John Stuart to Thomas Pennant: corrections of place names in the Tour 1769 and the natural history of Rannoch

ID:	0422
From:	John Stuart
To:	Thomas Pennant
Repository:	WCRO
Identifier:	WCRO CR2017/TP369, 2a-2d
Cite:	'John Stuart to Thomas Pennant: corrections of place names in the Tour 1769 and the natural history of Rannoch' in Curious Travellers Digital Editions [editions.curioustravellers.ac.uk/doc/0422]

Dear Sir

I was favoured ten days ago with your obliging letter of Nov$^{r.}$ 27$^{th.}$, and in order to comply the more fully with the desire your express in it relative the new edition you propose to publish of your ingenious *Scotch Tour* , have given it a new perusal, marking down at the same time such Galic names as require to be more properly spelt, together with any other remarks that occured.

Tour in Scotland, printed in Chester , 1771 .[1]

- page 27$^{th.}$ 'Rack in the N. dialect signifying the driving of the clouds' — Reac in the Galic language has the same meaning.
- page 35. Note at the foot: ' Inch-Colm ' — spelt more properly Insh-Colm; Inis, or as it is pronounced Inish signifying an island in the Galic language.
- p.42. ' Dun-glas ' i.e. the grey eminence or tower, Dùn signifying in Galic a small hill, fort or tower, and glas grey.
- ' Dunbar ' — Bàr is the top, summit, or point of any place or thing.
- p.46. ' Edinburgh ' — The old name of this city, by which it is still known in every part of the Highlands is Dun-Edin .
- p.56. ' Colton ' — properly Calton: an error of the press.
- p.57. ' Craigmellar castle is seated on a rocky eminence' — as its name implies, Craig both in Galic and Scotch signifying a rock.
- p.60. ' Dalkeith ' — Dail in Galic signifies a field. I am ignorant of the meaning of Keith.
- p.62. ' Inch-Garvey ' — rather Insh-Garvey, i.e. the rough island, from inish and island and garv rough.
- p.63. ' Kinross ' — so denominated from the Galic word ken; or keann the head or upper part of any thing, and ros a promontory, or any tract of land lying betwixt two arms of the sea or two rivers that join one another. Accordingly all the country lying from the Ochil hills and the Tay to the firth of Forth was of old called Ros, and in Latin, Rossia. Kinross then still points out it's boundary to us in one part, as Culross does in another; for cùl signifies the back or hind part of anything.
- p.64. ' Lough-Leven ' — Lough, the first part of the name of this and other lakes, is in Scotland commonly spelt Loch, which is likewise agreeable to the Galic orthography and pronunciation.
- p.65. ' Glen-devon ' — Glen or gleann signifies in the Galic language a valley in which a river runs.
- p.67. ' Straith earn ' — more properly Strath-earn. Strath or srath likewise signifies a valley and differs from the word glen [illegible] implies a more open, flat and extensive one.
- p.71. 'Baily Roy' — so called from the red colour of his hair, for roy in Scotch signifies red, as rua' does in Galic.
- p.72. ' Tay ' — called by the Highlanders Taï .
- p.75. 'Inver' — This word in the Galic language signifies the place where a smaller river enters into a larger one or into a lake or the sea; as Abber seems to have done in the Pictish language.
- p.76. ' Dunkeld ' — called by the Highlanders Dùn-chaillean .

- ‘ Breadalbane ’ i.e. the higher part of Scotland, from brài the higher part of any thing, and albin Scotland.
- p.77. ‘ Taymouth ’ — In the Galic language it is still called Balloch or Bealach i.e. the mouth of the loch.
- p.78. ‘ Lough-Raynac ’ — rather Loch-Rannoch.
- p.79. ‘ Lough-Tay ’ — I know no other fish in Loch-Tay besides those you mention, but Char, Lampreys and Parr.
- ‘ Ben-more ’ i.e. the great mountain, from beinn a mountain and mòr great.
- ‘Ptarmigan’ — would it not be better to spell it Tarmachan or Tarmonach, agreeably to the common pronunciation in different parts both in the Highlands and low country of Scotland: An tard-mhonach, i.e. the inhabitant of lofty mountains, seems to be the original of the word.
- p.80. ‘Royston-crows’ — They are called in the Galic language not Feanagh but Feannaga, from feann grey or whitish. They nestle commonly in furze or birch trees, but not in the hills
- ‘Sea-eagles’ — As far as I can learn, The Sea-eagle or Falco ossifragus *Lin.* does not breed in Breadalbane, but the Osprey does. A pair of this last species nest every year in the ruined tower you saw in the small isle of Loch-dochart.
- ‘Tibberd’ A remarkable spring or fountain of water, especially if a superstitious regard has been long been paid to it on account of it's supposed virtues or healing qualities, is called by the Highlanders Tibberd or Tiobart, but I never heard any of the Druidical circles of stone called by that name. In the W. isles they call them ti'e-nan-Drui'neach or the Druids houses.
- p.81. ‘ Lochon ’ — It should be Lochow.[2]
- p.82. ‘ Kinmore ’ — rather Kenmore; from Keann the head or end of any thing, and mòr great.
- p.83. ‘Sacrament’ — I believe there is now hardly occasion for your censure as to the conduct of the Highlanders at the Sacrament, especially in this country, where that ordinance is gone about with as great decency and order as circumstances will permit. In Arguileshire indeed, some years ago, there were instances of such abuses as you mention, and to prevent them for the future the church thought it proper to enact that, instead of four days set apart for publick worship on that occasion, as in some other parts of Scotland, they should in that county be confined to two only, but that the Sacrament should be regularly administred in every parish once in the twelvemonth.
- p.85. ‘Na-Fian’ — The Highlanders in many parts reckon themselves the descendents of Fingal and his co-temporaries, but never call themselves Na' Fianna, a name by which they denominate only the heroes of those primitive times.
- ‘Antient brotche’ — The brotche is at present, as far as I know, only used by the women, but of old, I believe, was like-wise used by some of the men in the way you describe.
- ‘ Teindrum ’ rather Taindrom i.e. the house of the height; from Ti' a house and droma the genitive case of druim the back or upper surface of any thing.
- p.86. ‘Rocks’ — The rock or distaff is now very little use in spinning by the women of this country. Spinning-wheels have become almost universal.
- p.87. ‘fairs held at Taymouth ’ These fairs are held in the village of Kenmore, and not at Taymouth.
- p.88. ‘the most southern resort of roes’ Roes still abound in some parts of Glenlyon, are seen in some of the woods of Breadalbane, and even so far South as the sides of Loch-Lomond.
- ‘no other fish’ Besides the common trout and bull-trout, called by the inhabitants keann-garv i.e. great head, I have seen a small species of Char in Loch-Rannoch, and have been informed that there were plenty of eels in it, but no fish or pearls.
- ‘Turuvachal’ should be spelt Tur-bhuachal.
- ‘most abandoned Sot’ The word Sot, I believe, conveys a different meaning with you in England from what it does to a Scotchman. He understands by it not merely a person who is become in a beastly manner a slave to his cups, but likewise one that is naturally dull, stupid and thick-skulled, without any life or vivacity. In this sense your censure upon the Poet Struan will hardly be reckoned just; for he by no means wanted a considerable share of natural parts, though he did not often make the proper use of them.
- p.90. ‘ Lagh sheachanna na bleanagh ’ should be written Là sheachanna' na blia'na, or the day to be shunned for beginning any work or enterprize upon through the whole year.
- ‘hold their Bel-tein’ — The feast or entertainment which is held at this time by the herdsmen is called Binnechan from beinn a mountain, as of old it was probably celebrated on the tops of hills or mountains. The word Bel-tein or Beal-

tein, which according to the oldest and most received etymology of it signifies the fire of the God Bel or Baal, is now used only to denote the time in which this sacrifice or feast was solemnized. Thus the first of May.O.S., is universally called là Beal-tein, or Belton-day by the Highlanders.

- p.92. 'Latewake' — Musick and dancing, as far as I can learn, are now almost abolished at Latewakes in every part of the Highlands. In this very country however I know them still alive, who in their youth assisted at the ceremony such as you describe it.
- p.95. 'clach-bhouaigh' should be written clach-bhuai', or the stone of great power and efficacy.
- p.97. ' Blair ' — Blàr is the Galic name, and signifies originally any level spot of ground, without trees or other cause of roughness. But as such was often chosen as the most proper place for an engagement, blàr is now likewise used to denote the battle itself.
- p.102. Note at the foot.' Arrie ie. a house, made of turf' The bothay is indeed a house commonly made of turf, but that is by no means the meaning of the Galic word Arrie or the Scotch word Shealing, each of which denotes that whole tract of high ground which all the families of one or more hamlets retire to with their flocks for common pasture in summer.
- ' Brae-mar ' — The Galic name is Brai'-mhàr . Bràì' signifies the higher part of any place or country.
- p.107. ' Garval-bourn ' — Garv signifies rough or rocky.
- p.109. 'devish' — In Breadalbane they call sods devit, but I know not the word devish, though perhaps it may be used for the same purpose in the North.
- p.111. ' Tulloch ' i.e. a round small eminence.
- p.122. 'Sowens' This is a common enough food in a great part the Highlands, and reckoned by many very agreeable. But the husks of oats of themselves, without a considerable mixture of oat meal, are never sufficient ingredients in it's preparation.
- p.128. ' Elgin ' — This name is probably derived from the Galic word ^{àillegan} which denotes any thing fair or beautiful. This seems to be likewise the original of Alectum the old name of Dundee , which to this day is called Aillig by the Highlanders in Athol.
- p.136. ' Ardersier ' should be written Aird-nan-saor i.e. the height or point of the wrights. The reason of this projecting piece of land's getting such a name is, I believe, at present unknown.
- p.137. ' Inverness ' so called from the river Ness and Inver or Inner denoting always the place where a small river enters into a lake or the sea.
- ' Ardersier ' properly Aird-nan-saor .
- ' Tomman heurich ' — Tomman signifies a round green eminence.
- p.140. ' Leornamonach ' should be written rather Lèir-nam-monach , Lèir or Lethir signifying land that lies upon one side of a river or a branch of the sea, and monach a monk.
- p.141. ' Dingwall ' called by the Highlanders Inner-feorain . Feòran is the name of the river that enters there into the sea.
- p.143. ' Ballinagouan ' i.e. the village of the smiths; baile signifying a town, village or hamlet, and govan a smith.
- ' New Tarbat ' — Tarbat is the Galic name for an istmhus. Whether there is any such narrow neck of land at New Tarbat I cannot say.
- p.144. ' Sutherland ' called by the Highlanders Cattu .
- p.145. ' Porth-beg ' should be written Port-beg i.e. the little harbour or landing place.
- p.146. ' Cairn lean or the grey tower' — The Galic word lean or leathen signifies broad, but lia' grey.
- p.149. ' Cathness ' called by the Highlanders Gall-u or Gall-dhu'ich i.e. the county of Strangers.
- p.151. ' Morven ' i.e. the great mountain, from mòr great and beinn a mountain.
- p.161. ' Tariar-kinich ' should be written Tarr-dheargnaich, a word derived from tarr the belly or lower part and dearg red.
- ' Carn Goran ' should be written Carn-gorm i.e the blue cairn or heap of stones. Upon this mountain, barren in other respects, are found beautiful enough pebbles, which I suppose you have seen.
- ' Stasach na gail ' ought to be spelt Starshnach-nan-gai'el .

- p.162. ‘ brechan ’ should rather be written brechean or breacan, from breac spotted or party-coloured.
- p.163. ‘ brechan-feal ’ rather brechan-feill i.e. the folded plaid.
- ‘cuoranen is a sort of laced shoe’ It should be spelt cuaran.
- ‘ truish ’ should be written truis and fille-beg feile-beg.
- p.165. ‘Crosh-tairie, or the cross of shame’ rather crosh-tàrie, or as others pronounce it, crosh-tàrich i.e. the cross for gathering or assembling the clan together.
  ‘ tanac or plaid’ should be written tonnag or little plaid.
  ‘ called ossan ’ — The word preassach, i.e. plaited, should be added, for ossan by itself is the name given to the short stocking commonly worn by the men or women.
- p.169. ‘ Straith-glas ’ — i.e. the grey straith or valley.
- p.171. ‘ See-whinnin, or Cummin's seat ’ should be spelt See-Chuimin .
- Note at the foot. Kil-whinnin should be written Kill-Chuimin , or Cummin's burial-place.
- p.176. ‘spreith’ The open theft of cattle is called by the Highlanders creach. Spreith is only the general galic name for cattle.
- p.178. ‘ Loch-yell ’ rather Loch-iel.
- p.181. last line. ‘ Morvan ’ should be spelt Morven .
- p.183. ‘ Lough-Tulla ’ — rather Loch-Talla.
- p.188. ‘ Crouachan ’ should be spelt Cruachan
- ‘ Croisch an t sleachd ’ should be written Crois-an-t-sleuch .
- Note at the foot: ‘Druidical stones &.’ Druidical circles or places of worship were of old called Clachan i.e. stones: Hence to go to the clachan is at this day a common Galic phrase for going to Church. But I have not been able to learn that in more modern times it was ever the practice to build churches on the ruins of these antient Druidical temples.
- p.189. ‘ Inverary ’ — In Galic Inner-aora, so called from the river aora which enters into the sea hard by it.
- p.192. ‘ Aray ’ It's Galic name is Aora .
- p.194. ‘Colquhuns’ should be spelt Colquhouns.
- p.195. ‘ Ben-Lomond ’ i.e. the naked mountain, from beinn a mountain, and lom bare or naked.
- ‘ Comerie ’ is commonly spelt Comrie.
- p.198. ‘But the Erse language’ — Erse is a Scotch word signifying the language spoken by the native Highlanders, but is only a contraction of the word Irish. The only name which they themselves give to their language is Galic. The Irish language they call Galic Erinach
- ‘ Dunbarton ’ called at present by the Highlanders Dùn-breaton or the fort of the British, but of old Baile-chluaith , from baile a town and Cluaith the firth of Clyde.
- p.200. ‘ Stirling ’ — It's Galic name is Sruila .
- p.212. ‘ river Carron ’ originally Car-avon i.e. the winding river.
- p.262. Galic epitaph 2$^{d.}$ line. ‘thuair’ should be spelt fhuair
- 10th. line ‘ Dus gidh mi ’ should be written Duisgidh mi
- p.263. Sap$^{'s.}$ ode in Galic. 2^{d} line. ‘Sqa’ is an error of the press for sqà':
- 3$^{d.}$line. ‘faad’ for fad:
- 4$^{th.}$l. ‘ 's do fhreagrath cùin ’ for s t fhea-ghàir ciuin:
- 5$^{th.}$line ‘chloss’ for chlos:
- 7$^{th.}$l. ‘ le t Aadh ’ for le t' àill:
- 10$^{th.}$l. ‘ Teasghradh ’ for Teas-ghràdh, and ‘ Baal ’ for ball:
- 11$^{th.}$l. ‘ chaoch ’ for chaog:
- 12$^{th.}$l. ‘ 'Stac aoidh ’ for Stacaich:

- 14th l. ‘ chuin ’ for chiuin.
- p.264. Gal. epit. last word: ‘ oiru ’ for oirn.
- p.279. ‘Capercally’ — This bird is called by some of the Highlanders Caper-coille, and by others Capull-coille.

Rannoch is eighteen computed miles long. There are about thirty eight farms in it, but three or four or more tenants are commonly joined about each of them. The number of souls is said to be about 2400. The whole country is divided into a hundred merk-lands, as they call them, the old rent of each of these divisions having once been probably but a merk Scotch, or thirteen pence and one third of a penny Sterling. The whole rent at present is about 1040 £ Sterling.

Corn, bear and potatoes are the only crops — The quantity raised of them is often sufficient for supplying the inhabitants but for one half of the year. Three cows at an average and one horse are every year sent to market from each merk-land.

The principal quadrupeds, known here in a wild state, are

Deer, Roe, Common Hare, White Hare, Badger, Martin, Otter, Weesel, Wild Cat, Pole-cat, Mole, Common Mouse, and Water Shrew-mouse.

Birds:

The Sea-eagle, Ring-tail Eagle, Osprey, Common Buzzard, Kite, Hen-Harrier, Kestril, Sparrow Hawk, White Owl, Brown Owl, Raven, Hooded Crow, Rook, Magpie, Jay, Green Woodpecker, Greater spotted woodpecker, Cuckoo, Creeper, Black Cock, Grous, Tarmachan, Partridge, Fieldfare, Throstle, Red wing, Black-bird, Ring-Ouzel, Water-Ouzel, Tit-Lark, House-swallow, Goatsucker, Red-breast, Hedge Sparrow, Willow wren, wren, wheat-ear, white water wagtail, Chaffinch, yellow-hammer, Reed Sparrow, Great Titmouse, Blue Titmouse, Heron, woodcock, Snipe, Green Plover, Land Rail, Little Grebe, Grey Speckled Diver, Golden-Eye, Mallard.

No Rats have been hitherto seen in Rannoch

The Martin ventures abroad in search of it's prey only in the night-time. It is found out therefore but in time of Snow, by means of it's track; and even then it is observed to attend so well to self-preservation as not to stir out of it's concealment for the first two nights. The Martin that haunts old hollow birch-trees is thought to have a richer and more beautiful fur than the one that is found in old pines.

The only woods in Rannoch are of pine and birch. The pine wood ~~[illegible]~~ is about two miles long and one broad. There are at present no trees in it of any size. The planks they yield are commonly from eight to thirteen inches in breadth, and the largest do not exceed two feet. The timber however is reckoned but little inferior to that imported from Norway. In the greatest part of trees of ten inches in diameter, growing in dry rocky soil, there are between six and eight inches of red timber; but in a moist boggy situation a tree of ten or twelve inches in [illegible] will have no more.

There is a good saw-mill, which is let in lease by the Govt. The Tacksman is obliged to manufacture 150 tun of timber every year, which he rents at eighteen shillings and sixpence pr. tun. Planks nine feet long and an inch and a quarter thick and sold by him again in retail at one penny each superficial inch.

Plants in the pastures and lower grounds:

- Athamanta meum
- Carduus Helenioides
- Gentiana campestris
- Tormentilla erecta
- Lotus corniculata
- Campanula rotundifola
- Euphrasia officinalis
- Ajuga raptans
- orchis maculata
- Scabiosa succisa
- Centaurea Jacea
- ——— Cyanus
- viola tricolor
- Artemisia vulgaris

- Achillea millefolium
- ——— ptarmica
- Chenopodium bonus Henricus
- Urtica dioica
- Arelium Capa
- Thlaspi bursa pastoris
- Thalictrum minus
- Leontodon taraxacum
- Briza media
- Geranium pralense
- Bellis perennis
- Plantago major
- Trefolium repens
- ——— pratense
- Alchemilla vulgaris
- Gallium verum
- ——— boreale
- Lamium album
- ——— rubrum
- Sinapi arvinse
- Chrysanthemum leucanthemum
- Polygala vulgaris
- Thymus serpillum
- Orobus tuberosus
- Fragaria vesea
- Rosa canina
- Prunus spinosa
- Ranunculus flammula
- ~~[illegible]~~
- Parnassia palustris
- Narthecium ossifragum
- Alyrica gale
- Ping#icola vulgaris
- Comarum palustre
- Geum rivale
- Drosera rotundifolia
- Potamogeton natans

In the [illegible]eatest part of the pine-wood there is such a plentiful crop of heath and bilberries as to suppress all other vegetation.

Plants in the birch-woods of Tros-chraig, Craig-loisgl' and Coille-mh#r :

- Vaccinium vitis ide

Arbutus uva ursi — } In great abundance

- Pyrola rotundifolia

——— minor

——— secunda} The rotundifol. creeping above the wood almost to the top of the hill

- Gnaphalium dioicus
- sylvalicum
- Linum catharticum
- Ophrys ovala
- Stellaria Holastea
- Stachys palustris
- Mercurialis perenius
- Adianthum capillus veneris
- Lysimachia nemorum
- Primula veris
- Scrophularia vernalis
- Digitalis purpurea
- Geranium Robertianum
- Rubus saxatilis
- Chyacintus non scriptus
- Angelica sylvestris
- Valeriana officinalis
- Oxabis acetosella
- Bunium bulbocastanm
- Veronica officinalis

Plants in the higher hills:

- Alchemilla Alpina
- Salix Herbacea
- Vaccinium uliginosum
- Erica vulgaris
- ——— cinerea
- Empetrum nigrum
- Cornus herbacea
- Festuca ovina
- ——— rubra
- Lycopodium selago
- ——— selaginoides
- Rubus chamæmorus
- Anthericum calyeulatum
- Polygonum viviparum
- Thalictrum Alpinum
- Epilobium Alpinum
- Cochlearia Groenlandica
- Cucubalus acaulis
- Saxifraga stellaris
- ——— oppositifolia
- ——— aizoides
- Juniperus communis
- Lichen furfuraceus
- ——— geographicus

The foregoing list will serve to convey a tolerable idea of the principal vegetable productions of Rannoch Besides these however I observed several other common plants, the names of which are not inserted, and some which I have not hitherto ascertained. They were not in a proper state for investigation when I met with them, and I have not in this part access to the books necessary for assisting me in the enquiry. Some time after this therefore, when I may probably have greater leizure and better opportunities of information, it may be in my power to send you a completer list.

I remember to have heard you express some intention of publishing, in the next edition of your Tour,[3] prints of some of the more uncommon Scotch plants. Of such as are natives of Rannoch the Cornus herbacea, Pyrola rotundifolia or common winter-green, Pyrola minor or lesser winter-green, and P. secunda or dented leaved winter-green, will serve very well for this purpose.

They are all of them rare and beautiful plants, and good figures of each of them may be taken from the *Flor. Dan.* — The berry of Cornus — is red and tempting, but eating freely of it will, in the opinion of the Highlanders, create an insatiable appetite. Hence the name they give it of Lus-a'-chraois i.e. the plant of gluttony.

I am convinced that many of your readers would likewise reckon it a very considerable addition and improvement, were you to prefix to this new edition a small accurate Map of Scotland and part of England, in which your Tour might be pointed out by small parallel or dotted lines.[4]

If these or any other remarks I can send you are of the smallest service, I may assure you it will give me pleasure. There is no occasion therefore for you putting yourself to the trouble of any further reward. The being favored with your acquaintance and good wishes is to me a sufficient one.

I could hardly forbear, blushing upon receiving your thanks for the white Hare. Soon after I wrote you last upon looking to the box in which I had it laid up, I found that mice had some how got access to it and laid bare the teeth and part of the feet. I delayed therefore for some time the sending it to Edin$^{r.}$, in hopes of getting a new and better specimen. At last I was determined, by an opportunity that offered this week, to send it off such as it was. This day however I was lucky enough to see two white hares that were shot yesterday by a fox-hunter in this country for M$^{rs.}$ Campbell of Achalader. She has promised to keep one of the skins for me and if that does not do, the same man gives me hopes of his procuring [illegible] for me a fresh specimen.

I think it does not hitherto appear that M$^{r.}$ Banks has made any new or considerable discoveries in his late voyage. As for the island of Staffa, by passing near it on a fine day I doubt not but you had as good an opportunity of observing the general appearance of it's curious columnar rocks as he could have had by landing there.

Achalader is in health, offers his respectful compliments unto you, and desires me to tell you that he has sent to D$^{r.}$ Ramsay the book he promised to transmit to you. Lord Breadalbane is at present in Edin$^{r.}$, does not go to London

till spring, and not certainly then I have still more to trouble you with, but at present I have already exceeded all the reasonable bounds of an epistle

I am,
Dear Sir, with great esteem, Your most obliged & most obed$^{t.}$ Serv$^{t.}$

John Stuart

To

Thomas Pennant Esq.

at Downing

Flintshire

South Britain

67

received & answ^{d} jan. 12$^{th.}$ 1773

of Rannoch &c by Mr Stuart.

Editorial Notes

[1] The quotes and page references below correspond to the 1771 edition of *A Tour in Scotland 1769*, although Stuart's spelling occasionally differs from the source.

[2] The reference in Pennant's *Tour* is to the figure of Duncan Campbell of Loch Awe in George Jamesone's painting *The Campbell of Glenorchy Family Tree* .

[3] The next edition of Pennant's *Tour in Scotland 1769* to appear would be *the Warrington edition of 1774* .

[4] On the advice of Stuart and others, Pennant did prepare such a *map* for his *Tour in Scotland 1772 Part II* , however it was not completed until 1777, the year after the tour itself was published. Pennant's cartographical interests are also evident in his correspondence with George Paton.