys in the region, one for each of the main rivers in the Dales, and most valleys take the names of their respective rivers, except for

Wensleydale, which takes its name from a town, rather than from the Ure, formerly the Yore river. Let us now look at one particular valley in the Yorkshire Dales, the Wharfe valley or Wharfedale, and examine a list of names of some of its topographic features, some prominent and some little known except in the local area, to see what origins those names reflect:

*Barden Moor* – *Bar* refers to barley, and *Den* is vale, from OE *denu*; *moor* refers to a tract of unenclosed wasteland, from OE.

*Bolton Abbey* – *Bolton* is from OE, referring to a village or enclosure with buildings, but *abbey*, a word from Middle English (ME), originally from OF, was not added until the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

*Cam Pasture* – *Cam* is a ridge or long narrow earthen mound, from ON *kamb-r*, and *pasture* is from OF.

*Crookacre Wood* – *Crook* is from ME, an adoption of the ON *kroks*, and both *acre* and *wood* are from OE.

*Great Whernside* – a prominent peak in the Wharfe valley, from OE or ON “the hill where querns (millstones) were found.” The term *quern* is from OE *cveorn* or ON *kvern*, and a *quernstone* is a simple device for grinding corn, made up of two circular stones, the upper revolved by hand (sometimes the name may cause confusion to those unfamiliar with the area as the tallest peak in the Yorkshire Dales is also called Whernside, and is in Ribblesdale).

*Grimwith Reservoir* – *Grimwith* is OE for haunted wood, and the OE *grima* means spectre or goblin. *Grim* was also a nickname for the Norse god Woden, who was associated with earthworks of prehistoric origin, which were, as noted earlier, sometimes attributed to gods or spirits by the Angles and Saxons. *With* may be from OE *withig* for willow. *Reservoir* is a more modern word from French.

*Gurling Trough* – *gurl* is a growl or rumble, and boisterous or rough weather, adopted from the Scotch. *Trough* is OE or ON. The Scots made raids over the English border from about 1300 – 1600, and the term could possibly reflect that influence.

*Kilnsey Crag – Kiln* is from ON *kilna* or OE *cylene*, and *sey* is possibly from aphetic *say*, from OF *assay*, meaning to put to the proof, to test the composition of, or to test a metal. *Crag* is of Celtic origin.

*Sheep Creeps – Creeps* is from OE meaning holes or openings in a hedge or other enclosure for an animal to creep through, and *sheep* is from the OE.

*Trollers Ghyll* – a deep gorge in the Dales. *Trollers* may be derived in part from ON *troll*, the supernatural creature, but *troll* is also OF for angler's reel, and salmon and trout are plentiful in the Dales. *Ghyll* is an alternative form of ON *gill*; the poet William Wordsworth is said to have popularized the spelling of *gill* as *ghyll*.

*Wharfe* – the river after which the Wharfe valley is named. It is from OE *weorf* or ON *hvefr*, for winding river.

We see from the examples above that compound names from the OE and ON predominate, though there are some terms from the OF and a compound word which appears to be partly of Scotch or Gaelic origin.

### **Word Origins of Village and Town Names in Wharfedale**

Finally, let us examine a list of all village and town names in Wharfedale, or the Wharfe valley, in order to look more closely at the origins of the place names in one particular district. The River Wharfe begins near Langstrothdale on the moors of the Cam Pasture, flows past the hamlet Oughtershaw, and then past the various villages and towns listed below (in the order in which they are listed) before it flows past Ilkley to join the Ouse, which joins the Humber before flowing out into the North sea:

*Langstrothdale* – long valley with a stretch of marsh or a small wood. *Lang* is from ON, for long, *stroth* is from ON *stord*, a small wood, or OE *strod*, marsh, and *dale* is from OE.

*Oughtershaw* – Uhtred's copse or wood, from OE. *Shaw* is from OE *scaga* or *sceaga*, for a small wood, and also can mean the furthest edge of cultivated land.

*Beckermonds* – place where the streams meet, from ON *beck* and perhaps from the OF *mond*, or world.

*Yochenthwaite* – the “clearing of Eogan,” from ON.

*Deepdale* – for deep valley, OE.

*Hubberholme* – OE, from *Hubba*, the name of a Viking chief, and *holme*, from the OE *holm* for sea, ocean, wave, or the ON *holmr* – for islet, creek, lake, river, or meadow on the shore.

*Buckden* – from OE, the vale frequented by deer.

*Cray* – from Old Welsh *crei*, the fresh stream.

*Starbotton* – from ON, the valley where the stakes are cut.

*Kettlewell* – from OE, for bubbling spring, changed to the Norse spelling from *Cetel Wella*.

*Halton Gill* – from OE and ON, for a farm in a nook by a ravine, *hal* being from OE *halh* or *healh* for a nook or corner, and ON *gill* for a deep ravine.

*Littondale* – from ON *lit-r*, meaning to color or dye, combined with OE *dale*, for hill slope.

*Kilnsey* – . *Kiln* is from ON *kilna* or OE *cylene*, and *sey* is perhaps from OF *assay* meaning to test the composition of or put to the proof.

*Conistone* – *conis* is from ON *kongr* and the Danish *konge*, for king, and the OE suffix *-ton* is for village or farm, so the name may have the meaning of the King’s farm or village.

*Grassington* – from OE, the farm among the pastures.

*Linton* – from OE, the farm where flax is grown.

*Threshfield* – from OE, and possibly ON; *thresh* from OE *perscun*, also ON *preskja*; *field* is from OE *feld*.

*Hebden* – from OE for vale of flowers. *Heb* is possibly from the Greek *Hebe*, for the goddess of youth and spring, and *-den* from OE *denu* for vale.

*Burnsall* – from OE or Scots English, *burn* for stream or spring, or possibly from a proper name from the OE, and *hal* for nook or corner.

*Appletreewick* – OE, farm by the apple tree, and *wick* from OE and OS *wic* for farm or dwelling place.

*Addingham* – from OE, and is a town named after an Anglian chieftan “Adda,” with the suffix *-ham* for homestead.

*Ilkley* – from OE, with *ilk* perhaps from the OE *ilca*, from *hwelc*, meaning “of the same name” and the suffix *-ley* for woodland clearing; the town's name was *Olicana* under the Romans.

### Conclusion

From these examples it seems apparent that Old English and Old Norse forms are predominant in this district, with OE and ON compound terms made up of words from both languages being fairly common. In addition, many old English names took on a Norse sound, as can be seen in the above example of *Kettlewell*, the town name which took the place of the Anglian term *Cetle Wella*, or *Cheteleuulle*, as it was listed in the Domesday Book survey of 1086 (Raistrick, 1967, p. 12). In a similar example of Norse influence, the Dales town of *Shipton* (‘sheep farm’) became *Skipton*. The Old Norse *sk* sound often took the place of the Old English *sh*, and *k* replaced *ch* in areas where the Scandinavians settled. As noted earlier, many of the words for place names are compounds, made up of an adjective combined with a topographic term, and compound names make up the majority of place names in Yorkshire and in England.

The Celtic influence in the list of towns, though faint, still lingers with the presence of the one name above with a Celtic origin. *Cray* appears to be from the Welsh *crei* for fresh

stream (though there is also an OF *creie* from the Latin *creta* for chalk) and terms associated with rivers or water stand out as having been retained from the Celtic languages. As the *Wharfe* river flows out of *Wharfedale*, it joins the *Ouse*, a river with a name of Celtic or even pre-Celtic origin, and then the *Humber*, another river with a name of Celtic or pre-Celtic origins, possibly from *Humbra* or *Hymbra*, according to the chronicler and historian of the 8th century, the Venerable Bede, and possibly having connections with Umbria in ancient Italy and an amber trade which flourished in the ancient world from the North Sea across the Continent to the Adriatic. Scholars can often determine the linguistic influences on toponyms coming from OE and ON, after examination of hundreds of similar examples and their morphological variations, but many of the names with Celtic origins are hard to trace and become lost in myth, where they are claimed for the Scots, Picts, Scythians, Greeks, Assyrians, and even the ten lost tribes of Israel.

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