

Old-lore Miscellany
OF
Orkney Shetland Caithness
and Sutherland

VOL. IX.

OLD-LORE SERIES

VOL. XI.

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OLD-LORE MISCELLANY
OF
ORKNEY SHETLAND CAITHNESS
AND
SUTHERLAND

EDITED BY
ALFRED W. JOHNSTON

VOL. IX.

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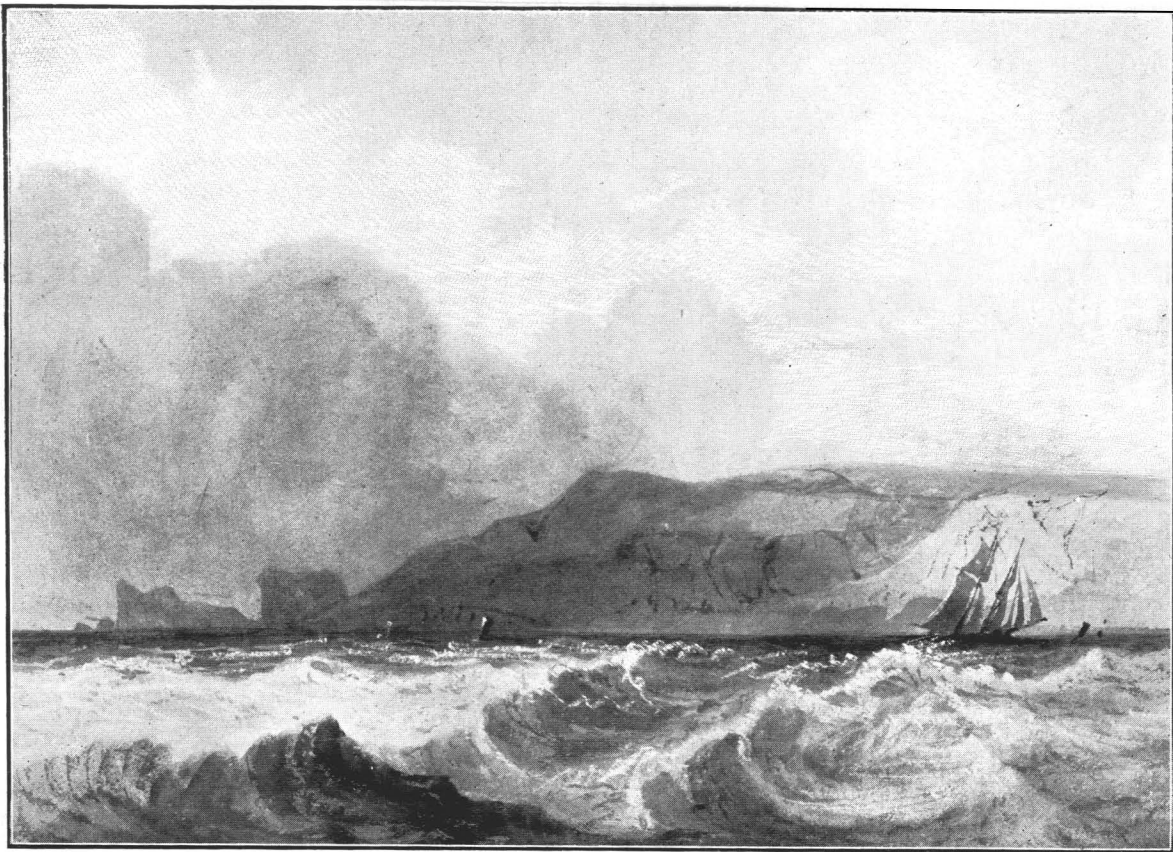
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N.B.—It has now been considered unnecessary and inadvisable to incur the cost of printing an Index of the numerous names and subjects in the Miscellany, of which the Table of Contents should be a sufficient guide for students.

ERRATA.

- p. 207, 5th line from foot, for 1857 read 1851.
- p. 235, top line, for 7 gallons read 9 gallons.
lines 21, 22, after ounce-land read as stated by Captain Thomas.
- p. 247, "Conversion value." Note.—Cloth alone was converted into a fixed payment of 4s. Scots per ell. Butter was not converted.



HERMENNES, BURRAFIRTH, UNST.

*From the original water-colour drawing by George Richardson. Frontispiece to Dr. Edward Charlton's
"Journal of an Expedition to Shetland in 1834."*

Old-Lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND.

VOL. IX.

PART I.

JUNE, 1921.

NOTES.

OLD DORNOCH: ITS TRADITIONS AND LEGENDS, by H. M. MACKAY, Town Clerk, pp. 151. We have here four 'popular' lectures on (1) Medieval Dornoch, (2) The Reformation Period, (3) The Reformation to the Revolution, and (4) The Revolution to the Disruption, with a foreword by the dowager duchess of Sutherland, now lady Millicent Hawes. We welcome such lectures when written by one who, like Mr. Mackay, is familiar with his subject by virtue of intimate and lifelong knowledge of the place and of a close study of its records. Each of the successive pictures is necessarily limited, and altogether they form in no sense a complete history. But they are well done. Surrounded though it may be by old Norse place-names, such as The Fleet, Unes, Embo, Skelbo, Eaglesfield, Strath Ormelie, Astle, Skibo, Ospisdale, and many others with which the S.E. littoral of Sutherland abounds, Dornoch, the ancient Durnach of the Royal Writ of about 1145 was no Norse, but a Celtic name. So too was its first church dedicated to St. Barr, who was no Norseman but an early Irish saint of the 6th century. This edifice, we are told, stood immediately to the east of the Cathedral erected after 1222 by St. Gilbert, its fourth bishop, when he reconstituted the Diocese of Caithness, which then included all the modern Caithness and Sutherland. The Norse, whom we, too, believe to have had a trading town at Unes (Vik-nes), the "Ness of the Creek" of Little Ferry or Ferryoons, probably left the old monks of Durnach and their Abbot unmolested.

For they seized only the good lands, and gave them Norse names, and the sands and thin soil of Dornoch had probably little attraction for them. Gilbert de Moravia too would find the site of his new Episcopal See and residence far less exposed to Norse attacks than the Episcopal Castle at Scrabster on the Pentland Firth, near which bishop John had in 1200 escaped with his life but with his tongue mutilated and his eyes injured, or than Halkirk, where bishop Adam, Gilbert's immediate predecessor, had lived and was burnt to death in his own kitchen in 1222, with John, earl of Caithness and jarl of Orkney coolly looking on. But Gilbert himself was attacked by them in, it is said, 1240, even at Dornoch. For he had then a wealthy priesthood and a richly furnished Cathedral there.

It is, perhaps, unfair to criticise what are avowedly merely popular lectures as if they were intended for a serious historical treatise, but we think that, as regards times other than sir Robert Gordon's own, his statements should hardly be quoted without the fullest warning that they may not be worthy of acceptance. Of early times he was prone to say anything he chose, and in later times he was much biassed against all save Sutherlands and Gordons and Murrays. It is, however, quite a pleasure to find, and that too in a book by a Mackay, that full and even-handed justice is always dealt out to all these persons and to all churches and creeds alike.

As regards details, we note that doubtful Norse derivations are given. Again, the list of bishops at p. 51 is clearly, as to the first five of them, wholly fictitious. Nor can Cnoc Bar, or Craig Bar, or Castle Varrich have anything to do with that fictitious bishop. Nor is the fact of the existence of St. Bar's Fair any proof of his being a Bishop of the eleventh century. For most other Fairs and Markets were named after Pictish saints of very early times long before the tenth or eleventh cen-

turies. Tor-an-Aurach may be the mound of the Aberachs (Mackays) killed in a raid on Dornoch, yet, in this connection, there is an interesting note in Pope's paraphrase of the "Orcades" of Torfaeus that all the south side of the Fleet was known as "Taobh an Taralich" or "Haralds side," and Harald Ungi's forebears were probably domiciled as chiefs in Strathnaver and not unlikely to have been buried at Dornoch. To the Flemish origin ascribed at p. 8 to the Freskyns, afterwards the de Moravia family, we demur. The Fretheskins, Fresechyns, Freskyns, or Freskins were lowland Scots or Picts from Strabroc (Uphall and Broxburn) in Midlothian, and no Frisians; and Freskyn I. settled in Moray about 1120 and built Duffus castle on Loch Spynie, where he entertained David I. all the summer of 1150 while that king was building Kinloss Abbey, and Freskyn's son William Macfrisgyn lived at Duffus after him. Hugo, *dominus Sutherlandiae* from about 1196, was William's eldest son, and Hugo was succeeded as *dominus* or lord in Sutherland by his own son, also named William, who, about 1235, became first earl, the Duffus estate going to his younger brother, Walter.

As regards Gilbert and the Dragon, which burnt the woods, may this monkish fable not allude to the Norse invader with fire and sword, and his improvident use of wood for his houses and skalis and ships, and also record the defeat by Gilbert at Hilton of Embo of a Norse force whence comes the City seal of 'Dorn-eich'? Next, there is a big blank in the lectures between Gilbert and The Reformation, and, to fill it up, we long for a fifth lecture on the monastic and conventual life in Dornoch, and to have vividly put before us all that Gilbert's old tower and steeple have looked upon in the way of processions of clergy on high days and holidays and the marriages and christenings and stately funerals of earls and ladies, and the doings of the red Franciscan

Friars on the links, and at Thursday fishings, on the Evelix River and the Fleet, to provide fish for Friday fasts, and the pious nuns flitting on errands of mercy through the city from their convent at Cnoc na Cail-leich.

It is when he comes to times in which Sir Robert Gordon becomes a contemporary of the events he relates, and to times after the records of the Burgh begin, that Mr. Mackay is at his best. For that part of his interesting story we refer readers to his book. But could he not some day give us more details of the stirring scenes of "the '15" and "the '45," when Dornoch was indeed lively, and full of Mackay and Sutherland regiments, full too, in 1746, of their enemies with Jacobite proclivities, at a time when four sloops-of-war were taken and retaken in Little Ferry, and when the Kyle was the scene of a brisk running sea-fight. Of the disaster in July, 1809, at Meikle Ferry, as Mr. Mackay says, there is no authentic account; for the issue of the *Inverness Courier* containing it is missing from the file; but we refer him to "The Northern Highlands in the 19th century" (pp. 24 and 25), which gives a fairly clear account in the appeal after the event for the subscriptions of which Dornoch appropriated the balance.

There is so much that is good in Mr. Mackay's lectures that we ask for more; and Sir Robert's *Genealogie* (treated with caution), *The Sutherland Book*, and *Origines Parochiales* would, with George Sutherland Taylor's papers and the Burgh Records, go far to form materials for the complete history which Mr. Mackay should write. Meantime we heartily commend Mr. Mackay's volume to all who visit the old city; and no Dornoch or Sutherland man can afford to be without a copy at the very reasonable price of 4/6, at which, as excellently printed at the "North Star" Office, Dingwall, it is sold by Mr. Gillespie, Bookseller, Dornoch. —J. G.

CAITHNESS FLORA.—A specimen of *Pyrola Rotundifolia* has been found at Scorriclett by mr. Sinclair Manson, Kirkhill, Wick, and another by mr. James Sutherland, Pulteneytown, and identified as such by mr. Arthur Bennett, Croydon, joint author of "The Flora of Caithness."—*Northern Ensign*, July 1st, 1920.

CAITHNESS PEAT MOSS MAN.—The clothing of the man found imbedded in the moss recently at Quintfall Hill, on the Barroch estate, Caithness, about seven miles north of Wick, has been forwarded to the Museum of Antiquities, Queen Street, Edinburgh, by sir John Sinclair, and will form one of the exhibits on view when the Museum is reopened to the public. The coins found with the body indicate that the man belonged to the late 17th century. The clothing is in keeping with this theory. It consists of four main pieces, a coat, an undervest, a pair of knee-breeches, and a pair of under-breeches. All are made of cloth, of the homespun type still made in the Highlands, although perhaps a little coarser and harder in texture and surface. The outer coat has been made to button to the neck, and has a long row of button-holes placed only $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart. A few of the buttons are in position. These are round and cloth-covered. There are three buttons at the bottom of each sleeve. The cloth is of a bright yellow colour, but doubtless has been stained and altered in appearance by the action of the peat. The under-coat is a little longer than the outer-coat, and has originally had fifteen button-holes, though a small piece with three of the button-holes has been torn away near the neck. There have been four buttons at the end of each sleeve. Neither coat has any seam at the bottom, the edges being rough and a little irregular. The knickerbockers are gathered by a band at the waist, and they have two long strips of braid at the knee for tying. The knickerbockers have been worn out at the seat, and a new piece of cloth has been put

on in the inside. There is a cloth button both at the back and front for fastening. The under-breeches are very rough and primitive in appearance. They are of material similar to that of the knickerbockers, but a little thicker. They are also gathered at the top and are made to fasten in front. The stockings are of cloth, and have a seam from top to bottom. They are without feet, but a gusset has been let in at the ankle part of the leg so as to adapt them more readily to the manner in which they had to be worn. The shoes are of the slipper type, with very low heel. They have a leather welt, and are round-shaped in front. With the body was found a large blanket or plaid. This blanket is plain for an inch round the border, and then comes a $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch border worked with black wool. The cap is a little round-shaped one, very similar to some types of military service cap. It is of the Balmoral shape, but there is no knob in the centre. It is sewn in the swell and sewn also in the shrinks.

The striking feature of the discovery, in so far as it relates to the habit of attire prevalent in the peasant class in the seventeenth century, is that the man apparently was wearing no underclothing, but wore two coats and two pairs of knickerbockers. The practice of dispensing with underclothing is still, it is reported by travellers, found among Greek peasants of the present day.—*Scotsman*.

AN UNOPENED PICT'S HOUSE.—It was in 1857, when I was a lad of 13, that certain improvements were made on the farm of Faralclet in Rousay. Amongst others a field of 15 acres was enclosed with a stone dyke, and whilst stones were plentiful it was difficult to convey them to certain parts of the field in consequence of the hilly nature of the ground. The most accessible quarry was what had been a building of some sort, but now covered with earth and grass so flattened out that even

cattle could graze over it. A commencement was made at the east side of the ruin and a large quantity of stones taken out of it. My father then gave orders to leave that part of the ruin and take stones out of the west side of it. One day on my return from school I made my way as usual to the *quarry*, and getting a small crow-bar I continued working at the east side of the old building, as it had occurred to me that there was bound to be some trace of a habitation in the basement of the ruin. After working for a considerable time at the face of the ruin, and endeavouring to release a fairly large stone, I was rewarded with seeing a hollow space at the back of the stone, instead of, as formerly, more stones piled on each other. I at once raised the cry that I had found a room at the east side of the ruin. My father and the workmen at once came and examined my find, when it was discovered that the hollow space was in the shape of a kiln, and was covered at the top by a stone of about 5 inches thick by about 4 feet in diameter. It was then resolved to uncover this kiln-like structure, and in so doing a piece of deer horn was found on the top of the stone cover along with various small bones, resembling the bones of a pig's foot. On the stone cover being removed entrance was made through the roof by means of a ladder, the structure being about 11 feet from top to bottom, and built of rough unhewn stones. At the bottom was found a stone lamp, and nothing more. There was a door at the bottom leading to other parts of the ruin, but on entering by this door there was only a passage running right and left, so filled with earth and stones that one could neither walk nor see any distance. I do not think any systematic effort has been made to open out what remains of this ruin. It must have been a large building in its day, as the circumference of the ruin is about 200 paces. At that time the ground about the ruin had the appearance of an old churchyard, as there were many stones standing on edge

in it, about a foot above ground, as if they were at the head of a grave, but not the least trace of an inscription or marks of any kind on them. One space in particular was very grave-like, as it had a stone at the head and another at the foot, and about 6 feet between them. Curiosity made my brother and I to dig there, and we discovered one or two pieces of very decayed bones, which on reporting we were at once stopped from further digging. "The Pict's House," as it was called, was visited by all strangers coming to the island, and amongst others a clergyman, who was on a visit to Rousay, came to see it, and was shewn the stone lamp and piece of deer horn, which he at once coveted, and asked my father to give it to him, which he did. I was more than annoyed, on returning from school, to be told my stone lamp and deer horn had been given away, as I considered they were my property, I being the means of finding them. What ultimately became of them I am unable to say.

On the farm of Faraclet is a standing stone, known locally as Yetnesstone. In my boyhood days I was told, and I believed it too, that whenever he heard the clock strike twelve the last night of the year, he went to a loch a short distance off in two jumps and took a drink of water. I often wished in those days I had the courage of my belief, and be there when Yetnesstone was away for its drink to see what was below it.¹ I have often thought the old ruin above referred to must have been of importance in its day. It is surrounded by a dyke, and the enclosure is known as "The Taft." It is at the north end of a fresh-water loch and quite close to the sea, and is worthy of being opened up even yet, as far as possible. My visit to a Pict's House near Dunrobin, in Sutherland, has prompted me to tell the story of my finding one in Rousay, and which I would fain hope will be some day as thoroughly cleared out as the Dunrobin one.—J. LOUITT, Edinburgh, Sep., 1916.

¹ For Low's account see vol. viii., p. 137.

ORKNEY PLACE-NAMES.—Cantic (Head) : Gaelic, *ceann 'n t-suic*, head of the snout—pronounced *kantuck*. The Camps of Jupiter Fring, Old Gaelic *tiobairt air*, well on, obsolete Welsh (? Pictish) *ffring*, *ffrin*, brow of a cliff, *cf.* Gaelic *fraon*, a place of shelter in the mountains; Gaelic, *campa*, camps : *Campa nan tiobairt air ffring*, camps of the well on the cliff brow—pronounced *jupart air fring*. The place is now called the Braes of the Camps. The original name may have been Old Welsh *ffring*, applied to the brow of the steep hill with a flat top. The Gaels, before the Norse arrived, may have named the *tiobairt*, well, and the *campa*, camps. The well was said to be bottomless (see *Miscell.* VIII., 138). *Campa* cannot be Old Welsh, on account of the letter *p*, but it is quite reasonable to suggest that it is as old as Papey, Gaelic *pàp*, when loan-words with *p* were introduced into Old Irish, with Christianity. The Laverock of Kirkwall, Gaelic *laimhrig*, a landing-place, pronounced *lavrig*, as applied to the shore of the Peerie Sea, the old harbour. In the new edition of MacBain, *laimhrig*, landing place, harbour, is derived from Norse, *hlað-hamarr*, pier or landing rock, Shet. *laamar*. Shetland must be a misprint, as there appears to be no such word in the dialect. It occurs, however, in Lewis, as *lathamarr*, a loading rock, and is derived, by professor W. J. Watson, from the Norse already quoted (see *Place Names of Ross and Cromarty*, p. 268). Can Quanterness be a late Gaelic *Cuantórr* + O.N. *nes*, harbour hill, as applied to Wideford Hill; *tórr* is applied to a hill of conic form, which is characteristic of Wideford Hill.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

BOOKS AND PRINTING IN CAITHNESS.—The paper read by Mr. John Mowat to the Glasgow Bibliographical Society in 1917 has been reprinted from their *Transactions*. Mr. Mowat brings to his subject expert knowledge, and the ease with which he moves among

Caithness books, pamphlets and newspapers of early and recent times reveals a master hand. The present paper passes in review the earliest appearances of books in Caithness, and deals also with early bookselling and printing in the county. The section devoted to journalism in the far north of Scotland is very interesting. It is to be hoped that Mr. Mowat may expand the paper reprinted and give the readers of the *Miscellany* the benefit of his garnered knowledge, not only of Caithness, but also of Sutherland literature.

REMINISCENCES OF AN ORKNEY PARISH.—Mr. John Firth is to be congratulated on having, in response to the request of his friends, published in book form the series of articles which he contributed to the *Old-Lore Miscellany* (Vols. III.—VII.) on “An Orkney Township before the Division of the Community,” together with additional chapters on local customs, such as markets and feast days, and a list of old Orkney words, riddles and proverbs. This book will rank as the most notable of its kind. In diction it is terse and simple, while its narrative is a straightforward statement of facts known to the author, in which he shews a keen sense of humour and pathos—a modern saga.

A review of this work will appear in the *Year-Book*. It was printed in 1920, at Stromness, by Mr. W. R. Rendall, and may be had from Mr. A. Wood, Post Office, Finstown, Orkney, for 5s. net.

FOLK-TALES AND LEGENDS OF SHETLAND.—Mr. John Nicolson, author of “Tales of Thule,” etc., has given a valuable contribution to the folklore of Shetland under the above title, including sections dealing with The Trows, Traditions and Legends, Superstitions, and Guddiks or riddles, etc, together with a Glossary. There are twenty-nine fairy tales and fourteen legends, all well told and interesting, apart from their great scientific value.

Although there are many place-names derived from the person-name Atli, in Shetland, Atla, of Atlaskoard, is suggestive of Eddic origin, associated as it is with a Grásteinn of the fairies. Many Shetland dialect words are of Gaelic origin, such as *bleddik*, buttermilk, Orkney *blatho*, Gael. *blàthach*. Although Jakobsen derives *birtek*, tabu name for fire, from O.N. *birti*, light, there is the Gael. *birtich*, stir up, from *bior*, goad, and the expression : *birtich an teine*, poke the fire. The 'licht-nin tree' of the quern explains an obscure passage in the lay about the mythic mill grotti.

The book is published in Edinburgh by Thomas Allan & Sons, at 7s. 6d. net.

QUERIES.

THE MINCH.—The Great and Little Minch, the channels between the Outer Hebrides and the mainland and Skye. The only other instance of this name appears to be Minchmore, a mountain range in Peebles and Selkirk. The only Gaelic derivation appears to be *muing*, a mane, root *muin*, the back, neck, as applied to a neck of water or hills.—A. W. J.

PRINGELL, SCOTT, SCARTH.—The following is an extract from an old family Bible given, about 1895, by the late Mr. James Cathie Scarth, eldest son of the late Mr. Robert Scarth, of Binscarth, to Captain H. L. Norton Traill. The water-mark is "A. Cowan & Sons, 1854. Patent." It is understood that the persons mentioned were ancestors of Mr. Scarth.

(Between Job and the Psalms.)

I begund my travells abroad in Holland, France, Spain, Italy, Prusia and Turkie in the year off 1645 and I returned from Prusia, Turkie, Italy, Spain, France and Holland to England the 12th day of Augt. 1648.

I was married to my wyffe the 16th daye of August, 1652.

[1] My sonne Samuëll was borne the 30th day of June in the forenoone betwixt aught and nyne of the clocke and by reason of his weakness was baptised the same daye in the afternoon anno 1653, and he was weaned the 20th of March 1655.

[2] My sonne Nathaniel was born the 9th daye of October in the year of our Lord 1655, betwixt 9 and 10 o'clock at night and was baptised by mr Mathew Newcome, lecturer of Dodham, the 21st daye of October, 1655. My above said sonne Nathaniel was . . . the 11th daye of June in the year 1657.

My previous [?] sonne Nathaniel dyed the 19th daye of July [1657 ?] being the Lord's day, betwixt 11 and 12 of the clock in the forenoone. Oh ! what a sore losse—yet Job I. 22. [In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly]. The rest of his friends all greived for my losse.

[3] 3rd sonne, named Nathaniel, was borne the 21st daye of January in the year of our Lord 1658 betwixt 8 and 9 o'clock atte night, being Thursday, and was baptised the 8th daye after his birth, being the 28th daye of June [January]¹ in the above said year, 1658, in the town of Harwich.

My deare husband Alexander Pringell, dyed the 21st daye of December being Wesenday [should be Tuesday] betwixt 6 and 7 of the clocke in the morning and was burried upon the 25th daye of December, 1658.

(Before the New Testament.)

Elizabeth Scott was born in the year of God, 1786, being the 28th of April, on Saturdaye at 8 of the clock atte night.

William Scott was born the yer of God, 1790, the 7th day of February, being Sabath forenoone between 11 and 12 of the clocke.

¹“June,” probably misreading for Jan. because Thursday was 21st day of January and Monday was 21st day of June.

Robert Scott was borne the 8th daye of April being Sabath forenoon between wan and two of the clocke, 1792.

Kirkwall—Edward Scott and Katring Murray married the eight daye of June, 1782.

(At the end of the N. Testament.)

Edward Morgan was borne the . . . day of March 1684, and was married February the 15th daye, 1713.

Susanna Willis was borne January the 17th daye, 1684, and was married unto Edward Morgan the 15th daye of February, 1713.

To James Scoat and Marri Wallis, from William Wallis, to you and your children.

(This Bible is imprinted at London by the Deputies of Christopher Barker, printer to the Queenes most excellent Majestie, 1599).

The Editor will be glad to have any information about the above-named persons, and as to the present possessor of the Bible.

POPLEY.—Information is wanted regarding the family and ancestors of James Jameson Popley (? Papley), of Westray, Orkney, a shipowner, whose ship and crew went down in the Atlantic about 1790. His widow and son, William Arthur Popley (born January 26, 1817, died January 6, 1892), went to London, where she died. The son was brought up by, and assumed the surname of an uncle called Barnard (from whom Barnard's Wharf was named), was educated in the City of London, and afterwards was made a freeman of the Spectacle Makers Company. On March 21, 1840, he resumed his real name of Popley, when he married Eliza Harriett Hulbert (of a Huguenot family of Mortlake), who owned property in Wandsworth and Putney; she was born May 12, 1821, and died September 1, 1885.

The following is an extract from James Fea's

“Considerations on the Fisheries in the Scotch Islands,” London, 1787, p. 37¹:—

George Papley, born in the island of Westray, died at the very great age of 129 years. He was seven years old when the unfortunate Charles the I. was beheaded; he recollected the reign of his murderer and the regular succession of kings which followed, knew their respective names and the dates of the principal transactions of their reigns.

From this it will be seen that George Papley was born in 1642 and died in 1771, when James Fea was 43 years old. It is not known when Fea died, but he was born in 1728, and was alive in 1793. Papley thus lived under Charles I., Oliver Cromwell, Richard Cromwell, Charles II., James II., William and Mary, Anne, George I., George II., and George III.

SOME OLD CAITHNESS CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS

By JOHN MOWAT.

“Old Customs! Oh, I love the sound!
However simple they may be;
Whate’er with time hath sanction found
Is welcome and is dear to me.”

LONG after the Reformation there lingered in Caithness many distorted popish superstitions. In several parishes there were ruined chapels, to which the people still resorted on particular days to do homage to their tutelary saints. In 1613, the Rev. Dr. Richard Mercheston, minister of Bower, was mobbed by a band of infuriated worshippers and thrown into the River of Wick for his zeal in destroying the image of their patron saint. Reports were circulated by the perpetrators that the body of the minister was seen floating down the

¹ Mr. James W. Cursiter is thanked for this reference.—ED.

river with the stone figure of St. Fergus on the top of it.¹

Up till the beginning of the 18th century it was the practice of the inhabitants of Wick and district to visit the ruins of the old Chapel of St. Tears, at Ackergill,² on St. Innocents' day, and leave in it bread and cheese as an offering to the souls of the children slain by Herod. The disappearance of the bread and cheese was attributed to supernatural causes, but the dogs of the neighbourhood fared all the better for this supposed act of worship. Before sunrise every Christmas morning a similar practice took place at the Kirk of Moss, Mirelandhorn, when bread and cheese was left, as well as silver coins, which all mysteriously disappeared. No doubt, if at that time there were some foolish enough to sacrifice silver coins, there were also others wise enough to reap the benefit of such misguided devotions.

Another peculiar old custom of chapel worship is associated with the Chapel of St. Moddans at Freswick.³ On Candlemas day certain natives of the district assembled, and on their bare knees crept round the walls of the old ruin, then going to the burn close by and throwing two handfuls of water over their heads. Tradition gives no explanation of this religious performance, but it is related that the worshippers afterwards adjourned to the nearest alehouse, and all got "regularly drunk."

In these bygone days there were several lochs in the county accounted holy lochs, the waters of which were supposed to possess healing virtues. To these the superstitious flocked at certain seasons associated with the moon. St. Mary's Loch in Dunnet⁴ was one of these. To it pilgrimages were made from all parts of Caithness and even from the Orkneys. The particular season for visiting St. Mary's was the first Monday of

¹ Calder's *History of Caithness*, p. 219.

² Bishop Forbes' *Journals*, p. 211.

³ Canisbay Kirk Session Records, July, 1652, *O.-I. Miscell.* V. 59.

⁴ Calder's *Sketches from John O' Groats*, p. 227.

the "reath"¹ or quarter, and the summer quarter was the most popular. The patient desiring a cure had to walk or be carried round the loch in the early morning. Another part of the ceremony consisted in the washing the face and hands and throwing a piece of money in the loch. If the cure was to be effectual it was necessary that the patient should be out of sight of the water by sunrise. If there was no cure it was put down to want of faith or carelessness in carrying out the instructions. The virtue of the water was never doubted. The origin of healing powers of the water was said to be bestowed on it by the priest of St. John's, who blessed the loch. The pennies dropped into the consecrated water may at one time have been a source of revenue to the Chapel. There were also various wells said to possess the curative virtue, to which people afflicted with particular ailments resorted at certain times and seasons. The "Wall o' 'e Warth Hill" was one of these. Here the seekers after health went in search of their quest "'tween sin and day." Perhaps associated with this superstition is the old custom of "creaming the well." To be the first at the well on New Year's morning was to get the "cream" of the well, which meant beauty and happiness to the fair one who secured it. A wisp of straw was left in the well to indicate to the next comer that the well had already been "creamed." It was usual for a lad and lass to go together as soon as possible after the stroke of twelve. The custom has long been obsolete, but even in the memory of the writer the wisp of straw was placed in the well as a practical joke on an early rising maiden to show that someone had been before her.

The custom of "castin the heart" was a superstitious ceremony which lingered long. It was considered necessary as a cure for all who suffered from the result of a fright or from a lingering sickness. The heart was

¹ Gael. ràith.

supposed to be out of place or spirited away by an evil jinnee. The services of one skilled in the casting of the heart was often in request, and every district had its representative. The performance, with slight variations, was carried out as follows. Over the head of the patient was held a common sieve, and under it a wooden "bicker" containing newly drawn spring water. Molten lead was then poured through the eye of a sissors, which passed through the sieve into the water and separated into small pieces. These were carefully examined to find one of the shape of a heart. If not successful the process had to be repeated on alternate days. At the end of each performance the patient had to take a drink of the water and also wash face and hands with it. When the leaden shape of the heart was secured it was sewn into the clothing of the sufferer, or hung around the neck until recovery was complete, and as a proof against future trouble. To be effectual both the patient and the performer had to be fasting when the ceremony was carried out.¹

Under the date of 18th February, 1724, there is the following reference to a case of supposed ability to cure by sorcery. "The minister reports that he is credibly informed that Margaret Bain, spouse to James Donaldson, in Nybster, professes to cure diseases, and has lately practiced her skill in this parish, particularly on David Bremder and Euphans Doull, his wife, in Freswick, and on a child of William Cormack's in Aukingill and others; that she practices her art in different methods, and by different ceremonies, upon different diseases. One of her cures, particularly, is this. She takes a stockine (stocking), a horn spoon, and an unscoured woollen thread: she lays the stockine on a stool and some of the yarn upon it, and sets the patient thereon: then takes the rest of the thread and wraps it about several parts of the patient's body, particularly

¹ *Calder's Sketches from John O' Groats*, p. 226,

the arms, breast, and head, then ties the end of the thread to the Kettlecrook, takes hold of the Kettlecrook with her own hand, and crosses the fire three or four times, going against the sun—all the time muttering some unintelligible words, shaking and pulling all her joints in such a way as if the devil were in her. Then she raises the patient from off the stool, and if the spoon, which was on the outside of the stockine, be within the stockine, and the thread which was with it be wrapt about it, she reckons her cure performed.”¹

Animals were subject to three particular forms of disease, “forespoken,”² “elfshot,”³ or “ta’en by the fairies,” and were treated accordingly. The cure for “forespoken,” or affected by the evil eye, was a drink of water off silver or out of a vessel in which silver had been placed. A mixture of oatmeal and salt, called the “lib-for-spoken,” was then poured down the throat of the animal. Previously some skilly person had stirred the mixture with a steel needle and muttered over it some incantation. The secret of this remedy was said to have passed away with James Cook, Freswick, a century ago. The salt and oatmeal preparation was only effectual when applied by one having skill in such matters. “Lib-for-spoken” was used in several ways as a proof against the power of the evil eye. It was sprinkled on boats setting out for the fishing, and fishermen were said to secure a portion, which was put in the “forestep” beneath the foot of the fore mast. Oatmeal and salt was also used for “saining,” *i.e.*, to secure a blessing. An old woman in Duncansbay, named Kirsty Loutit, used it in this way. A neighbour had come to give her a “yokin’s” ploughing. Before he was allowed to start the horses and plough had to be blessed and sprinkled with the oatmeal and salt which

¹ Canisbay Kirk Session Records.

² O.N. *fyrir-spá*.

³ Norw. *äli-skudt* (O.N. **álf-skot*), O.E. *ylfagescot*, Germ. *albschosse* (Grimm.).

she carried in her apron, because she said the folk will be "aystin" me.¹ While doing so she muttered this incantation :

" Preserve man and beast ;
Stryth,² pleoch and gear, go on."

The symptoms of "elfshot" were a languid appearance, hard breathing, and disinclination to take food. The skilly man professed to find holes in the under-skin, which they sought for very diligently. The supposed marks were rubbed with "forls" or "elf stones" or "soap stones." Two tablespoonfuls of salt were dissolved in water, and a little poured in the ears and down the throat of the animal. A silver piece had to be put in the water when the salt was dissolving. A much more elaborate performance had to be resorted to in dealing with "murrain" or "heasty," as it was called in Caithness in olden times. When the disease was discovered the charm doctors were immediately called to superintend the raising of the "need-fire," the relic of an old Druidical custom. On an island with running water on either side was erected a circular booth of stone and turf, over which was set a "heilan" couple of birch wood. An upright pole was fixed from the crown of the couple and inserted in an oblong socket in the ground. Between the upright pole and the couple leg was fixed a horizontal beam, the pointed ends of which fitted into sockets. On the centre of this beam, which was called the auger, was fixed four short arms or levers. When all was completed, men were called who had already divested themselves of most of their clothing and everything containing metal. Two by two they turned the auger, while others drove wedges on the offside of the upright pole to press it

¹ Caithness phrase, meaning : they would wish to take away her luck. Cf. O.N. *æsta*, to ask for, crave, desire, etc. It also occurs in the Caithness saying : 'em at aysts 'e silk goon will get the sleeve o't.

² Work-animals, cf. Gael. *sreath*, herd, flock.

harder on the lever. By constant pressure and friction the end of the auger would take fire, and from this the "need fire" was immediately kindled. All the fires in the infected farm were quenched with water and re-kindled from the "need fire." The smoke of the new fire blown on the cattle was supposed to arrest the plague. To prevent the spreading of "blackquarter," a disease prevalent among young cattle, the infected beast was taken to a house, which no cattle were ever after to enter, and there the heart was taken out and fixed to the byre. While there the other cattle were free from the risk of the disease spreading.

In the Sibbald MS. Collection in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, there is a curious letter from Mr. Mathew Mackaile, apothecary, dated March 5th, 1683, which has the following reference to "Heasty, a disease incident to þe cattle in Caithness": "The Beasts in Caithness are often troubled with a disease wh þe people call Heastie, because it putteth them in a rage, and killeth them suddenly. They apprehend it to come from witchcraft; for if there be an exact search made in and about the house belonging to þe owners of þe cattle þt (that) are thus distempered, there will be found lying together, a little bit of every part of such as is distempered; as a little of the head, tongue, heart, lights, liver, etc. wh. some take to þe person whom they suspect, and plead with them, whereupon þe Beast or Beasts recover; or they put them in þe house of some of their neighbours whose cattel immediately become sick and their own recover."

The only cure for the cow "ta'en away by the fairies" was burning. Under the spell of Saunders Williamson, a notorious fairy medium, a deluded Canisbay crofter applied this remedy to a cow with an illness which could not be diagnosed. Saunders was called, and prescribed a fire to be lit under the animal. The result was that the beast was frightened or burnt to death.

The "taking of fret" ¹ was practised by the necromancer with more or less sincerity even within the past hundred years. The method generally adopted in Caithness to charm away the produce of a neighbour's dairy was the trailing of a hair tether or simmon over their grazing pasture between sun and day, when the dew lay wet and heavy. When the cow crossed the track of the hair tether she became yeil or her milk yielded no butter. This state of matters is described by Burns.

"Thence country wives wi toil an pain
May plunge and plunge the kiin in vain
For Oh! the yellow treasure's taen
By witchin skill.
An dawtit twal pint Hawkies gain
As yeil's a bill."

The story is told of a good man getting up one morning to find a notorious person parading his pasture. He set off in pursuit, and succeeded in capturing the hair rope, which he took home with him and threw behind a "meal-girnal." The first time the goodwife went to churn she was amazed at the unusual quantity of butter produced. As there was no other explanation the horse-hair rope behind the girnal was associated with the matter. It was brought out, and when cut there flowed from it a copious supply of rich cream. But the cutting broke the spell, as future churning brought no superabundance. The same process has been associated with a heather simmon.

Many peculiar practices, now long obsolete, were associated with particular days. Eel (Yule) and Ne'er's day were the beginning of festivities which continued more or less until Candlemas. On New Year's day young and old turned out to the ancient game of "Knotty." First footing on New Year's day lingered longer than most old customs. But in bygone times the "first foot" formed quite an important part in the destinies of the Northener. In going on a journey or

¹ Gael. *frith*, an incantation, from O.N. *frét*.

to a new job, or even setting out on the ordinary calling. Some were careful to note the first living creature they met, and by it judged their success. The minister was always considered a "bad feet," especially among fishermen. A fisherman on the way to sea wished to meet no one, and it was bad luck to answer questions. To meet a hare, a pig, a mouse, or a cat was considered an ill omen, and the sight of a crow was an ominous sign. The dog, cow and horse were considered "good feet."¹ Dark-haired people were looked on as lucky when first-footing. Old fishermen would never turn a boat against the sun.

Fosterne'en was celebrated by a dish of Scotch brose for dinner. The brose was served in one large wooden bicker, and the whole company sat round with spoons and partook. On "Peace" Sunday everyone had eggs for breakfast, and those who had no poultry begged their "peace eggs" from the neighbours.

The "cutting-off-piece" is still kept up in the harvest home ball, but it is shorn of the glamour of the principal reaper throwing all the shearing hooks over his head to see how many would stick in the ground, and how many of the reapers would live to shear another year. Nor do the shearers now sleep with the last hand of corn they cut below their pillows to dream of future husbands. The old customs associated with births, deaths and marriages were many. Before deaths there were always those who had "foregangs" or saw "lights" or had "dreams." The hearing of the "death watch" or the ticking of the "Jacky Mill" was a sure sign of a death in the family. The "lyke" or "lye-a-wake," with all its forms of feasting, so much out of keeping with the solemnity of the occasion, is now of the dim and superstitious past, but the remnant of it, in whisky and bread and cheese at funerals, became a deeply engrained use and wont in the habits of later generations. The old

¹ *John O' Groat Journal*, Aug., 1840.

wedding ceremony was *the* period for feasting and display, and few were daring enough to break a custom, which very gradually took on milder forms. It was a period of feasting which lasted for more than a week, and sometimes the couple were run into expense which took them the greater part of their married life to clear off. To begin with, there was the "cantrag" or contract night, then the house-to-house visitation by the bride and bridegroom giving "the bids." The ceremony proper began with the "feet-washing" night, which preceded the wedding day, and the feasting continued next day and night without much interruption. It was resumed on the evening of the third day, when all the invited guests gathered together to a "house warming" for the newly married couple, which was often held in an ale-house, and which was perhaps with some measure of truth called the "filling-foo" night.

These are but lights and shadows of a dim past, perhaps more of shadows than lights, because the shadows left the deeper impress, and the perspective may be somewhat blurred by the process of time, but we will not think less kindly of the people who held to them with some sincerity.

NOTES ON WEATHER WORDS IN THE ORKNEY DIALECT.

By H. MARWICK.

TΘ adopt a Stevensonian phrase, the climate of Orkney is one of the vilest under heaven. It is perennially swept by high winds, frequently reaching hurricane force, rarely and only for short intervals lulling to a calm. For the most part also, they come rain-laden and the usual colour of the sky overhead is a dull grey that makes the grim insular landscape look

grimmer and more sterile still. This effect is intensified by the almost total absence of trees. At the same latitude east in Norway, and west across in America, the winter cold is far more intense and yet tall trees flourish; but, unless somehow protected, no tree seems able to brave the biting saline blasts of Orkney.

This superabundance of wind and rain is reflected in the Orcadian dialect by a plethora of descriptive terms and the reason is obvious. To a city-dweller climatic conditions are relatively negligible; his work is, for the most part, thereby unaffected. But to the farmer and the seaman they are all important. The business of the farm, still more the business of the sea, is absolutely at the mercy of the elements. To a primitive people, climatic conditions are of still greater significance, for with them the business of life is almost exclusively conducted in the open air. It is not astonishing therefore to find that our early forefathers carefully discriminated the various phenomena of sea and sky, and evolved terms, full of real meaning, which have come down to us, but have come in many cases shorn of much of their real significance.

These facts also serve perhaps to explain the personification of the weather. It may be that our forefathers regarded the weather as a personal foe with whom they had to cope. At all events, the elder generation almost invariably used the idiom "he" instead of "it" as the appropriate pronoun. And even to-day one hears the phrases "he's blowan¹ hard," "he's clearan up," &c., almost as frequently as the more modern idioms. And in the dialects of Western Norway, exactly the same procedure is followed.

There are over a score of words descriptive of rainfall and an equal number descriptive of wind. Exact dis-

¹I use the affix *an* on purpose as in Orkney this is invariably the pronunciation of the present participle ending and is clearly a retention of the O.N. form *-andi*, the similar sound in Scots being derived from the O. Northern English pres. part *-ande*.

crimination is difficult—indeed impossible, but a rough classification may be attempted on the basis of the strength or intensity of the phenomena represented. For a very light breeze the two words generally used are *kuil* (*køl*), a word which also appears in English in the form *cool*, and *grey* (*grē*). Both words are also employed as verbs to betoken an increase in strength; *e.g.* “It’s beginnan to *grey* up,” “It’s *greyan* (or *kuilan*) up.”

Then comes a group of five or six words, each of which signifies a considerably stronger breeze: a *tirl* (*tərլ*), a *gurl* (*görl*), a *gussel* or *gushel* (*gösl* or *göšl*), a *hushle* (*höšl*), a *skolder* (*sköldər*), a *skuther* (*sköðər*), and a *guster* or *gouster* (*göstər* or *goustər*). The last of these is etymologically identical with the English word *gust*, but in Orkney it has a slightly different meaning and is applied to a sudden breeze which may last considerably longer than a mere gust. It is also interesting as retaining the Old Norse nominative suffix “r.” There is another word *golder* or *galder* (*göldər* or *gäldər*) which is now very rare in Orkney though common in Shetland. *Skolder* is perhaps a corruption of the word and this form is now much more frequent in Orkney. Between all those words it is hard to discriminate exactly, but they all imply two ideas in common, namely that of a wind which is pretty strong but does not reach the force of a gale, and, secondly, which lasts for a relatively short time though considerably longer than a mere gust.

A very strong wind is called a *skreevar* (*skrívər*), or a *sweevy* or *sweevle* (*swívi* or *swívl*). The latter is an example of a word which has changed its meaning very considerably, for it is derived from the Old Norse *sveifla*, to turn or spin round, so that it must originally have meant a whirlwind, as Jakobsen says it does yet in Shetland. An apparently greater departure from the original meaning is to be noticed in *katrizper* (*kat* :

rízpər) which in Rackwick, Hoy, is applied to a very strong gale. Yet, originally, the word must have been the equivalent of our "cats-paws"—coming evidently from the O.N. *kattar-risþur*, cat's-scratches. Perhaps, however, "cat-scratches" betokened to our forefathers something very different from our "catspaws."

In harvest time after the crop is built into stacks one often hears the farmer longing for a *yardsook* (jard : suk), i.e. a strong dry wind which would prevent his crop from "taking heat." *Sook* is a very common word in Orkney for drought, or drying; cf. *sooked* fish (half-dried fish); "it's makan a bonnie *sook* the day" (it's a drying day). O.N. *súgr*, a drying wind. Thus one is ready to suppose that a *yard-sook* simply means a wind that would dry the stackyard. Unless, however, this is a word of comparatively late origin—after *yard* had come in from Scots, *yard-sook* must be the O.N. *jörð-súgr*, the earth-drier.

Then again we have a small group of words to express various kinds of gusts. The commonest is *flan* (flän), but this is generally used of a gust coming down a chimney. It is also used as a verb—"to *flan* doon"—"the wind was *flannan* doon a' the night." It is at sea, however, that gusts are of most importance, and there are three words which, though common enough ashore, are usually associated with sudden squalls at sea: a *bat*, a *swap* (swap), and for one of rather longer duration a *skwither* (skwæðər or skwiðər). Lastly, a whirlwind is often termed a *kithy-wind* (kiði-wind).

For varying degrees of mist and rain there is an even greater diversity of words and phrases. It is again impossible to place them in exact gradation, but they may be placed in two or three groups more or less distinct. Of these, by far the most numerous is the group applicable to what is known as a "Scotch mist." The plethora of words in this division is a telling and sinister indictment of the Orkney climate. Unnecessary words

in any language invariably lapse; the persistence of these throughout thirty generations tells its own tale.

A *driv* (driv), a *rugg* (rög), a *murr* (mör), a *hagger* (hägär), a *dagg* (däg), a *rav* (räv), a *roostan hoger* (rústän:hógär) are all substantival expressions for one and the same thing—a light, drizzly, more or less steady rain. To *either* (äiðär), to *eesk*, (ísk), to *neist* (näist), to *fizz* (fiz) are all used of the same phenomenon, but almost invariably in association with the word *rain*. Thus we have regularly *eeskan an' rainan*, *eitheran an' rainan*, &c. Then come the adjectival terms for the same: *drivvy* (drivi), *ruggy* (rögi), *murry* (möri), *haggery* (hägäri), *roosty* (rusti), *eesky* (iski) *fizzowy* (fizoi), *muggry* (mögri), *rimy* (räimi), *durry* (döri), *smuggry* (smögri)—each applied to a day or weather of this sort. A very curious word—*muggero-feu*, or *muggaty-feu*, or *mugga-fisty* (mögäro:fø, mögäti:fø, or möga:fisti) is also applied in this sense as a noun: *e.g.* “It's just a real m—— this day,” *i.e.* a misty, drizzly sort of day.

A passing shower is termed a *dister* (dästär), or “a *skub* (sköb) o' a shooer,” and when the sky begins to clear it is said to be *glettan* (glätän). A *glet* (glæt, a *lett* (læt), and a *luffer* (löfär) are all terms for a period of intermission or a pause in the midst of wind or rain. In some places the word *rime* (räim) is used in this sense: *e.g.* “Wait till it *rimes* a bit” (*i.e.* clears or fairs), while in Harray the word *kalwart* (kal:wört) is used for the more usual *luffer* or *glet*. A wild, cold sort of rainy day is called an *attray* (atri) day, and it is said then to be *aiteran* (æträn) *an' rainan*, while if the rain comes pouring down it is said to be *rashan an' rainan*, and the shower is often termed a perfect *hellyie-fer* (hæljɪ:fär). Finally, *wind-feeder* is a word applied to a certain kind of rain which is supposed to be a harbinger of wind.

Nowadays at least, Orkney is little troubled with snow, and the number of snow-terms is relatively small.

The word itself is still pronounced *snaa* (sna) by the elder generation, and a thick snow-storm is called a *moor o' snaa* or, if very bad, a *stark moor*. When it is accompanied by wind and the snowflakes are whirling and eddying about, the term *kyirked stoor* (kjærk :id stur) is sometimes applied. *Smoor* is used always instead of smother. The regular word for a snow-drift is a *fann* (fän), and when the wind is strong and causing the snow to drift, it is called a *yert-drift* (jært :dræft), i.e. an earth-drift (see *sup. yardsook*). Any atmospheric phenomenon which is supposed to betoken the approach of snow is called a *gamfer for snaa* (gamfær). Usually the gamfer is some appearance of the clouds. A slight fall of snow is called a mere *skutch* (skötz), while a thaw is termed a *tow* (təu), and a violent thaw which causes the burns to swell or overflow is called a *tow-lowsing* (təu :ləu^z.n) or an *ice-lowsing*.

I now pass to those words which are applied to the various phenomenon of sky and atmosphere. The sky itself is termed the *lift* (ləft), and frequently one hears the expression "There's no a star apae the lift." Then too for the word 'starlight' there is the more ancient and euphonious *starnlight* (stärn), while *skyare* (skjer) moonlight is the wholly admirable term used for clear bright moonlight. A halo about the moon is termed a *broch* (brəʃ, brəuʃ) and is held to betoken bad weather—a fairly sure prediction. A *sun-gaa* (gā) or mock rainbow seems to be of similar omen. When the sky is for the greater part overcast and bright vivid clouds are prominent, the sky is said to be *glamsy-like* (glamsi) or *skyelly* (skjeli) or *skyræn* (skäiræn). The last word simply means 'very bright,' and is almost the equivalent of the English word 'glittering.' At other times—after thunder for example—the sky often assumes a curious sickly yellowish-green hue which is termed a *skyued* (skjød) or *skyuimy* (skjømi) colour. Then, again, on a stormy night, the dark gloomy sky is called

a *buggy* (bōgi) sky, and the night is dark and *ugsome* (ög : səm).

A curious relic of superstition lingers in the name for thunder. Our fathers evidently believed that, when it thundered, the deity was offended, for to this phenomenon they applied the names *Guid's weather*, i.e. God's weather or *Fair-weather*, evidently in some meagre hope of propitiation. The close, warm atmosphere usual in thundery weather is called *muify* (møfi).

The phenomena of phosphorescence are naturally remarkable enough to demand nomenclature and two or three words are employed. *Miracles* is perhaps the commonest, but *limro* (limro) or *glimro* (glimro) is also frequently used. At certain seasons of the year, or in certain conditions of atmosphere, phosphorescence is attended with rather serious danger. A friend of mine told me this year that one night when driving home he found that his hair and whiskers were ablaze with phosphorescence. When he tried to rub his eyes matters were made worse and it was very difficult to see at all. His hair was all hanging with *limro*. Perhaps this is an electric phenomenon and not due to phosphorescence at all. The old idea was that when this happened you were bewitched by a being called "Tangi" (tāŋi)—an evil spirit who wished to lure you astray to your doom. The very same idea is current in Iceland, I am told, and is there ascribed to the agency of the *draugur*, a being comparable with our *trow*.

Everyone is familiar with the tremulous movement in the atmosphere which is to be seen near the earth on any warm day after rain. At least everyone must have seen a similar appearance above the funnel of a steamer or train or above any hot body. It is really caused by the warmer layers of air rising up. Curiously enough, there is no English word for this phenomenon but Orkney is overstocked. *Teebro* (tíbro), *teetboro* (tit : bōro), *teet-gong* (tit : gjoŋ), *brin* (brɪn) and *kringlos* (krín : los) are

all applied to this, but the last word is also applied to the "stars" one sees after having a blow on the nose. These words are all of Norse origin, but there is a curious German word *sonnen-kringlein* which is applied to similar phenomena. To get *kringlos afore the eyes* is the Orcadian equivalent of *seeing stars*, and a man who is dizzy or dazed is said to be *kringly-headed*.

(Criticism or expansion of these lists will be gladly welcomed.—H. M.).

GLOSSARY.

- aitran**—raining, of a cold bitter rain or drizzle. O.N. *eittr*, poison; *eittrkaldr*, bitterly cold.
- attry**—of weather—bitter, stormy, cold, &c. See *aitran*.
- bat**—a gust of wind. Probably No. *bad*, from *bada*, v., to crush or trample down, knead, &c. Cf. however, gaelic, *bád*, s.f. wind.
- brin**—(1) a cold dry parching wind that causes plants to wither. A deriv. of O.N. *brenna*, to burn; No. *brennkalde*, a very severe cold. (2) shimmering of atmosphere. No. *brign* or *saabrign*, id.
- broch**—a halo round sun or moon. So also in Scots. Probably a metaphorical use of O.N. *borg*, a place of defence, the Orkney broch; c.f. however Gaelic *broth*, lunar halo.
- buggy**—dark, lowering of sky. Prob. same as No. *boke* in *bokevedr*, cloudy warm weather.
- dagg**—fine rain, Scotch mist, drizzle. O.N. *dögg*, Swed. *dagg*, dew. No. *dogg*, (1) dew; (2) soft fine rain.
- dister**—a light passing shower, No. *dustra*, to drizzle.
- driv**—a drizzle, with suggestion of being windblown. No. *driv*, what is driven. e.g., snow or rain. Faeroese and Swed. dial. both have *driv* as in Orkney.
- eesk**—to drizzle. Jakobsen regarded this as a deriv. of O.N. *ísa*, v., to cover with ice, and merged with it also the No. *hysja*, v., to drizzle. Dr. Jón Stefánsson, however, cites an Icel. *ískra* or *ýskra*, v., to drizzle.
- either**—to drizzle. A modification of *aitran*; see above.
- fizz**—to drizzle. O.N. *fisa*, pedere; No. *fisa*, to blow, smoke, drift through air like smoke.
- flan**—a sudden gust. O.N. *flan*, a rushing; *flana*, to rush heedlessly or blindly onwards.
- gaa**—a mock-sun. From a primitive **gizla*; No. *gil*, Isl. *gýll* or *gill*, a mock sun; Dan. dial. *gall*, Germ. *galle wettergalle*, id.
- gamfer**—atmospheric omen. No. *gandferd*, a troop of witches riding through air. Dr. Stefánsson cites Icel. *gandför*.

- glamsy**—of the sky—glittering and stormy-looking. O.N. *glansi*, a glitter; No. *glansa*, to shine or glitter.
- glett**—a pause or lull in a storm, a clearing up of the sky for a time. No. *glette*, id.
- glimro**—phosphorescent glimmer. Dan. *glimre*, glimmer, gleam. Cf. Swed. and Germ. *glimmer*, mica.
- golder**—a blustery noisy wind. No. *galdr*, an uproar—of wind, people, &c.
- grey**—a light breeze. No. *graae* or *graaa*, id.; O.N. *græði*, a breeze curling the waves.
- gurl**—a strong breeze. No. *grael*, a blast or puff which ruffles the sea.
- gussel**—a strong wind of some duration. Cf. No. *gosa*, a blast of wind and its cognate *gusul*, a great babbler or chatterer.
- guster**—a blast of wind. O.N. *gustr*, id.
- hagger**—a heavy drizzle. Rather obscure. Hints of origin may be seen in O.N. *agi*, moisture, wet, and in No. *aga*—*det agar med regn*, and *age-vedr*, doubtful weather—now cloudy, now clear.
- hellyiefer**—a downpour. Prob. a combination of O.N. *hella*, to pour and *veðr*, weather. Cf. *helliskúr*, *hellidemba*, &c., a downpour.
- hushle**—a strong gale. Deriv. of No. *hosa*, to whistle, rush forth, &c.
- ice-lowsin**—a thaw. No. *lausing*, Isl. *leysing*, loosening, a thawing of ice or snow.
- kithy-wind**—a whirlwind. Prob. a deriv. of No. *giddu*, to shake, shiver, sway, be in unsteady motion.
- kringlos**—spots of light or 'stars' seen after a blow on the eye. O.N. *kringla*, a disk, circle, orb.
- kuil**—a slight breeze. O.N. *kul*, id.
- kyirked**—blowing in circles, eddying round. No. *kjergja*, to run round in a circle as water or foam in a stream. [Suppl. to Ross.]
- lett**—= glett. No. *lette*, a moderating or ceasing (of bad weather). O.N. *letta*, to clear up.
- lift**—the sky. O.E. *lyft*, id.
- limro**—phosphorescent gleam. Cf. *glimro*. This may however be a quite different word. Cf. O.N. *ljómi*, a beam, ray; and *dagr ljómar*, day breaks.
- luffer**—= glett or lett. A difficult word. Cf. Shet. *lotter* and No. *lotte*, id. Prof. Torp is uncertain of origin.
- miracles**—phosphorescence. Evidently a corruption on model of Eng. word of O.N. *mörueldr* or *maurueldr*, phosphorescence.
- moor**—blinding snow. Cf. O.N. *mor*, a swarm, atom; Mod. Isl. *mor*, dust; No. *myrra*, a fog, and *myren*, granulous—applied to snow.
- muggero-fue**—a misty drizzle. A difficult word. Prob. a deriv. of O.N. and No. *mugga*, soft drizzling mist, and No. *fuka*, a penetrating foggy drizzle.
- muggry**—drizzly and misty. See last word.
- muify**—warm, sultry, close. Prob. a corruption of O.N. *móða*, mist—the root significance of which (acc. to Falk and Torp) is warm vapour. Cf. Scots muith.

32 *Notes on Weather Words in the Orkney Dialect.*

- murr**—a drizzle. No. *myrra*, slight drizzle, fog.
- neest**—or neester—to drizzle. Jakobsen considered this a parallel form to the Dan. *fnusk-regn*, drizzle.
- rashan**—in phrase *r—*—and *rainan*, of a downpour. So in Scots. Of uncertain origin. May be an assimilation in sound to the Eng. *rash*, of O.N. *rasa*, to rage, be very violent (of a storm) ; or it may be merely an alliterative assimilation of the Scots. 'lashin and rainin.'
- rav**—a drizzle. Seems same word as Scots. *raff*, a flying shower. Jakobsen was uncertain of origin but compared it with No. *ravl*, offal, off-scrapings, &c.
- rimy**—misty, drizzly a 'frosty rime.' O.N. *hrim*, hoarfrost, rime.
- roost**—a fine drizzle, a 'fine roosty rain.' No. *rus* and *rush*, fine drizzle of rain or snow. The 't' in roost has apparently been added on analogy of Scots. *roost*. In the North Ronaldsay form *roostanhoger*, roostan may be a pres. participle of a verb 'to roost,' or it may simply be the noun plus 'and.' With *hoger*, cf. hagger.
- rug**—a close drizzle. Dan. dial. *rug* ; Swedish dial. *rugg*, id.
- skolder**—a strong dry gale. Probably No. *skuldra*, to peal, rattle, clash ; O.N. *skjalla*, to clash, clatter ; used of a gale bursting out.
- skreever**—A very strong gale. Prob. a parallel form to O.N. *rifa*, No. *riva*, to tear, rend, &c.
- skub**—a light passing shower. Jakobsen says this word is related to *skubb* in Faeroese *skubbutur*, dirty coloured, etc.
- skuther**—or skwither—a sharp breeze of short duration. Prob. two different words ; the first a deriv. of O.N. *skota*, v., shoot forth, etc., and the second comes nearer the No. *skvetta*, v., to fly away suddenly, run away. Cf. No. *skvitta*, v., to drizzle, spurt forth.
- skare**—or skyare—clear, bright—of moonlight. O.N. *skaerr*, id.
- skyelly**—of clouds—bright, glittering, 'glamsy.' Prob. No. *skjell*, clear, visible, transparent.
- skyran**—glittering, very brilliant. No. *skir* or *skiren*, clear, bright.
- skyued**—pale, greenish, sickly in colour. O.N. *skjóttr*, piebald.
- skyuimy**— = skyued. No. *skjaamutt*, adj., dark, spotted ; Faer. *skjomuttur*, dirty-coloured, dirty grey.
- smuggry**— = muggry g.v. In Norse frequently we find parallel forms with and without initial s.
- stark**—applied to an intense blinding snowstorm—'a s— moor.' No. *sterk*, violent, furious—applied to wind, tide, &c.
- starnlight**—starlight. Perhaps a Scots. borrowing seeing that 'light' is Eng. and not Norse.
- swap**—a sudden gust of wind. O.N. *svifr*, a swoop ; No. *svipa*, a wind gust on sea.
- sweeyle**—a gust or short gale. Also in form sweevy. No. *svivla*, a gust of wind. O.N. *sveifla*.
- Tangie**—an imaginary goblin, = 'sea-trow' which was pictured as covered with tang or seaweed.

teebro— = brin, q.v. Isl. *tíð-brá*, a mirage, &c.

teetgong—id. Teet is the O.N. *tíð*, quick, fast, as in *tíð-brá*; *gong* may be = the Scots. *gang* (O.N. *gangr*), but is more probably an assimilation in sound of the No. *gídn*, which is applied to this same phenomenon. So also we have teetburn = *tíð-brígn*.

tirl—a short spell of bad weather. Deriv. of O.N. *pyrla*, to whirl—as wind does to hay. Cf. No. *tirla*, to blow softly.

tow-lowsin—a thaw. Tow = thaw. See ice-lowsin.

ugsome—threatening, awe-inspiring—of weather. Deriv. of O.N. *uggv*, apprehension; No. *ugg*; 1, damp cold—causing shivering; 2, awe, respect.

SOUND SYMBOLS USED.

ǣ = a in <i>father</i>	ó = French <i>eu</i> in <i>feu</i> .
ä = a in <i>ran</i> .	þ = th in <i>thin</i> .
æ = e in <i>Ferguson</i> .	ð = th in <i>thine</i> .
ē = e in <i>berry</i> .	š = sh in <i>skin</i> .
e = ai <i>stain</i> .	j = y in <i>yet</i> .
i = ee in <i>been</i> .	ŋ = ng in <i>long</i> .
ī = in <i>sin</i> .	ö = in Orkney the u sound in <i>but</i>
o = o in <i>on</i> .	(usually written phonetically
o = o in <i>so</i> .	as <i>Λ</i>) is more rounded and
u = oo in <i>soon</i> .	Dr. Jakobsen always pre-
œ = e in <i>bitter</i> .	ferred the symbol ö.

THE CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND TOPOGRAPHY OF "WILLIAM THE WANDERER."

By JAMES GRAY.

IN the "Saga-Book of the Viking Club," Vol. IV., pp. 171-181, is a Paper by Mr. W. G. Collingwood, on "King William the Wanderer," the name given to his beautiful translation (itself almost an English Classic) from the late M. Francisque Michel's reprint of "Guillaume le Roi," probably by Chrestien de Troyes, the great French poet of the twelfth century,

who, according to Mr. Collingwood, got his material from a British or Anglo-Saxon Saga, which in turn was derived from an older Northumbrian Saga in Norse.

Mr. Collingwood makes one or two suggestions as to the identity of the earl of Catanaise with the great earl Thorfinn, Sigurd's son, grandson of Malcolm II. of Scotland, as to Catanaise, as to Surclin or Sorlinc, and as to the name Gliolas, the Gaelic personage "less than an earl," and probably the maor of that district. May I add to them?

Gliolas is clearly the not uncommon Gaelic name "Gilliosa," "the servant of Jesus," and he was probably one of the many Celtic landowners of the time, like Moddan, Liot Nidingr, Earl Ottar, and others. His territory of "Surclin" or "Sorlinc" was probably the parish of Kildonan, and was a corruption of Scir-Illigh," the old Gaelic name of that parish; and the Castle of Surclin or Sorlinc (whence they ran down to the Staithe from their sports when the chapmen's ship arrived) was near Bun-Illigh, at the "mouth of the Illigh" River, and may well have been one of the many brochs close to Helmsdale village from which the harbour could be seen, or possibly a broch on the site of Helmsdale Castle itself which overlooks the port.

Once at least, Thorfinn had to conquer much of Sudrland, which, save on the coast, was very Gaelic, and appears to have adhered to the Gaelic local maors and mormaors all through the six years, up to 1040, when Thorfinn, then unmarried, was fighting, in his first wars, the Moddan Clan, who were on the side of king Duncan I., his cousin and enemy.

To Gliolas' wedding with William's queen, Gratiana, come "monks regular and secular, and he received his wife from the hands of an Abbot." At Kildonan in Scir-Illigh is Tigh n' Abb or the Abbot's House; and Dornoch too had probably an abbot at the time and monks galore. If the abbot came from Kildonan, some

ten miles up the Strath, how very old must its connection with abbots be. For Thorfinn's youth was seventy years before 1107, when the Monastery of Scone, with which Kildonan Church afterwards was so closely connected, was founded, and its abbot long held that parish church, with, later on, a prebend in Dornoch Cathedral.

The lands of Sorlinc marched with Caithness. Sorlinc and Caithness were divided only by a river, the River of Hjalmundal, a literal translation of Strath Bun-Iligh. Then again "the hosting was to be at the ford," that is the old ford at Helmsdale above the modern bridge. In later times the Sutherland men for centuries assembled for war at the ford on the Golspie Burn, "at the Little Bridge." May not the custom of meeting at a ford be as old as Thorfinn's time?

So too in those days there were woods in Hjalmundal, and King William could ride straight away from Sorlinc Castle into the woods after the deer he loved. Nay, there were woods in Hjalmundal even a century later, when Sweyn Asleifarson burst into it about 1145, and burnt Frakark; and Olvir Rosta failed to escape to "the wood" at Kinbrace or Borrobol.

So much for Sutherland—now for the queen's twin sons, who landed as children at a port in Catanaise, probably Wick, so often mentioned in the Sagas, and grew up there with the chapmen who had adopted them. Both the boys left their foster father on the same day rather than learn a trade, and one of them rode away over the fell, the other having preceded him on foot. At last, coming down "a brow," he pursues on horseback and overtakes his brother, who fled to the woods. The only woods of any extent now or at any time in Caithness are at Berriedale. The "brow" is the fearsome brae of Berriedale. The forest they enter is, therefore, Langwell Forest; the clear stream is probably up either the Langwell or the Berriedale River; and the

house of monks would be one of the many religious houses which then existed in Latheron parish, and it would be sure to have a big cellar. The day after the twins have killed the stag, starting at dawn from the heights of Langwell, they are taken by the forester to the earl's castle, where they arrive at evensong. In this time they could easily get to Brawl, or more easily still to any of the many castles on the coast south of Wick. We do not know where Thorfinn had a chief seat, save at Duncansby, which is too far away. Possibly he had one at Dunbeath, then already, for centuries, an important cliff castle and stronghold, or at Langwell itself. It cannot, however, have been very far from Sorlinc. For when the opposing hosts of the earl and the queen foregathered next day neither of them had far to go. The chapmen, however, "travelling day and night, never left their rowing galley" till they came to Sorlinc. For they had further to come from their port at Wick.

It follows that not only did the writer of the original Northumbrian Saga, from which Mr. Collingwood conjectures that the Anglo-Saxon version at Burv St. Edmund's was taken, know all about Thorfinn, but that he knew intimately both the hills and dales and forests and religious houses of Sutherland and Caithness also.

I may add that my old friend, Francisque Michel, a great Basque Scholar and French and Scottish Historian, spent many happy months in my old home not far from Sorlinc half a century ago, and he then told me that he had recently carried out an order (unexecuted for eight centuries) of William the Conqueror by translating the Psalter into Norman French.

JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION TO SHETLAND IN JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST, 1834.

By EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.,

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

I.

MY former visit to Shetland¹ had left so many lively and agreeable impressions on my mind that I resolved to re-visit that country in the summer of 1834. My cousin, Henry Cholmely, offered to accompany me as the sporting naturalist or fowler to the expedition. I also engaged Mr. Proctor, of the Durham Museum, whom I had long known as a most zealous naturalist and an admirable auxiliary in these wild enterprises. Early in June Proctor arrived in Edinburgh, and the 10th of that month was the day on which we were to sail.

Tuesday, June 10th. We came down yesterday to sail, but, alas, the ship either could not or would not go out with the afternoon's tide. After seeing all our effects safely stowed into the hold, we resolved not to return to Edinburgh, as the laugh would be so dreadfully against us for our precipitation. To kill time we visited the glass works at the back of Leith pier, and then returned to sleep on board the "Magnus Troil" about 9 p.m. Here, as in duty bound, we investigated the state of the captain's cellar, and tasted some of its contents, and then turned into our berths, but the cabin was as close as a glass house, and the rain continuing to fall heavily all the evening it was impossible to remove the skylight. To me a berth in a smothering cabin was no novelty, but poor Cholmely found his couch so narrow that it seemed like being built up in

¹ See Vols. III., IV., VI., VII., VIII.

an oven. Nor was noise wanting to drive away soft slumber from his eyes, for I kept up a conversation till past midnight with an old dissenting clergyman of the name of Kerr, whom I had met two years before in the island of Yell.

Wednesday, June 11th. At four a.m. we were all aroused by the heavy tramping of many feet upon the deck. I found that we had recommenced our voyage, which yesterday had only extended the length of the dock, and that we were then passing through the dock gates. Well! we are now fairly off, thought I, for I was heartily wearied by my sojourn in Leith. Having passed through the dock gates the ship was hauled alongside of the pier to wait for dr. Cowie¹ and some other passengers, the pilot assuring us that we had good thirteen feet of water. Dr. Cowie not appearing, the sails were loosed, and we prepared to move fairly out of the harbour. But, alas! we were already at the terminus of that morning's voyage, the vessel obeyed not the summons to move, for she was immovably fixed in the mud, there to lie till the afternoon's tide. Great indeed was the wrath of the captain at the stupidity of the pilot, who had assured him of thirteen feet of water when there was in reality hardly eight. We could not stay another day in Leith, so resolved to return to Edinburgh and brave all the laughter our misfortunes would be sure to excite. At 4 p.m. we returned to the "Magnus Troil," which was just leaving the pier as we jumped on board, but dr. Cowie and two others were left in Leith. Much to the pleasure of the captain, these individuals had to follow us in a boat, paying of course a heavy fare as the price of their delay. And now we were fairly afloat, bowling away for Inch Keith with a light breeze in our favour. About 6 p.m. we passed the north end of that island, and were shortly after

¹ Apparently dr. Isaac Cowie, b. 1801, d. 1847, and not dr. John Cowie, b. 1813, d. 1866.

summoned to tea, but even at this early period of the voyage few of the ladies could join us at the table, for the wind had freshened, and the fear, if not the actual presence, of seasickness kept them close prisoners in their cabin. After tea, walked the deck till near 11 p.m., when we descended to a light supper of bread, cheese and porter, for how can time be disposed of on board of ship save by a quick succession of meals. The "Monarch" steamboat left Newhaven at the same time that we started from Leith, but wind and steam favoured her so greatly that she had passed the Bars and was out of sight to the southward long before we had rounded the promontory of Fife's Ness. In passing down the Firth all hands kept a sharp lookout for the "Albion" sloop from Lerwick, and we thought we made her out to the north, whilst passing Largo Bay.

Thursday, June 12. What a glorious tossing did we endure throughout the night in crossing the bay of St. Andrews, and, alas! this morning the fair breeze has blown its last, and we are rocking to and fro on the glassy ocean. Poor Cholmely! it is all up with him in this deuced calm, the groanings and heavings of his inward man quite equal those of the good ship's timbers. Oh! the horrors, to landmen and to sailors, though for widely different reasons, of a dead, dead calm at sea, with a nice swell heaving on your broadside to teach you civilly to exchange plates at dinner with your opposite neighbour, or to deposit at breakfast your cup of coffee in the lap of your vis-à-vis.

To relieve the tedium of the "glassy ocean's swell," we rigged out handlines and fished for hours with frightful perseverance, but no, not even a glorious nibble rewarded our patient labours. At breakfast the captain had the cruelty to send up a nice tempting hot beefsteak to poor Cholmely, who was then in speechless agony, reclining about the deck, and occasionally visiting the ship's bulwarks to gaze (no doubt) in fond

admiration upon the lovely blue heaving expanse beneath.

We are now rocking off Montrose under a hot sun, and not above 8 miles from the shore. The sailors tell me that the wind is kept down by the sun. I wish then that the glorious orb of day would for a while hide his refulgent head and not thus overpower the genius of the storm. About 2 p.m. we passed Fowls Heugh, a little to the south of Stonehaven, the rocks were white with sea-fowl, and a little farther on the old castle of Dunnotar stood frowning on the brink of a sea-worn precipice. An hour or two after we were abreast of Aberdeen, and could make out, with the glass, the new lighthouse on the Girdleness,¹ with its double lanterns, one 60 feet above the other. We were 10 or 12 miles from the land, but we could distinctly see the tall spires of Aberdeen and the glorious background of hills on the west of the town. A small whale remained for a long time spouting near us, and numerous solan geese and gulls were seeking their prey far away to the eastward.

Friday, June 13. The young lad who officiates as steward on board sprained his ankle severely late last night, and implored the medical aid of dr. Cowie. In joke, this worthy disciple of Esculapius tied around the wounded part a "breistin² thread," or a string with a mystic number of knots upon it, and therewith enjoined that cold water *ad libitum* should be poured on the joint and that the limb should be kept perfectly quiet. The magic thread has worked with a wondrous power, and it would be a pity to undeceive the poor lad by ascribing all its wondrous effects to the rest and to the cold water affusions.

We are now quite out of sight of land, with a very light breeze, and nought to do, save to eat, drink and

¹ "double fixed light, 1833 (placed vertically)"—Lothian's *Atlas*, 1838.

² wrestin.

be merry. Chalmers is better to-day, but somewhat low-spirited, and he dares not venture into the cabin. A very large finner whale was playing about the ship this morning at an early hour, but had disappeared before I came on deck. All that is visible on the wide blue expanse of waters are two large ships standing away for the Pentland Firth, and a few of the solan geese are flying in the same direction. About 6 p.m., when we were about 60 miles from any land, a huge finner whale rose quite under the stern of the vessel, as I was leaning over the bulwarks, and curving his back with a graceful arch rolled down again into the deep. From the size of his back fin, the sailors said that he could not be less than 60 or 70 feet in length. The deep-sea fishing lines were again, this evening, put to use, and with more profit than before, for a fine codfish was hauled up late at night by one of the sailors. In ten minutes after being drawn up from his home 60 fathoms beneath the surface, the poor fish was boiling in the ship's kettle in the fore-castle, and no doubt formed a savoury supper for the captain. Fired by this success, Mr. Cowie left his snug berth below, and remained till 2 a.m. on deck, hoping to hook another such prize, but, alas! he was not even rewarded with a glorious nibble.

Saturday, June 14th. On awaking, about six this morning, I was delighted to hear the rushing of the water, as the vessel flew on her course, for the wind had risen during the night, or rather about 2 a.m., and as it had now considerably increased it drove us onwards at the rate of six knots an hour. In about half an hour's time Fair Isle was descried from the deck, and this news brightened up the countenances of all, and especially of our seasick passengers.

On we rode, the ship's bows plunging deep into every surge, as if to cool herself from the hot sun that beat upon her decks. Breakfast was announced, the sea air had whetted our appetites, and every roll of the ship

sharpened the pangs of hunger or of seasickness. Our worthy captain took his station at the head of the cabin table, the coffee was poured and duly handed round to his ravenous guests. Each, as he tasted it, made a wry face, glances were exchanged across the table, and at length we all with one voice and one accord exclaimed, "Captain, what the Devil is the matter with the coffee?" Our skipper, amazed, tasted the villainous compound, his jolly rubicund face was thrown into a thousand contortions, and in a voice of thunder he roared for the steward. In came the poor limping lad, all pale and trembling, for there was rage in his master's voice and red-hot wrath in his countenance. "What have you been doing to the coffee, you rascal?" said the captain, as he handed a cup of the nauseous liquid to the steward. No sooner had the lad put it to his lips than he roared out, "Oh! Lord, sir, it must have been salt water that was in the ship's kettle." The terrified countenance of the poor steward and ridiculous nature of the mistake completely restored our good humour, and we all burst into an uncontrolled fit of laughter. The cause of this mishap was soon explained. The cod that was caught late last night by the sailors had been boiled in the ship's kettle, and, of course, sea-water had been used, which had not afterwards been replaced by fresh; and the poor steward had unwittingly employed it on the following morning in the manufacture of the coffee. We contented ourselves this day with tea, and really, considering the quantity of bread, butter, biscuit and beefsteak that was consumed, I do not think we were deeply sensible of our loss.

The wind had now so far increased that we made fully eight knots an hour and were past the Fair Isle by 11 a.m. This island is by some thought to be the Thule of the Ancients, while others have referred that name to Foula, as both are visible from several parts of Orkney on a clear day. I believe that Pennant

inclined to the latter opinion, and considers the name of Foulah as a corruption of the Roman Thule. Oh! terrible blunder of the English Monkbarns. Foulah is genuine Norse, derived of *fugl*, fowl, and *oe*, island, and no part of Shetland so well merits the appellation.¹ Besides remnants of Roman rule are said to be yet visible in Shetland, and if so we must look elsewhere for the long-sought Thule. But the Fair Isle has another and a most undisputed claim to the attention of the English historian. It was upon this island that the duke of Medina Sidonia was wrecked after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and here many of his crew perished from starvation or were murdered by the inhabitants.²

The breeze was now fast growing into a gale, so that the captain deemed it prudent to take in sail. A heavy sea struck us on the bows and deluged the forecastle, another, and poor Chalmers received an unwelcome shower bath from the spray. The blue ocean was all turned to black, crossed by white streaks of foaming waves, and Fair Isle, with its steep rocks, faded fast from our view as the classic cliffs of Fitful and Sumburgh Head rose before us, with the well-known lighthouse on the latter promontory. We expected to have a hearty rolling in the Roust of Sumburgh, where the two opposing streams meet from the east and from the west and cause a tremendous swell, but fortunately we passed through at the turn of the tide, and the increase of motion was scarcely perceptible. Away we flew along the coast, and in a short time were abreast of the island of Mousa, and I was gratified by a sight of the old for-

¹ The oldest form of the name is *Fogl* ('i Fogle,' where *e* may be the dative termination). Similar name is found in Norway, *Fuglen*—the islands are supposed to resemble swimming birds. Low mentions 'Uttie' as another name for Fula—O.N. *ytra-ey*, outer isle; it is the westmost and most isolated island in Shetland. Jakobsen's *Shetlandsøernes Stednavne*, p. 171.

² For a true account see Vol. I., 38, 122.

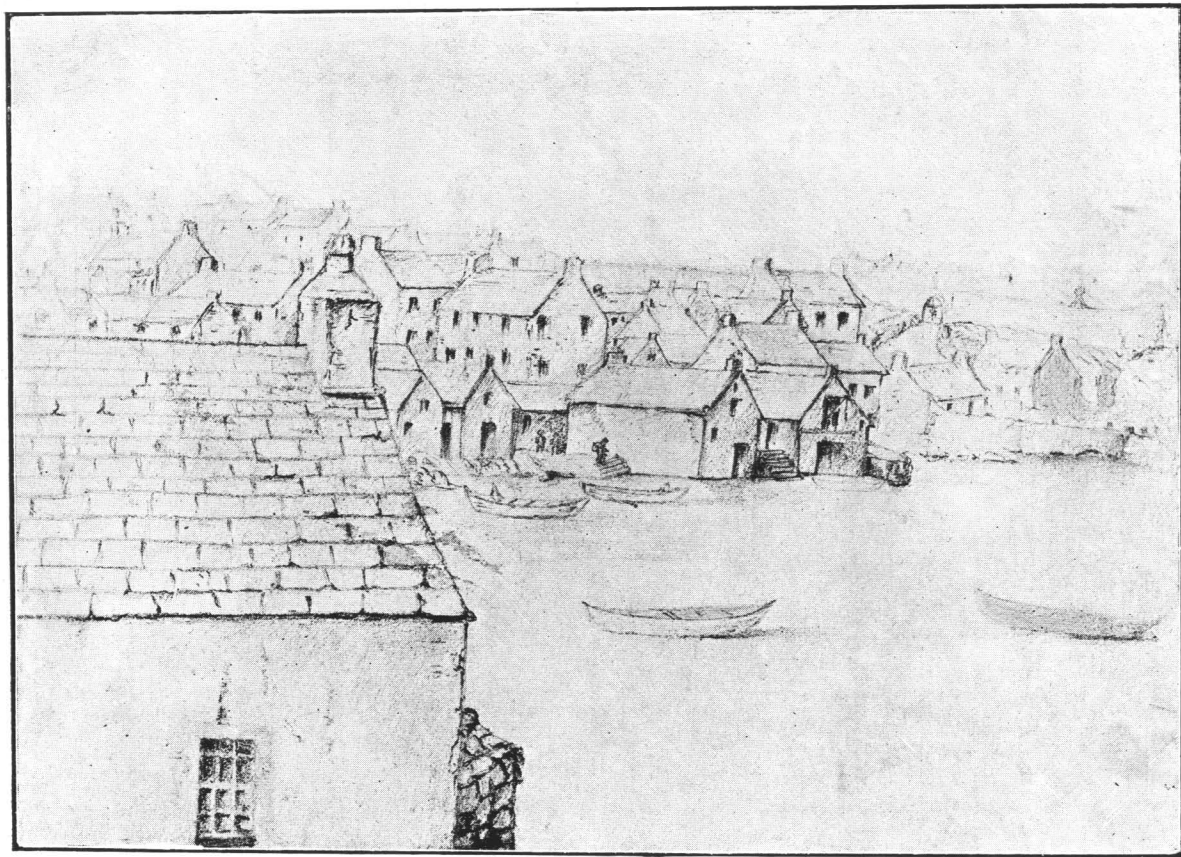
tress so celebrated by Torfæus, as the retreat of the frail dame Margaret.

The denizens of the Shetland seas now began to flock around us in the shape of innumerable kittiwakes, herring gulls, shags, black-backed gulls and Manx puffins, and the latter appeared here more abundant than I ever after saw them in Shetland. Luncheon was now announced, but only good men and true could lunch in such a gale as now blew from the south-west. But no bottles would stand quiet in such a sea, nay, the very plates would have been performing country-dances across the table. A number of small laths were tied across our festive board so as to divide it into several spaces, each capable of holding a plate. In these divisions every portion of our midday meal was packed with care, but still, with all these precautions, there was many a slip between the cup and the lip.

As I came again on deck we were entering the harbour of Bressay Sound, and already could we discern the higher houses of the oddly built town of Lerwick. A great number of Hanovarian and Dutch galliots or busses were at anchor in the harbour, and we hove to, in the midst of them, and cast anchor nearly in the same spot where, two years before, I rode that long and dismal quarantine. A dozen boats were immediately alongside us, and in ten minutes I set foot once more in the good town of Lerwick, the capital of the Shetland islands, containing 3,000 inhabitants, and as irregularly constructed a metropolis as any country can boast of. We took lodgings at the house of Peter Williamson, the best in the town, for we could not take up our quarters as we intended with Mr. Hay, as our vessel had brought the news of the death of his eldest son.¹

Great was my delight to meet at dinner with the face

¹ William Hay, of Hayfield, merchant and banker, Lerwick, b. 1787, d. 1858. His eldest son James, b. 1811, d. at Edinburgh, June 8th, 1834. *Grant's Zeland Family Histories.*



LERWICK.

From the original pencil drawing by E. C., in Dr. Edward Charlton's "Journal of an Expedition to Shetland in 1834."

of a well-known friend in the shape of some fresh tusk, the king of the Shetland sea-fish. After dinner we walked out to view the town, which much amused my companions, and we called upon several of the merchants whom I had formerly known. By all we were received with the utmost joy and hospitality, and by one in particular we were treated with excellent brandy and rum which had never been blighted by the evil eye of the exciseman. After tea I walked out with Proctor, (for Chalmers required a little repose after his trials on the ocean), and we bent our steps south of the town towards the Bay of Sound, on the road to Scalloway. Here we found several coleoptera under the stones, and though the night was cloudy we were enabled to discover the most minute objects at 11 p.m. Nor was our diligent search unrewarded in another manner, for Proctor, in turning over a stone, found the mighty sum of twopence concealed beneath, from whence he argued favourably of the riches of the country.

Having conversed for a long time with some Shetlanders in their skin coats, who were extremely anxious for intelligence about some of their friends in London, we returned home, delighted with the soft calm twilight of 12 p.m. [midnight] in Shetland. Our bedrooms were comfortable enough, but the beds seemed vast couches indeed after the confined and narrow berths on board of the "Magnus Troil."

(To be continued.)

RENTAL OF BRABSTER, CAITHNESS 1697.

(Concluded from vol. viii., p. 207).

DUNGESBEY (*continued*).

* Denotes later entries in another hand.

ALEXR. DUNNETT peyes the like duetie in each kynd and peyed this year's Mertimes debt and 4 bolls 3 firlots malt, the scat silver peyed.

Mair, he rests the first year's heall customs and this year's custome foulls.

He has of my beasts a stire 4 year old come Beltaine, with a cove stirk deid with him.

Item he rests me a meatt lambe for the last year.

Der. the 29, receaved 3 firlots and 2 peckes malt, rests no fearme nor scat for the last year and 1697.

*This sixth day of June, 1698 years, receaved off malt made of my teind bear in Dungesbey, being ij bolls, 2 firlots bear, mett in Wares firlot, and reseaved againe therof in malt, measured in my own malt-firlot, from Alexr. Dunnett, 9 firlots and 2 peckes, from John Wares and Wm. Walter 9 f: and 2 ps. and from Wm. Henderson, 9 firlots and 2 ps. Inde put into girnell, day forsaid, therof - - - - - 7 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, put therin the said day of John

Wares and Wm. Waters scat malt - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

This is intire vnbroken this day. Inde - 7 : 2 : 2 : 0

JOHN WARES in Stamster payes for his tacke ther for all manner of duetie, 12lbs. Scots, a teind sheape, 10d. scat silver and a firlot scat malt yearly 4 poultrie a bruid geese and meatt geese *quhen* he hes it and a meat lambe *quhen* he hes it.

Quherof payed befor compts be him - - 12:0:0

His teind sheafe led, his scatt-malt and silver payed,
poultre and geese payed, only he rests me 2 meatt
lambes, on for this year, and ane uther for the
year preceeding, ther fleeces payed.

WM. WARES laboures in the kills and payes the like
duetie in everie kynd and hes att compt peyed the
samen except two meatt lambes.

*Sext June, 1698, ther is peyed of this years fearme
for crop 1697, be Wm. Henderson, of malt given
to Wm. Murray 1 boll to the house 1 boll, 3 ps.
Inde from him is 2:0:3:0.

*From Alexr. Dunnett, given to Malcolm, Groat,
2 bolls and one boll to the house; Inde from
him 3:0:0:0. Inde payed preceeding this
date - - - - - 5:0:3:0

*Restis this day betuixt Alexr. Dunnett and Wm.
Henderson 5:3:1:0.

*Nota, this day ther is the teind malt and John Wares
and Wm. Waters malt vnbroken vpon, the rest
being broken formerly.

Receaved from Wm. Henderson of malt about the 20
of July 1698, i boll, i f: 3 ps. Inde payed this
years fearme be Wm. Hen-
derson - - - - - 3-2-2-0

And be Alexr. Dunnett of this
years fearme - - - - - 3-0-0-0

And be Wm. Waters and John
Wares of scat malt - - - 0-2-0-0

Quherof sold 3 bolls	Inde is	7:0:2:0	
and the rest taken			
into the house.	Rests yet	4-1-2-0	4-1-2-0

NOTE.—In the above three entries, Wm. Walter,
Wares and Waters appear to be the same person.

[p. 14] Followes ane accompt of horse, Shalties and meares,
viz. and staiges :

Imprimis, ane gray horse called the horse.	Item, a young broun mear of your own foster.
Item, the gray bear [kear ?].	Item, a meirke broun mear of your own foster.
Item, a black stained horse.	Item, a black mear that came from George Allan.
Item, a kear horse that came from Donald Mckbeath.	Item, a broun mear that came from James Jack.
Item, thrie black Shalties.	Item, a black mear and a pyed mear staige two yeir old com Beltain, that came from Robert Caldell.
Item, two broun Shalties.	
Item, a black Shaltie mear and a stead foll att hir foot.	Item, a broun mear and a kear stead foll at hir foott that came from John Nicolsone.
Item, a black mear with a whyt leip.	
Item, a soar mear.	

OXEN.

Imprimis, a reach horned.	Item, a read humbled with whyt spots.
Item, a read horned.	
Item, a read horned with a starne in his face.	Item, a broun horned.
Item, a black rigned.	Item, a read horned ox wanteing the tale.
Item, a broun horned.	Item, a kellow horned ox.
Item, a black brocked.	Item, a read horned ox with a whyt tale.
Item, a black horned.	Item, a dinn humbled.
Item, a dinn humbled.	Item, a broun horned flecked ox.
Item, a reach horned.	
Item, a black horned.	
Item, a black hacked.	Inde is eightein oxen.

[p. 15] Ane account of the key in the byr as followes the fourth
of Decer. 1697 yeirs.

- Imprimis two broun horned key.
Item a broun horned cowe with a whyt tale.
Item, a black horned cowe.
Item, a broun horned starned cowe.
Item, a black humbled cowe.
Item, ann other black humbled cowe that came from Dod. Miller.
Item, a black riged horned cowe.
Item, a black spotted cowe with a whyt head.
Item, a reach humbled cowe with a whyt spot in hir face.
Item, a broun flecked humbled cowe.
Item, a read horned cowe.
Item, a read humbled cowe with a whyt spot above hir tale.
- Item, a whyt and read spreckled humbled.
Item, a broun spreckled humbled.
Item, a broun horned spreckled cowe.
Item, a dinn humbled.
Item, a read horned cowe with whyt spots.
Item, ann other read horned cowe.
Item, a read humbled with a whyt starne in hir face.
Item, a whyt humbled spotted cowe.
Item, a black humbled starned cowe with a whyt tale.
Item, a reach horned cowe with gray spots.
Item, a black humbled flecked.
Item, a read horned cowe.
Item, a read humbled cowe.

Inde is twenttie fyve and a bull, off this number ther is seaventein bulled.

A not of carr in the bwyr as followes.

- Item, a read humbled cowe calf.
Item, a whyt cowe calf.
Item, a black flecked with a whyt tale.
Item, a read ox calf.
Item, a read rigged ox calf.
- Item, a read ox calf with a whyt spott one his rumple.
Item, a black ox calf with a whyt spot in his face
Inde is of carre . . .

[p. 16] This penult day of Decer. 1697: yeirs compted and cleired with George Mckbeath and Donald Caldell for the girnells of oatt and bear meall, till a leitle inbreaikes of each which I ommitt to charge in this Compt book; and I have delyvered to George Mckbeath att the terme of Mertimes last by past fyftein bolls oatt meall of the last yeirs crope for coasteing fyve men servants, a dey and a herd to Whitsonday nixt, and what is given out of the samen to the house or any other way by ordour, sieing ther is noe more old meall, is to be made up to him out of the first bear meall that is to be made or other wages to be allowed.

Notta, the compt of bear is wncleired for with George Mckbeath at the dait heiroy.

The servant fies presently in my service without doores is satisfied and payed preceeding Mertimes last and ther shoone till Whitsonday.

*Apryll this 25th, 1698, nota, George Mcbeath charge is to be made vp off 15 bolls oat meall of the last crope and 7 bolls, 2 firlots and i pecke of bear meall taken in from the severill tennents as in the compte book. Inde is 22 bolls, 2 firlots, i pecke. Mair, of the reversions of the teind bear made in bear meall (ther being therof of the best bear i boll, i firlot and 3 peckes and of tails 3 bolls) i boll, 3 firlots and 2 lepes. Inde in all of charge ther is - - - - - 24 : 1 : 1 : 2

GLOSSARY.

* Not in E.D.D.

Page references are to Vol. viii., those to this vol. are given ().

bannack (Sco. one of the thirlage duties exacted at a mill), *passim*.

brocked ox (Sco. *a b. cow*, one with black spots, mingled with white, in her face; Gael. *bó bhreac*, a spotted cow, *brucach*, spotted or freckled in the face), p. (48).

carr (Sco. *caure*, *carr*, *car*, calves), p. (49).

- carriage and arriage (Sco. *arage and carriage*, servitude due by tenants, in men and horses, to their landlords, Sco. and N. Eng. *aver*, a beast of burden from Fr. *avoir*, cattle. Cf. Norse term in *Orkney and Shetland Records*, I., 341, s.v. *rodh*), p. 200, where it is a money payment.
- coast (ON. *kostr*, provisions; in Orkney, malt and meal, also a servant's board, which appears to be the meaning here). *bearmeall*—given to the servants' coasts, p. 203, * coasting, * *coasteing* (feeding), p. 5.
- dey (ON. *deigja*, a dairy-maid), p. (50).
- din (Sco. = dun), *passim*.
- fearme (Sco. *ferme*, Fr. *ferme*, rent), *passim*.
- * grayes ("greys," probably cloth of the natural coloured wool, as in "hodden-grey"). *plaides and grayes*, p. 9.
- hacked (Sco. and N. Eng. *hawkit*, adj., *hawkie*, a cow with a white face). *a brown hawkit ox*, p. 8.
- halk hen (Orkney, "poultry to feed the King's falcons"), p. 205.
- * kear (Gael. *ciar*, dark grey, or dusky—Rev. D. Beaton), *a kear horse*, *a kear stead foll*, p. (48).
- kellow (Sco. and N. Eng. *kylae*, a small breed of Highland cattle), p. 73.
- kill (kiln, ON. *kylna*), p. (47).
- * meirk brown mare (ON. *myrk*, mirk, dark, is used in conjunction with colour, e.g., *myrk-blár*, dark blue), p. (48).
- pennyland (ON. *peningsland*, an old Norse valuation of land which paid a penny of rent, and on which skatt was assessed), *passim*.
- * reach (Gael. *bó-riabhach*, a brindled cow; also in form *riach*, brindled, greyish) *reach grey humbled ox*, p. 73, 74, 201.
- rest, (debt), to rest (to owe), *passim*.
- rigged (Scot. *rig.*, the back of an animal; *riggit*, having a white stripe or white and brown streaks along the back; ON. *hryggr*, back, spine). *black rigged ox*, p. 6.
- scat (ON. *skattr*, a government tax levied in Orkney and Caithness on the pennylands) *scat silver* and *scat victual* and *malt* paid by the tenants of Dungesby (as in Orkney), p. 207 (where it is paid in the proportion of 10d. silver and 1 firlof of victual, but the pennylands are not given).
- Shaltie (Shetland pony, Sheltie, Gael. *Sealtuidh*), p. (48).
- soar mear (Sco. *sore*, *sorit*, adj., of a sorrel or reddish colour, 'a sorit horse,' Fr. *saure*, *saurir*, Jam. and E.D.D.; Low G., *soor*, dried, withered, Chambers's *20th Cent. Dict.*, s.v. *sorrel*; cf. Gael. *seurg*, withered, faded. OE. *sear*, *sear*), p. (48).
- spreckled (Sco. = speckled, ON. *spreklöttr*), *passim*.
- staig (a young stallion, also a castrated animal; in which sense it is used here?) *passim*.
- stained-horse (Sco., Eng. = an entire horse, a stallion, E.D.D., s.v., *stoned-horse*), p. (48).
- starned (Sco. and Eng., *starna*, a ewe with a white spot on its brow, *starnie*, a ram with a white spot on its brow. ON. *stjarna*, a star, *stjarna*, f., *stjarni*, m., a horse with a star on its forehead); *a black humbled starned steir*, p. 9; *a brown starned horned cove steirk*, p. 12, 74.

tallow silver (a rent charge in Caithness. In Brabster it may correspond to the *scat silver* in Dungesbey, see p. 5), *passim*. Can it be Gael. *airgiod teullaich*, hearth tax? for which the usual terms are *a. cagailta*, and *a. teinntein*.

victual (Sco. grain of any kind, also oat and bear meal; in Orkney applied to *cost*, malt and meal) applied to bear and oatmeal, p. 201.

PRICES, Etc.

Equivalent in sterling money given in parenthesis.

ANIMALS.

staig, £10, £9 (16s. 8d., 15s.)
 ox and cow, £15 6s. 8d. (£1 5s. 6d.)
 cow, £8, £10 13s. 4d. (13s. 4d., 17s. 9d.)
 ox, £12 (£1).
 plough ox, £13 6s. 8d. (£1 2s. 2d.)
 3 young beasts, £10 (16s. 8d.)
 a beast, £4 6s. 8d., £7 13s. 4d. (7s. 2d., 12s. 9d.)
 steer, £4, £6 (6s. 8d., 10s.)
 quey, £2 13s. 4d. (4s. 5d.)
 ox hire, 1 firloft.
 8-year-old ox hire, 2 firlofts = £3 6s. 8d. (5s. 6d.)
 wether and 2 fleeces, £2 12s. (4s. 4d.)
 poultry at 2s. 6d. (2½d.)
 goose, 6s. (6d.)

MEAL.

per boll, £5, £6 13s. 4d. or 10 marks (8s. 4d., 11s. 1d.)
 bear gave one-third less its weight in meal.
 41 firlofts of oats gave 13 firlofts of meal, or about two-thirds less.
 1 boll of seed oats = in value to ½-boll of victual (4s. 2d. or 5s. 6½d.),
 p. 204.

CLOTH.

'working' plaids and 'grayes' at 1s. (1d.) per ell.

WAGES.

man's 'service,' 1 year, 6 firlofts, 2 lippies; ½ year, £5 (17s., 8s. 4d.)
 man's 'service' to house, 1 boll, 2 firlofts, 3 pecks (18s. 4d.)
 cotter's 'service,' 1 year, 1 boll (11s. 1d.)

FOOD.

'costing' 5 men, 1 dairy-maid, 1 herd, 15 bolls oatmeal, £75? (£6 5s., or 17s. 10d. each).

LAND RENT.

It will be noted that the rents of the pennylands vary, and that prices of some commodities are not given, so that it would be useless to attempt to give the equivalent in money; especially as the superficial area of the pennyland, which is not given, probably varied as greatly as in Orkney.

Among the items charged may be noted: Martimas debt and tallow silver, arrage and carriage (one instance), ferme, mill multure and bannack, poultry, meat lamb, wether, fleece, vicarage (one instance). The cotters paid: hawk-hens, eggs, etc., while the tenants of Dungesby paid scat-silver and -malt.

ERRATA.—p. 12, l. 7 up, for *or* read *and*.

NOTES ON THE FISCAL ANTIQUITIES OF ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

By A. W. JOHNSTON.

IN anticipation of a larger work on the subject, the following notes are given as a summary of the principal results of recent research into the money-weights, taxation and land valuation of Orkney and Shetland, involving a similar enquiry regarding Norway, Iceland, Scotland and England. By this means many outstanding difficulties have been elucidated on all sides. The stumbling-blocks—in most cases solitary instances—have proved to be the most valuable links in the chain of evidence.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND 'PAYMENT.'—In the Orkney Rental of 1502,¹ and in the Shetland Rentals,² the appraised value of agricultural produce which was charged in rent, tax and tithe, is stated in pennies or 'penny-worth' of Orkney and Shetland 'payment' or 'gild.' Some years ago the writer expressed the 'opinion'³ that this 'payment' was, in reality, sterling money, because (1) instances had been found in the Orkney Rental in which the 'price' of malt had been given in money at four times that of Orkney 'payment,' (2) the Orkney 'payment' price of produce was less than a quarter of that of similar produce in Scotland, and (3) the ratio of sterling to Scots money in 1500, was 3.5:1—the English Tower pound of 350 grammes was coined into £1 17s. 6d. stg., and the Scots troy pound of 374 grammes was coined into £7 Scots. But the fact was overlooked that the Norse penny-weight was slightly heavier than the sterling penny of 1500,

¹ Peterkin's *Rentals*, No. I.

² MSS. in writer's possession.

³ *O.L.Miscell.*, VIII., 56, and *Orkney Herald*.

and consequently it was equal to about 4d. Scots.¹ The Norse mark-weight of 240 penny-weights was 215.8 grammes. The Norse penny-weight was equal to that of a depreciated Scots coined penny in 1393-1424, which latter was equal to 5 depreciated Norse coined pennies in 1347, etc. It will now be proved that Orkney and Shetland 'payment' in 'penny-worth' was an appraisal of produce made in 1137, at its Norse value in pure weighed (not coined) silver. In the beginning of the 15th century, when the penny-worth of Orkney produce represented the same value of silver as a Scots coined penny, the latter may have been used in cash payments, *e.g.*, for 'forcop,' which continued to be paid in Scots money in 1502 and to this day, notwithstanding the depreciation of the Scots coinage in relation to Orkney payment to 1:21 in 1600 and after.

There appears to have been little variation in the silver value of agricultural produce between 1137 and 1502, and none at all in the value of the cow, which was still maintained at its prehistoric gold value as a unit in the payment of wergeld, and in the market.

In proof of the conclusion that Orkney 'payment' or 'gild' is the Norse value of produce in 1137, reckoned in Norse penny-weights of pure silver, the following facts are submitted. In the first place it is generally accepted that all the agricultural land in Orkney and Shetland was valued at its purchase price in Norse weighed marks of pure silver containing 240 Norse penny-weights. It is known that in Norway, as elsewhere, the rent of land was calculated as being one twenty-fourth of its purchase value; and, in Scotland, tithe was valued at one-fifth of the rent, because the rent was held to be one-half of the produce, of which one-fifth was thus equivalent to one-tenth, or a tithe of the

¹ The exact ratio of value of *pennies* in 1500 is 4.047 Norse : 3.5 stg. : 1 Scots : of which the equivalents are 1 Norse = 1.156 stg. = 4.047 Scots. Tower pound 349.914 gram. (450 d. stg.), troy pound 373.242 gram. (1680 d. Scots), Norse mark-weight 215.8 gram. (240 d. Norse).

whole produce. Consequently it is found (1) that the normal rent of a mark of 240 pennies worth of land is 10 pennies in Orkney and Shetland 'payment,' or one twenty-fourth of the purchase value, and (2) in Shetland the invariable tithe charge until 1628 and after, of which there is evidence in Orkney as well, was 2 pennies per mark, or one-fifth of the rent. The Orkney and Shetland 'mark' or 'shilling' of 12 pennies, was called a 'mark' because it represented the total amount of rent and tithe paid by a mark of land.

That the mark-worth valuation was made as early as 1137, is borne out by the great diversity of rents which had taken place before 1500, viz., from 4d. to 12d. per mark, instead of the original and normal 10d.; and that the original uniform rent was 10d. per mark, or one twenty-fourth of the purchase value, is shewn by the maintenance of the uniform tithe of 2d. per mark, or one-fifth of the original and normal rent of 10d.

The sub-division of the Norse mark into 8 aurar was maintained in Shetland for similar sub-divisions of the land of the value of an eyrir; whereas, in Orkney, the sub-division of the Scottish mark into 13s. 4d., has been used to express fractions, *e.g.*, 10s. for $\frac{3}{4}$ mark, etc.

In 1329, $73\frac{1}{4}$ marks of land in Ronaldsey, Orkney, were sold for $69\frac{1}{2}\frac{7}{10}$ English marks of pure silver of 13s. 4d. stg. to the mark.¹ In accordance with the relative weight of Norse and sterling marks of that year, the English money was about $1\frac{1}{4}$ English marks in excess of the value of the Norse marks, which shews that the value of the land in Ronaldsey had altered little between 1137 and 1329. The English 69.85 marks were equal to 74.59 Norse marks, or 1.34 Norse marks more than the original value in 1137.

The antiquity and common origin of the Orkney and Shetland 'payment' is shewn by the *meil* of malt being appraised at sixpence in both groups of islands.

¹ D.N., II., 146.

LAND DENOMINATIONS.—In Orkney agricultural land was divided into eyrislands, each of which contained 18 pennylands, of which the normal eyrisland, of 120 acres, was valued at its purchase price of 72 Norse marks. The normal rent being 10 pence per mark, the rent of the eyrisland, of 72 marks, was 720 pence or 3 marks of 240d. each. The Scottish 'Old Extent' dates, at the latest, from the reign of king David I., the same period as that in which the mark valuation of Orkney and Shetland was made. It may be more than a coincidence that the Old Extent rent of a Scottish ploughland of 120 acres was 3 *marks* Scots, as compared with the Orkney eyrisland of 120 acres, of which the rent was 3 *marks* Norse. The difference between these marks was very little, viz., the Norse 215.8 grammes, and the Scots 233.276 grammes, or, roughly, 12 pennyweights.¹

In Shetland the record has been preserved of only three eyrislands and one pennyland. The skatt of each of these three eyrislands, and of the place called Urisland, in Shetland, is exactly one-third of the skatt of an eyrisland in Orkney, as shewn in the following table :—

SKATT OF AN EYRISLAND IN ORKNEY.

butter 'skatt'	144d.	paid by 6 spans of butter at 21d. = 126d.,
		the balance of 18d. being added to the
		money payment of 'forcop.' ²
malt 'skatt'	72d.	paid by 12 meils of malt at 6d.
total	...	216d.
forcop	...	12d. + 18d., balance of butter 'skatt' = 30d.
		paid in money or appraised goods.
total	...	228d.

¹ Tower weight was used in Scotland until 1426.

² It is explicitly laid down, in Shetland, that taxes and rent were, by custom, paid in two-thirds of cloth currency and one-third in butter currency (formerly in malt). It is now maintained that the same custom prevailed in Orkney, viz., two-thirds in butter currency and one-third in malt currency, with the above adjustment as regards the uneven number of spans.

SKATT OF AN EYRISLAND IN SHETLAND.

cloth 'skatt'	48d.	paid by 24 ells of wadmél at 2d. per ell.
malt 'skatt'	24d.	paid by 4 meils of malt at 6d. and latterly by 4 lispunds (or Norwegian spansns) of butter.
total ...	<hr/> 72d. <hr/>	
leanger ...	4d.	paid in money or appraised goods, such as calf-skins.
total ...	<hr/> 76d. <hr/>	

Having found the amount of skatt of one eyrisland, it was then calculated by the skatt-roll, that there were about 232 eyrislands in Shetland, closely corresponding with townships and groups of farms. There being a complete record of the mark purchase valuation it was then ascertained that, while there were many eyrislands of 72 marks as in Orkney, the average value was about 58 marks. There are no quoylands, skatt-free lands or boardlands in Shetland. The whole of the pennylands in Orkney, including valued quoylands and allowing an approximate number of pennylands for places like Edey and Cava, of which there is no record of the pennylands, amount to about 201 eyrislands, as compared with the 232 in Shetland. There is no complete record of the mark valuation of Orkney.

For purposes of tithe, the marks of land in Shetland were grouped into blocks of 72 marks, each of which was called 'a piece of corn-tiend.' The intention apparently was to have districts corresponding with the Orkney normal eyrisland or the Scottish ploughland. Each of these 'pieces of corn-tiend' was further subdivided into 4 blocks of 18 marks apiece, each of which was called a 'last of land.' A 'last of land' of 18 marks originally paid, in rent and tithe, exactly 216d., or 36 meils at 6d., and apparently the original 'last' measure

was 36 and not 24 meils; hence the 'last of land,' viz., a plot of land which paid a 'last' weight of produce in rent and tithe. In this connexion compare the Orkney and Shetland 'mark' of 12d., so called because it was the sum of the rent and tithe paid by a mark of land.

SKATT AND RENT.—It will now be noted that since the mark valuation was made in 1137 and until 1500 and later, the normal eyrisland in Orkney paid 216d. in skatt and 12d. in forcop, or a total of 228d., so that the tax amounted to about one-third of the rent of 720d. In Norway *leiðangr*, war tax, the true skatt, amounted to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the rent in peace, and $\frac{1}{6}$ in war time. It will be observed that Orkney 'forcop' corresponds with Shetland 'leanger,' and it is now suggested that the original name for both was *leiðangrs fararkaup*, the board-wages of the levy, which is the genuine and only skatt. Shetland *leiðangr* was appropriately paid in calf-skins, with which the levy would make their *húðfat*, skin-bags, in which they carried their kit and in which they also slept. It is, therefore, apparent that the so-called butter-, and malt-skatt is not skatt at all, but an old valued rent of which 'forcop' was $\frac{1}{8}$ th, corresponding with the Norwegian *leiðangr* of $\frac{1}{6}$ th of the rent in war time. It is now suggested that this butter-, and malt-skatt is the original valued rent for purposes of taxation, which, upon the confiscation of the óðul by Harald Hárfagri, was apparently charged upon the occupiers as a permanent annual duty, in addition to which they had to pay further rent as time went on and the land improved.

In the Orkney Rental of 1502, the ordinary skatt of the normal eyrisland of 72 marks-worth is called 'right skatt,' and the increased skatt of the abnormal eyrisland of 144 marks is called 'double' or 'wrong' skatt. There is here a clear indication that skatt had been, in some instances, readjusted in the case of land of more than the normal value. No such adjustment has, so far, been noted in Shetland.

TABLE OF THE RENT AND SKATT OF AN EYRISLAND IN GOLD AND SILVER OF VARIOUS PERIODS.
GOLD AND SILVER RATIO, 8:1.

Description of payment and valuation.	Gold—8th century Eastern standard 18 pennies = 1 eyrir.	Silver—9th century Eastern standard 18 pennies = 1 eyrir.	Silver—9th century new money-weight ¹ 20 <i>old</i> pennies = 1 eyrir.	Silver—11th century coinage begun. 20 new pennies = 1 eyrir.	Silver weight in grammes, value in modern sterling money.
Old rent, called butter-skatt and malt-skatt.	1 eyrir = 18 pennies = $\frac{1}{8}$ th mark.	8 aurar = 144 pennies = 1 mark	$7\frac{1}{5}$ th aurar = 144 <i>old</i> pennies = $\frac{9}{10}$ ths mark.	$7\frac{1}{5}$ th aurar weight = 216 new pennies „ = $\frac{9}{10}$ ths mark „	194·22 gram. £1 11s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stg.
skatt, i.e., leiðangr.	1 penny $\frac{1}{18}$ th of old rent.	8 pennies = $\frac{4}{9}$ ths eyrir.	8 <i>old</i> pennies = $\frac{2}{9}$ ths eyrir.	12 pennies weight = $\frac{2}{9}$ ths eyrir „	10·79 gram. £0 1s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. stg. ²
purchase valuation in 1137.			(eyrisland of 72 plógslönd)	normal eyrisland of 72 marks × 240d.	15537·6 gram. £124 16s. 0d. stg.
rent in 1137 = $\frac{1}{24}$ th of purchase value.				3 marks = 720d. = 72 marks × 10d.	647·4 gram. £5 4s. 0d. stg.
mark.		mark of Eastern standard.			194·22 gram. £1 11s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stg.
			mark of new money-weight.		215·8 gram. £1 14s. 8d. stg.

¹ new money-weight $\frac{3}{5}$ th heavier than old so that payment reduced by $\frac{1}{10}$ th.

² now paid by 12d, Scots = 1d. stg., or, about $\frac{1}{24}$ of the original amount.

The fact that the eyrislands, originally of uniform value, varied in value in 1137 as much as from 18 to 72 (normal) and 432 marks each, is good evidence of the great antiquity of the eyrisland. And the antiquity of the mark valuation is shewn by the difference between the original uniform rent of 10d. per mark, and the varied rent in 1500, of from 4d. to 12d. per mark.¹

EYRISLAND.—The old valued rent which is represented by the butter-, and malt-skatt, amounted to exactly 216d., or $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of a mark of 215.8 grammes. It is known that this mark was founded upon Charlemagne's *nova moneta*, by which the old money-weight had been increased by $\frac{1}{5}$ th. The old Norse mark would, therefore, have been about 194.22 grammes, of which the ertog, the $\frac{1}{4}$ th part, was 8.09 grammes, and the ertog of the Viking Age weighed that amount, being in fact the Eastern stater of 8.18 grammes. Consequently the old valued rent, viz., 216d. of butter and malt, or $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of a mark of silver, would, in the old weight, have been exactly one mark of silver=1 eyrir of gold; hence the *Eyrisland* is land which paid a rent of an eyrir of gold. This gold valuation was, therefore, assumably made in the gold period, which closed at the end of the 8th century. This bears out the contention² that Orkney and Shetland were colonised by the Norse as early as 664, that a system of Norse government was established as early as 700, and that a land valuation was made for the purpose of levying *leiðungr*, a war tax which, before the time of Harald, was paid only by those who failed to serve on the levy.

Corresponding with the practice in Norway, in Harald's time, two-thirds of all duties went to the king, and one-third was retained by the earl for his government, until the rule of earl Torf-Einarr, after which the earls of Orkney were allowed to retain the whole duties,

¹ See *O.L. Miscell.*, VIII., 57.

O. & S. Records, I., Introduction.

on account of the viking raids to which the islands were subject. Norway was too far away to render any assistance to Orkney in case of attack, and so Orkney was allowed to look after itself. In the same way, as Shetland was too far from Orkney, the seat of the earl's government, to receive any assistance in case of attack, it was also probably allowed to retain the crown-rent of two-thirds, and so had only to pay the earl the third he had formerly received, which seems to be a plausible explanation.

As the Shetland eyrisland paid the earl only one-third of the duties which were paid by an eyrisland in Orkney, it follows that the 232 eyrislands in Shetland paid the duty of $77\frac{1}{3}$ eyrislands in Orkney, or less than half of the 201 eyrislands in the latter. In the 17th century, Scottish land-tax was apportioned between Orkney and Shetland at the rate of two-thirds and one-third. As this corresponded closely with the relative amount of revenue derived by the earl from both groups, it may have been the origin of this approximate valuation for the assessment of Scottish land-tax.

LAND VALUATION.—In 1137, the earl of Orkney sold the óðul (which had been confiscated by Harald) back to the hereditary occupiers, at a mark for each *plógsland* or ploughland. So that before the mark valuation was made, agricultural land in Orkney and Shetland had been divided into ploughlands, corresponding with the mark-lands. In the normal eyrisland there were 72 ploughlands of $1\frac{2}{3}$ acre each. Nine of these ploughlands, or 15 acres, corresponded with the Scottish ox-gang, or $\frac{1}{8}$ of a Scots ploughland. The Scots ploughland and the English hide of 120 acres were worked by a common plough and 8 oxen, so that $\frac{1}{8}$ of the ploughland was designated an ox-gang. The quarter of a ploughland was a husband-land of 30 acres, or two ox-gangs. Eight plough animals (horses or oxen) were the regular stock allowed for a ploughland in Scotland.

With the Scots husband-land of 30 acres and 2 plough animals, may be compared the typical Norwegian farm which was worked and stocked by 3 thralls, 12 cows, and 2 horses. The Scottish ploughland was an area of land which could be worked by one plough and eight oxen=72 Orkney ploughlands. The Norse *plógsland* only occurs in literature in the Orkney Saga and Edda. In the latter it is described as what could be ploughed by 4 oxen in a day and a night. In Orkney it probably represented what could be ploughed in one day, so that it would take 72 days to plough the whole eyrisland of 120 acres. On this basis each Scottish ox-gang=9 Orkney ploughlands, of 15 acres, could be ploughed in 9 days.

It is not known what system of agriculture was carried on in Norway and Orkney as regards rotation of crops; but, apparently, in Orkney, the whole of the eyrisland was under the plough, because such portions as were lea were exempt from skatt and entered as lea in the Rental. It is not quite clear whether this exemption included land temporarily (under rotation as fallow) as well as permanently under grass.

It has already been noted that the rent of a mark of land, originally 10d., or $\frac{1}{24}$ th of the purchase value, had, by 1500, considerably varied in amount, viz., from 4d. to the normal and original 10d., and as high as 12d. per mark. The mark of land which paid the original and normal rent of 10d. was still worth a weighed mark in 1500, *i.e.*, the rent of 10d. at 24 years' purchase \doteq 240d. or a mark. In the case of the mark of which the rent had decreased to, say 6d., the value may have been ascertained by multiplying the rent by 24, which, in the case of a rent of 6d., made the mark worth 144d. or 12 shillings Shetland payment, *i.e.*, 6d. \times 24 = 144d. = 12 shillings Shetland payment.¹

The following are the relative Scots money values of

¹ *O. & S. Records*, I., 74, 75.

a lispund of 27lbs. of butter and oil, and of a setting of 27lbs. of meal, malt and barley, in Orkney in 1627,¹ and the Orkney payment of the same in 1500:—

	Butter.	Oil.	Meal.	Malt.	Barley.
Scots ...	40s.	36s.	12s. 6d.	11s. 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ d.	8s. 4d.
Ork. ...	4d.	4d.	1d.	1d.	$\frac{2}{3}$ d.

Malt was $\frac{1}{3}$ more, and meal $\frac{1}{2}$ more than barley. What the weight of the lispund and setting was in 1500 has yet to be ascertained, but it was probably from 16 to 18lbs.

ICELANDIC PUZZLES.—In *Heimskringla* is mentioned a ‘skatt-penny,’ in Iceland, in 970, of the weight of three silver pennies. In the Icelandic *Grágás* (code of laws) the eyrir of law-silver (half silver and half copper=to the modern debased silver coinage) is called a ten-penny eyrir, and consequently the eyrir of pure silver would have been of the value of twenty pennies. Upon the introduction of coinage into Norway, in the beginning of the 11th century, the eyrir weight of silver was at first coined into thirty pennies, but from 1052-1130 it was coined into 2 aurar of 30 pennies each, so that an eyrir weight of silver was worth 60 depreciated coined pennies, an equation which apparently gave rise to the Icelandic computation of 60 pennies to the eyrir. There has never been any coinage in Iceland, and its money-weight terms are borrowed and adapted from those of Norway. In *Grágás* it is stated that an eyrir= lx pennies; but the editor of the printed text states that the l of lx is apparently written over an original x in the MS., so that the original number would have been xx as above mentioned.

To go a step further back, and on the supposition that these pennies were of the old weight, then the old eyrir, being $\frac{1}{10}$ th lighter, would have contained only 18 of these pennies, corresponding with the Orkney eyrir

¹ Peterkin's *Rentals*, No. 4, p. 31.

of 18 pennies, which goes back to the gold period in the 8th century and before. The Orkney 18d. *eyrir* corresponds to the Eastern money-weight in use B.C. in Britain and Europe outside Roman influence, viz.,

Orkney-Norse :

18 pennies = 3 ertogs = 1 *eyrir* = 24·27 grammes.

Eastern (Gold) :

18 dioboli = 3 staters = 1 talent = 24·54 grammes.

Cf. Old-English :

20 pennies = $3\frac{1}{3}$ double sol. = 1 ounce = 27·25 grammes.¹

From the foregoing data, the Icelandic 'skatt-penny' was=the old Orkney-Norse penny of which 20 went to the new *eyrir*, which, in Norway, was afterwards coined into 60 pennies; so that one old 'skatt penny' of 20 to the *eyrir*=three new coined pennies of 60 to the *eyrir*. The *eyrir* of law-silver (half silver and half alloy) was called a ten-penny *eyrir* because it only contained the value of ten Orkney-Norse or skatt-pennies.

An analysis of the Icelandic *baugatal*, or *wergeld*, has shewn that the hitherto uncertain *pveiti* is one-fourth of a skatt-penny—the penny cut into four parts.

CURRENCY.—The value of home-spun cloth differed considerably in Norway and Iceland. Shetland apparently followed the Norwegian market. Sheep and wool were more plentiful in Iceland than in Norway, and consequently cloth was cheaper in Iceland, whereas cows were of the same value, in silver, in both places and in Orkney and Shetland.

In Shetland cloth was valued at 2 pennies (weighed) an ell, apparently between 1160 and 1190, when one *eyrir* of 30 pennies weight of silver was in Norway= $2\frac{1}{2}$ aurar in coins of 6 ells each=15 ells. The ell was 18 inches, and the cloth was 2 ells wide, so that an ell

¹ It will be noted that the English *ounce* is one-ninth heavier than the Norse *eyrir*, because the former contained $3\frac{1}{3}$ as compared with the 3 double solidi of the latter, or, otherwise 20 and 18 pennies respectively.

of cloth was 18 inches by 36 inches. In 1628, the Danish ell of 24 inches was in use in Shetland, having been apparently substituted by Robert Stewart, earl of Orkney, for the old Norse ell of 18 inches. It was one of the grievances of Shetland, in 1575, that the earl had increased the ell by one-third ($18 + \frac{1}{3} \times 18 = 24$).

Cows were valued, according to quality, at $2\frac{1}{2}$ aurar weight for wergeld payment, and otherwise at $2\frac{2}{3}$ and and 2 aurar weight, i.e., 3 and 4 cows to the mark weight. These two latter values of the cow (of the 13th century) are preserved in the Orkney denomination for the sub-division of the mark of land, viz., 3 and 4 cows' worth (O.N. *kýr-verð*) per mark, as recorded in Peterkin's *Rental*, No. VI., 1739.

For a considerable period in Iceland the following values were in use: 2 aurar weight = 4 aurar law-silver = 16 aurar of cloth \times 6 ells = 96 ells = 1 cow. In Norway, in 1160, 2 aurar weight = 5 aurar of coins \times 6 ells = 30 ells = 1 cow. In other words 2 aurar weight of silver bought 96 ells of cloth or a cow in Iceland, or 30 ells of cloth or a cow in Norway and Shetland.

Peterkin's *Rentals* No. I., 1502. Captain Thomas, in "What is a Pennyland,"¹ has attempted a partial analysis of this Rental, but his work is highly uncritical and careless and resulted in absurd conclusions.

He states, "cost is nowhere explained in the Old Rental, but the Glossaries make cost to be one-third oatmeal and two-thirds malt." Whereas it is clearly stated in the Rental, p. 5: "cost . . . *inde* thrid scheild meill," which did not escape the notice of Peterkin, whose glossary to the Rentals is quoted by Thomas.

An amusing example of his uncritical and careless methods is his description of the *uris*-, or *meilis-coppis* (singular, *cop*) of the boardland of Rapness in Westrey, which he asserts are "coppis, pronounced

¹ *Proceedings*, S.A.Scot., 1884, p. 253.

'cup-pes,''' and a "coppo" was "an old quarry." Thirty farms of 101 coppis or old quarries, covering an area of, approximately, 113 acres! He states that they are described as 'quoys' paying no skatt, whereas they are particularly enumerated as eyrislands and boardland "preter all the quoyis," and it is alleged that they ought to pay skatt, which is proved by the *Rental* of 1595, in which they are assessed with skatt at a very high rate.¹ The *Rental* states that six of these *uris*-, or *meilis-coppis*, made a pennyland, from which it is quite clear that the *uris* and *meilis* were connected with the uniform skatt and not with the varying rent. *Cop*, is O.N. *kaup*, as in 'forcop,' etc. The 6 *uris* or *meilis* are probably the amount of skatt paid by the pennyland. The statement in the *Rental* shews that each pennyland or group of 6 *meilis*-, and *uris-coppis* ought to pay 2 meils of malt skatt, so that the butter skatt would have been equivalent to double that number, or 4 meils, or a total of 6 meils, corresponding with the denomination '6 meilis-coppis.' The Orkney payment value was 36 weighed pence, which, in 1347 and after, was equal to 6 Norse aurar=180d. in coins, when the ratio of weighed to coined silver was 5:1. The denomination '6 *uris-coppis*' is therefore to be ascribed to 1347 or after. In the *Rental* of 1595, the 6 meils-coppis of skatt appear to have been entered and converted in the following manner. The 2 meils of malt are included explicitly in the rent. The 4 meils of butter-skatt are represented by 2 or $1\frac{1}{2}$ lispunds of butter-skatt, and the balance of butter-skatt (4 meils=24d., less 2 lispund \times 4d.=16d.) \times 3 converted in 48d. Scots.

The term 'cop' is O.N. *kaup*, bargain, purchase, agreement, wages, lease, etc. It may be connected in some way with a special contribution of food by tenants of boardlands. The Scottish forms of this word are

¹ Cf. the similar high skatt paid by the lands adjoining the boardlands in Burrey, etc.

coup, to exchange, *chaip*, a bargain, in which sense, 'the best chaip,' it is used in this *Rental*, under Burrey, in connexion with rent; *cf.* also Scots, *caupe*, *caupis*, an exaction by a superior. In Shetland *kaup* is used in the compound *ásætiskaup*, fee for a lease, a grassum paid by the tenant every third year for the renewal of the lease, corresponding with the Norwegian *tre dieaars-tage*. The Shetland term is given in the glossary to Balfour's *Oppressions* as 'eystercop,' where it is wrongly derived from "N. ey-settr-kaup, *merces insulæ conducendæ*."

In connexion with the Orkney use of the Scottish term *boardland* or *borland*, compare O.N. *borðleiðangr*, food paid to the king's (earl's) board, in contradistinction to *útfararleiðangr*, or war tax.

Captain Thomas calls attention to the statement in *Rental* No. VI., p. 12, that there were 96 mark scatting in a pennyland, and suggests that "perhaps a pennyland is in some way compared to a riksdollar, which contained 96 Danish schillings." He makes no use of the fact that a pennyland paid 4 settings of malt-skatt, and that a setting weighed 24 marks, which should have suggested the obvious calculation and explanation that a pennyland paid 96 marks of malt-skatt.

He has, however, to be thanked for having shewn that the eyrisland was founded upon and corresponded with the English-Scottish ploughland, that it was the unit of land denomination and taxation, and that the marks of land were a purchase valuation which regulated the land rents; but all else is a hopeless muddle. It is unfortunate that many students, including the writer, have hitherto, without question, quoted from Thomas because he was an antiquary of undoubted reputation, and the only one who had written on the subject. It should, however, be remembered that he was an old man and in bad health when he wrote his paper.

Butter-skatt is enumerated in spanns of the value of 21d. Orkney payment, and fractions of a spann are sometimes expressed in their money value. The spann of butter is however usually converted at 20d. instead of 21d. as a matter of arithmetical convenience, but those fractions which are expressed in money (10½d. for a half, 14d. for $\frac{2}{3}$ rd, 7d. for $\frac{1}{3}$ rd., etc.) are counted at their face value, viz., at the rate of 21d. per spann. Part of this butter-skatt had to be paid in kind (butter), and the balance in any other appraised commodity of the same value. The following is an analysis of the butter-skatt of the parish of St. Andrews:—

								s. d.
27½ spanns	[× 20d. =	-	-	-	-	-	-	45 10]
[$\frac{2}{3}$ spann]		-		-	-		14d.	
[$\frac{3}{4}$ spann]		-		-			16¾d. ¹	
[$\frac{1}{2}$ spann]		-	-	-	-		10½d.	3 5¼
								<hr/>
[total value of butter-skatt		-	-	-	-	-		49 3¼]
<i>Inde</i> (whence, of which) <i>stent</i> (to be paid) 22								
lispunds, 10 marks of butter [at 4d. per lispund								
= 89½d. adjusted to - - - - -								
								7 5¾]
								<hr/>
<i>Summa de</i> butter scat <i>preter</i> the stent		-	-	-	-	-		41 9½
								<hr/>
[i.e. the balance of butter-skatt after deducting the value of the stent butter].								
[The summations of these two items are given thus:]								
Summa de stent xxij leisp. x mark	-							[= 7s. 5¾d.]
Summa de butter scat preter the stent		-						41s. 9½d.
								<hr/>
[Total butter-skatt as detailed above		-						49s. 3¼d.]
								<hr/>

Thomas read 'butter-skatt *inde* stent butter' as meaning (contrary to its consistent meaning everywhere else), that 'stent butter' was an additional payment to 'butter-skatt,' with the result that he took the balance

¹ In error for 15¾d.

of butter-skatt as the price of the whole number of spans. The word *inde* is used to indicate the medium of Orkney payment, e.g., '26 meils inde 13 cost tantum flesh,' 26 meils, of which 13 are to be paid in cost and as much (13) in flesh. He also read *d.*, i.e., *denarius*, penny (contrary to its consistent meaning everywhere else) as meaning *mark* in the single case of the spann of 21d., although *mk.* or *mark* is used everywhere else. He also assumed that Orkney payment was in Scots money, regardless of its glaring disparity with the price of similar produce in Scotland. Thirty-six meils, or a chalder, of barley of the value of 144d. Orkney payment, was valued in 1498, at 800d. Scots, or $5\frac{5}{9}$ ths more than Orkney payment, and a 'mart' of 40d. Orkney, for 160d. Scots, or 4 times more. There is no doubt that where Orkney payment was paid in cash in 1500, it was actually paid in Scots money as in the case of forcop, which continues to be paid in Scots money to this day—but, with this exception, Orkney payment had to be made in pennyworth of actual produce, or otherwise at its 'market' price.

The entry 'scat mairts for their pryce,' means, 'cows or oxen fattened to be killed and salted or smoked for winter provision,'¹ which were requisitioned at the rate of one from each eyrisland, to be paid for at the current market price. In 1575, it was a grievance in Shetland that the earl took sheep and oxen 'at the time of holding of the lawting' and 'promised payment therefor, but as yet is unpaid.' This, thereafter, became a fixed annual tax, called 'ox and sheep money.'

Unfortunately the original MS. of the Rental of 1502 cannot now be found. The printed edition is full of obvious misprints, and it would not be surprising if 'scat marts' actually reads 'sat marts,' salt marts, as the regular description in the Exchequer Rolls is *martæ salsæ*, which in 1500 are priced at one mark or

¹ E.D.D., s.v.

13s. 4d. Scots each. The Rental gives no price, but in accordance with the interpretation of Orkney payment now given, the Orkney price should be one quarter of the Scots, viz., forty pence; and in a document of 1560¹ the feu-duty includes a forty penny mart. The Orkney appraisement of a sufficient cow or ox was 10 meils = 60d. Orkney = 2 aurar weight or 4 to the mark, and of a 'gild ox,' 15 meils² = 90d. Orkney = 3 aurar weight of silver; the prices of which, in 1500, would have been 20s. and 30s. Scots.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.—In accordance with the price of the various weights of butter—the Orkney lispund of 4d., spann, 21d., and the Shetland lispund of 6d.—the spann weighed $3\frac{1}{2}$ Shetland lispunds or $5\frac{1}{4}$ Orkney lispunds. In a document of 1328,³ 36 Shetland spanns were equivalent to 7 Norwegian skippunds ($\times 18 = 126$ Norwegian spanns); therefore, 1 Shetland spann = $3\frac{1}{2}$ Norwegian spanns of 18lbs. each. On the assumption that the Orkney lispund of 24 marks of butter at 4d. had been originally the bismarapund of 24 marks or 12lbs., then the Shetland lispund of 6d. butter would have been 18lbs., and the Orkney (and Shetland) spann of 21d. of butter, 63lbs. The conclusion therefore is that the Orkney lispund (bismarapund) was originally 12lbs., the Shetland lispund 18lbs. (=Norwegian spann), and the Orkney and Shetland spann 63lbs., as proved by the statement of 1328.

CURRENCY OF THE RENTAL.—Orkney-Norse money is described as 'Orkney payment,' 'gild,' 'prysit guidis,' viz., a 'penny-worth for ilk d.,' the lispund of butter being appraised at 4d., meil of malt 6d., meil of barley 4d., barrel of butter valued at 13 meils 2 settings = 80d. Orkney = 20 lispunds at 4d., corresponding to the Norwegian skippund of 20 lispunds. The summation of

¹ O. & S. Records, I., 134.

Skene *De Verb. Sig.* (1597) s.v. *serplaith*.

D.N., VII., 137.

Orkney payment is, in one case, described as *solidi*, in contradistinction to *argent*, the term used for Scots money in the Rentals, including forcop. The term 'price' is used either to express a value in Scots money or other goods of a similar value in Orkney payment.

NOTATION.—Other half, half 2 = $1\frac{1}{2}$. Half 3 = $2\frac{1}{2}$, etc., $1\frac{1}{2}$, $111\frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{2}$, $1\frac{1}{2}$. In cases of, say, '8 pennylands less 40d. the meaning is '8 pennylands *minus* $\frac{40}{160}$, or $\frac{1}{4}$ mark of land'; the number of marks in the pennyland has first to be ascertained, say 4, in which case the exact number of pennylands would be $7\frac{1}{2}$, or $31\frac{3}{4}$ marks—one can appreciate why these troublesome equations were merely indicated.

Peterkin's *Rental*, No. 2, 1595. In this rental the money is Scots, and Orkney payment is no longer reckoned. Where *forcop* is continued as a separate payment by itself it is of the same amount (Orkney payment) as in 1502. Stent butter is continued as 'butter-skatt,' and the balance of butter-skatt, of the 1502 rental, is usually doubled in amount and entered as 'skatt silver'; when forcop is not mentioned separately it will be found included at its original amount, in skatt-silver; *e.g.*, in the case of the 3 pennyland of Foubister, in St. Andrews.

1502 Rental. Butter-skatt 1 spann [20d.] . . . *inde stent* 1 lispund [4d., leaving a balance of 16d. of butter-skatt] . . . malt-skatt 2 meils . . . forcop 7d.

1595 Rental. Butter-skatt 1 lispund, in skatt-silver 3s. 3d. [=the balance of butter-skatt in 1502, viz., 16d. $\times 2 = 32d.$ + 7d. forcop = 3s. 3d.] . . . skatt malt 2 meils.

Between 1502 and 1595, one item of Orkney payment had been commuted into Scots money at only double its original amount.

It should be appreciated by the tax-payers in Orkney that each penny of forcop, which in 1600 and after = 21d. Scots, is now paid for by 1d. Scots, or $\frac{1}{21}$ of the original amount, and skatt silver (butter-skatt balance)

by $\frac{2}{3}$ of the original amount. This is, however, partially neutralised by the weight of stent butter and malt, etc., having been about doubled. The whole skatt of an eyrisland is 228d. Norse, of which 96d. (stent butter and malt) has been doubled by the increased weights, 30d. forcop, etc., has been reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ of that amount, and 102d. skatt silver has been reduced to $\frac{2}{3}$ of that amount; the net result being that the whole charge has been reduced by about $\frac{1}{3}$ th. The grievance, however, is that the Norse taxes were not abolished when the Scottish taxes were imposed, resulting in the islands being now doubly taxed.

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NOTES.

SOME RIG-NAMES IN PAPA STOUR, SHETLAND.—*Tún of Bragaster* (including da Wirlie): Smaks, Stakki Punds, Lowds.

Setter (including Sotrawater, Midsaetr, and New-setter): Baeni Daelds, Vigi Daelds, Tunga, Upslands, Soldians, Shaeni Daelds, Hoola Daelds, Staen Tigs, Staabi Daelds, Mell Flugs, Runi Daelds, Mid Kellins, Lebetes, Barni Hools, Oberbetes, Stutstocks, Gjru Daelds, Wilmans, Toonans.

Biggins (including Upper Biggins and Kirk-house): Haeli Daelds, Ljeukla Daelds, Sanfligs, Spelds, Búgja Slits, Shures, Kjurkatungs, Lunkla Daelds, Buskas Daelds.

Olligarth: Underhills.

Hurdabak (including Evrigarth): Boo Taegs, Tafts, Yjokla Spring, Bjeauries, Tunga (or Tonga) Daelds, Free ar Daelds.

Northouse (including Da Mellins, and Tirval Skord): Doona Daelds, Bjeulaands, Aander Daelds.

Forvik: Sweeni Laands, Skelpa.

East Biggins (from Biggins Water to Forvik): Daal Vaness, Hjeoga Daelds, Tennes Daelds, Sneeves Daelds, Fúdaalaand, Braes Daelds, Hússans, Rods, Gjaeries, Skaakins, Linkla Daelds.

The names have been taken down and spelt as near as possible to the pronunciation used by the oldest inhabitants in the Isle, and the above is only a few of the names, many more remain to be gathered.

Some Names of Craig Stanes, near Northness, Papa Stour: Boynaskerry, Krogory, Riva Skerry, Robin Húd, Sta En, Willies Taing, Staen o' Tang Gio, Kreade, Da Gutars, Skup Vik, Gjeu Berry, Haal i Kan, Inunder Da Kru, Back o' Sildi Gio, Doon Heylor, Jarm Coutts Heid, Jekis Heiliks, Atween da Hols, O' Da Unglabreid.—P. A. JAMIESON.

An old rigmarole, the tune of which is still known in Shetland. The words seem to be partly Dutch and, of course, are much corrupted:—

Müşhie plum she tips could be
Went to her galanta.
Every one as they pass by
Must come in an' donka,
An' as they donk
So they must dance
An' so may dey bevārā.
Da mushie wi' da rotter kop
Weel may dū bevara.

W. W. R.

QUERY.

Can anyone tell where and when the portrait of "Aana Macallame in the Orknes" appeared.—A.W.J.

REPLY.

LAAMAR.—In "*Old-Lore*," Vol. IX. Part I., page 9, it is mentioned that there appears to be no such word in the Shetland dialect as Laamar, and that in the new edition of MacBain, he is in error in quoting Laamar as a Shetland word. I know of one place in Shetland so-named, and I would think that there must be others. The place I mention is Laahamar, a "loading rock" or



*Aana Macallame borne in the Orknes of
Scotland in the year of our Lord 1615
being presented to the kings Majesties sight Octob. 1662
Though my Portraicture seemes to bee
A Man; my Sex denyes me so;
Nature hath still Variety;
To make the World her wisdome know;*

landing place at Haraldswick in Unst. On 21st November, 1794, H.M.S. "Pylades," a brig-rigged sloop of war, of 16 guns and 450 tons, was driven ashore in Haraldswick, between Laahamar and Brookpoint.

Perhaps Shetland members can give us other examples of this word.

Whilst on the subject of place-names, does Brookpoint really mean a point at the mouth of a burn—or is it a corruption of a Norse word meaning something quite different? I have not been at Haraldswick for many years, so do not remember if there is a burn at this place.

Since writing the above, my brother informs me that there is a Laamar near Voe, Boddam, Dunrossness—also a "loading-rock."—R. STUART BRUCE, Symbister, Whalsay.

HOW WILLO O' IVER TUACK BECAME A HORSEMAN.

BY J. T. SMITH LEASK.

DA Horseman's wurd! Wha's no hard o' hid? Treu, hid's no sae muckle i' vogue noo-a-day, but a' trou' Orkna', fifty year sin', hid waas i' a' bothys' mooths. Guid kens gin dere waas onyting i' id ava, bit hid waas weel aneuch spoken o' an' rin apin. 'Deed a' da fairm servants an' young chielders waar fair mad tae be made horsemen or git da "Wurd" is dey ca'ad id; to' id waas weel kent 'at da Ald Chiel hed so'nting tae deu wi'd, jeust da sam' is 'e hed tae deu wi' da Free Masons. Hid's maist stunderan, an' hid's paaled miny a ane, foo folk, aye, an' soond folk teu bae deir ain tales, hae been sae mad tae rin sae muckle i' tow wi' da Eenimy is gin dey waar poosted or will i' da hade. Hid buist be i' da bluid, takin' efter ald Ave wha

begood id wha kens, to' sheu heud oot 'at sheu waas gockid ower. Humph! sheu so'od a' hadden 'er gab, cis, hid's weel kent sheu teukna muckle tizin' or teekin'.

I' ald times, da wey horsemen waar 'made' waas so'nting awsome, muckle da sam' is Feust gaed trou' whin 'e selt 'is sowl tae ald Mephi—whit deu ye ca' 'im? Da gluffises gaed deir waas doon till da shore at da chap o' twal api' da night, deir leevan lanes, an' laid demsels doon alow da fleudmark, feet till da sea. Haith hid wad a' been mair fare for dem, body an' sowl, gin dey hed been sayan deir bonnie wirts an' gan till deir beds, an' no lyan dere fylin deir clais. Beesweel, lyan i' dat pooster, an' clappin' ae han' api' da croon o' deir hades an' da tither api' da soles o' deir feet, dey telt ald Clootie tae tak' a' 'at waas atween deir han's. Hid waasna canny bit i' twa shaks o' a cat's tail, ald Hornie waas api' da spot wi' a beuk i' 'is han'. Whit airt 'e cam' naeborthy seems tae hae kent, bit id buist a' been fae doon by, to' 'e cam'na is a bockie. Da beuk waasna da Guid Ane, na haith, (whiss id) sheu waas da Beuk o' Black Airts, jeust da morroo o' whit 'e gaed till da witches, an' whit dey eused i' deir deevilry. Weel, ald Tangie gaed da beuk till 'is neou tak', wha fae dat oor fill da end o' 'is days he'd bit tae wiss for a ting tae be deun, an' deun id waas i' a weep. Dere's a whasay 'at a ora boy i' Orkna hed gotten a had o' ane o' dem, Da Best kens hoo, bit hid's a guid while ago noo to', an' ae e'enin whin 'is maister telt 'im tae rin an' tak' in da horse feed boxes, da common gallows hedna trift an' deudna fash 'imsel tae fitch aff o' 'is peerie creepie, bit i' a blink, in cam' da trouchs atrou da door, trunlin' a' i' a tail, like as miny yowes. Da stoopid amiter o' a maister waas stootly skarred wi' siccan a feralie, bit 'e gaed da boy a luggit, an' pat 'im awa dere an' dan. He buist a' been a born feul, cis gin 'e'd keepid da boy, he wad a' haen guid mains api' da Ill Ane bae gaen da boy twa-r-tree mens wark tae deu,

an' id wad keepid Saatan trang deuan id for 'im. Hid wad a' been a guid hainin' o' siller teu i' waages; aye wad hid.

Hid's said 'at da vera last ane tae be made a horseman i' dis wey, i' da Wast Mainland, waas Jock o' Nasegoe, bit seurlly hid cinna be treu, or dan Ald Nick deudna bide bae his pairt o' da pac'. Jock jeust fell oot o' ae misanter an' in till anither maistlins a' 'is days, atween his kye, an' horse, an' bairns an' wife a' deean, to' Best kens sheu waasna muckle o' a loss, an' 'imsel aye gettan sairly mittled noo an' dan, an' deean afore 'is time teu. Bit lit da treuth be telt, da warst misanters o' a' cam' apin 'im efter he waas made a Elder i' da Kirk—haith dan, he waas maistlins is illaff is puir ald Job 'imsel, bit no sae heumle wi' id a'. Wha kens, ma'be da Deil sheuled, aye jeust sheuled misanters apin 'im is paymints for tinkin tae brak' bargain bae bean guid, efter 'e'ed cozined 'is sowl. Hid's puir waan for folk 'ats behadden tae da Deil traan wi' 'im, is he'll mak' dem swee afore he's deun wi' dem. Aye, whin he gets dem anunder 'is toom, he'll scad da puir wratches is Burns wad say, an' reest dem teu.

Da wery o'd waas 'at aince a bothy got da Beuk, he couldna' mak' awa wi' 'er. Na deed, sheu wad naither burn or droon, for gin sheu waas pittin intil a fire is hate is Neboocanaiser's fiery furnace, or sukken i' da deepest hole o' da Pentlan' Firt, Tangie klikkid 'er oot, nain da waar, an' pat 'er back intae da shuttle o' da kist, or ony ither piece whar sheu waas eusually keepid. Whin da ane 'at aicht 'er slippid awa to', sheu waas whirmed awa at aince, back till da Bad Piece whar sheu lay fill anither feul, 'at waas willin tae coz 'is sowl, speired for 'er. Sheu buist a' been bund i' unca guid stuff afore sheu steud da hate.

Dere waas anither wey to', no fairly sae sarious, bae whit men got, whit dey ca'ad, da horsemen's wird. Hid waas a sort o' sacrit Society or Order, an' nane bit men

'at wirout wi' horse, an' horsecoopers, an' horse doctors, an' blacksmiths waar alloo'd tae get 'da wird.' Da maakan o' a horseman i' dis wey waas a unco wheer atgain teu, is Willo o' Iver Tuack fand oot till 'is cost. Da meetin' waas hadden is eusual i' a treshin mill, amang da strae, i' black darkness, api' da heud o' da night. Hid waas i' da barn o' Tongue, an' Tamo o' Tongue waas da hade ane dat night, an' 'e hed twa gossips—Jimoo o' Nazegoe an' Mano o' Dale tae gae 'im a hand—tree o' is illminted moniments is wad be fund ony piece i' a days wark. Dey ower gaed demsels dat night to'. Da tewals eused for da job waar a helter, a muffler, a ald weel wirn birdle bit, an' a puckle o' da Ald Kirk, aneuch tae sair da company an' mak' dem fou. Willo waas weel prinked ap i' 'is bits o' best Sunday duds, bit waas led in till da lodge bae da helter, wi' da muffler wippid savandidly ower 'is e'en, his breeks bretteed ap till abeun 'is knee, an' dan he buist kneel wi' 'is bare knee api' da bit fill 'e sweur a mighty aith 'at he wad hail an' nivver revale ony o' da airts an' pairts, an' ither uncan tings dan aboot tae be telt 'im. Hid waas a awsome aith, bit muckle waar nor dat waas tae come. Dere's a whasay 'at whin ane's made a Free Mason, he buist ride a nanny goat, bit Willo waas telt he buist shak' hans wi' da Ald Chiel 'imself; ma'be he's da R.W.M. o' da horsemen, wha kens. Willo waas rightly blide tae win oot o' dat pooster, cis da ald bit waas koglie an' wirn doon dat tin 'at id narlins cuttit trou till da bane. Hid baled lang, an' hid waas amis apin 'im teu for bean sae feulie. Weel, onywey, he raise ap o' 'is hookers, an' aye wi' 'is e'en buckled ap, he waas yocked a had o', an' tribblin deir weys, he waas led back an' fore, an' oot an' in, an' oot trou ae door an' in trou anither fill 'e tent a' kennin o' 'is wharaboots. A matlo wad narlins dung 'im ower is he waas piverin' a' ower, 'is teeth waar titteran, an' da cald creeps waar rinnin doon 'is riggin

bane wi' gluff, an' sma winder, wi' siccan a introduction afore 'im, forebye he waas a coorly footer onywey, an' kentna whit tae lippin. Bit da swate breuk oot an' fairly teumed aff o' 'im, an' 'is knees knockid taegither, whin a muckle heuf waas pittin intil 'is live tae shak', an' shak' id da pur sowl deud is weel is 'e waas able, nivver jaloosin hid waas da heuf o' a twa year-ald staig. Hid waas a bonnie prettikin teu, bit hid's ceurious 'at da staig deudna nicker or snush, bit Willo waas led awa nain da wiser, bit tankin 'is Maaker at winnan awa wi' da life fae siccan cleuks. Dan da muffler waas taen aff o' 'is e'en, bit a' da sam' da muckle gomeril couldna see ae styme is hid waas is black dark is da boddamless pit. Whin a' dis atgans waar ower, Willo waas concordidly telt a' da sacrets o' da Order right aneuch, sic is da signs bae whit he wad ken anither horseman, an' foo tae mak' a traaward horse tae geong is leesome is a ald coo. A guid hantle o' 'd waasna o' muckle euse, an' id's a whery gin dere waas a air o' treuth in id ava—naeting bit afftak' no wirt leedan tae. Ane o' da sacrets waas gin Willo wissed tae tak' mains api' onybothy, he hed naeting tae deu bit geong 'is waas tae da Kirkyaird an' waal a screw nail oot o' a coffin 'at hed been anunder da meuld wi' a corp in id for seevan year. Sal an' hid waas a bonnie playfair for ony ane tae hae i' his bickets. Dan gin da ane he waas illfain o' waas awa wi' a horse, he jeust hed tae ca' da nail intae da mark o' ane o' da cackers, an' id maittered no foo far da horse waas awa, da breut wadna budge a bit fill da nail waas taen oot.

Efter Willo hed leeded tae a' da builder 'at waas tae be telt aboot horse, an' hoo tae tame dem, a hale lock o' unco droll tings waar whissed i' 'is lug o' foo tae tame or mak' feuls o' da lasses, whassaco tae had dem i' boona, bit da maist o' 'd waas jeust a lock o' bruck, an' a hantle o' 'id no fit tae pit i' print. Gideed, bit ane o' da sacrets o' foo tae dale wi' da lasses 'll stand

bean telt, an' a rugfis pleunkie hid waas teu for a lad tae play aff apin ony bit o' lass, an' abeun a', gin he hed a e'e apin 'er. Hid waas jeust heumlin. Gin Willo wissed tae mak' a lass rin efter 'im, a' he'd tae deu waas tae get a had o' a aipple, dan geong oot an' find a swinke an' cut 'er trou ane o' da whitey knots or lumps, dan withoot ditean da knife, he waas tae cut da aipple i' twa, an' gin he got da lass tae ate ae half, sheu wad rin trillan efter 'im like a peerie dog fill 'e gaed 'er da tither half. Ma'be sheu wad ! da ceur's no vooched for, sheu wad ma'be cloor 'im an' hid wad be amis. Some lad might try tae middle 'is lass i' dat wey, an' lit da warl ken foo he wins on. Dere waas naeting said aboot da horseman keepin' 'is ain wife i' boona whin sheu taks da trilka or flytes. Na haith, gin dat sacret waas kent, a' merrid men wad rin tae be horsemen, bit is da deil 'imsel hesna da gy o'd, hids a puir waan for men folk tae stow shargin wives.

Dat waas da last o' da sacrets, sae da corks waar draan, an' da whiskey pittan roun'. Dere waas feinty a bit o' gless aboot han's, na, no sae muckle is a coop or a peerie jeck, sae da boys teuk sook aboot oot o' da bottle, an' id jeust tasted is guid an' gaed doon deir trots is weel is gin id 'a been drukken oot o' a siller tassie 'at Burns wissed tae tak' 'is wine oot o'. Every ane o' da company, a' bit Willo 'imsel, hed tae gae a pleuman's toast afore 'e teuk a sook. Dere waas nane o' dem oot o' da Beuk, an' jeust da sam' is da instructions aboot da lasses, dey'r no fit tae pit i' print, nane bit ane or twa. Ane waas

Am rede trou mud an' clay, is butter deus trou fish,
An' 'case I getna ony mair, I'se tak' a sap o' dis.

Anither ane waas

Here's tae da rainbow, da red white an' green,
Here's tae da bonnie lass 'at I saa da streen,
Here's helt till 'er body, money till 'er purse,
Heevan till 'er sowl, for I nivver wissed 'er warse.

Whin dey hed pittin ower a' da whiskey, an' waar a' croos, Willo gaed 'is waas hame, riftin sairly, but is prood is a dog wi' twa tails, an' baith waggan, tinkin he kent mair nor maist folk aboot horse flesh an' lasses, bit lit-a-lit, he made siccan a molligrant an' bogled sae muckle ower sair guts an' a sair hade i' da mornin', 'at his trowie ald faither hed tae tak' oot da yoke an' pleu a' day for 'im, while he lay i' bed speuan.

THE TRANSITION FROM NORSE TO LOWLAND SCOTCH IN SHETLAND, 1600-1850.

A STUDY IN THE DECAY OF ONE LANGUAGE
AND ITS INFLUENCE UPON THE LANGUAGE
THAT SUPPLANTED IT.

BY PROFESSOR GEORGE T. FLOM, University of Illinois.

1. The dialect of the Shetland Isles forms the northernmost branch of Lowland Scotch in A. J. Ellis's *The Existing Phonology of English Dialects*. Its grammar is in the main Scotch, but with a few Norse forms; its accent is West Norwegian; its phonology a mixture of the two.¹ In its phraseology the Norse element would seem to be the dominant one; but yielding slowly to Lowland and Standard English. In its vocabulary it is part Norse and part Lowland Scotch (and English), with less important other elements.² I shall below come back to the question of the relative proportion of the main elements. On the semantic side, Norse and Scotch uses are found side by side in well-nigh every sentence spoken; its compound words very frequently combine one stem from the one language with one from the other. This unusual example of mixed speech, with its exceedingly irregular forms, is the outgrowth of the complete union of two languages,

of which the one which yielded its place was the speech of the majority, the one which displaced it was the speech of the smaller number, mainly the official class and the clergy. The basic Norse population, in passing during the centuries from Norse to Scotch, adapted the new words learned to their own native ways of pronouncing; and in the course of time large bodies of Scotch words, in the resulting mixed dialect, were not only pronounced after the Norse manner, but were perhaps given Norse suffixes also, or employed in ways strange to Scotch, but ways which the words had had in the native Norse. And similarly with loans on the other side. The Scotch settlers and officials, few at first, more numerous later, found in Shetland a dialect which they did not understand, and which they had to learn, one whose nouns, and adjectives, and verbs, they took up into their own speech, adapting them to their own manner of pronouncing. And certain other national factors must, perhaps, also be reckoned with. The variety of pronunciations of the same word is, apparently, nowhere in English-speaking countries, so great as in the Orkney-Shetland variety. At the present time Standard English is slowly but surely displacing the dialect, as the form of speech that all strive to acquire.

2. The historical background of these things may briefly be summarized as follows. The Norsemen first visited the islands probably about 750 A.D.; their first permanent settlements were made probably about 790 or 800. Neither the *i*-umlaut of the Norse words in the dialect, nor the lake and river names (not to speak of the place-names) offer any evidence of settlement earlier than that. However, before the Norse occupation, Picts, and Gaels, and Irish priests, had been there; but upon the coming of the Vikings the peaceful priests withdrew, returning, we assume, to Ireland. The Picts and Gaels had come from Scotland, and some of them also from Wales it would seem; of these, too, many may have withdrawn.

But many also remained; and the evidence indicates these were not exterminated by the Norse; they merged gradually into the new population. And so there came about a certain racial mixture already from the beginning of the Norse occupation. The evidences of Pictish nationality especially, are to be seen in certain lake and river names, and in a small group of words in the Shetland dialect.³ Shetland and Orkney (which also had been settled by the Norsemen at the same time), were politically a part of Norway as late as 1468. In that year the two were temporarily handed over to Scotland as a pledge of the dowry of Princess Margaret, upon her marriage to James III. of Scotland. This contract was made by King Christian I. of Denmark-Norway, Norway having become united with Denmark in 1387. Thus with 1468 Scotch rule takes its beginning; but in Orkney especially there had been some Scotch immigration long before then.

In nationality, then, Shetland had been Norwegian for well on toward 700 years. But it continued to be acknowledged as Norwegian territory for 200 years after 1468; for Scotch rule was clearly understood to be merely a temporary arrangement, and the islands were in time to be returned to Norway. It was expressly stipulated in the contract that there were to be no changes made on the part of Scotland in the laws and institutions of the Shetland-Orkney Earldom. On three different occasions after 1468 the Kings of Denmark-Norway offered to pay the sum necessary to release the islands; and as late as 1667 the right of Norway was recognized by Scotland in a document that also bears the signature of the King of England and of the King of France. But that is the last we hear of it. And we may perhaps set down 1667 as the date in which Shetland-Orkney passed definitely and permanently into Scottish hands. And down to about this time also, as I shall indicate below, Shetland was linguistically almost

purely Norse; from then on it becomes more and more rapidly Lowland Scotch.⁴

3. As late as the end of the XVIth century, we may safely assume, Scottish settlement of Shetland had hardly begun. We learn, *e.g.*, that in 1593 Rev. Magnus Manson, who had been appointed minister in Unst, one of the northern isles, was obliged to go to Norway to learn the Norwegian language, or perfect himself in it, as his congregation "understood no other language."⁵ And Arthur Edmondston, in his *View of the Ancient and Present State of the Zetland Islands*, Edinburgh, 1809, illustrates how around the year 1600 the Scotch seem to know very little about Shetland. In the last decades of the XVIIth century, however, this has changed. The Scotch population now no longer consist merely of the Great Fowd, the lairds, and the ministers sent there by the home church; there is something like a definite immigration of settlers, and a systematic effort on the part of Scotland to make the islands Scotch. But the change from one language to another must have been a slow process in that period under conditions as they were in Shetland at that time. Orkney was nearer, and in Orkney it began earlier and went faster.⁶ Of Orkney, Mathew Mackaile, of Aberdeen, writes in the last half of the seventeenth century,⁷ in *A Short Relation of the Most Considerable Things in Orkney*: "It is very probable that the inhabitants of the Orcades of old did only speak Noords, or rude Danish; but now there are only three or four parishes (especially upon the Mainland or Pomona) wherein that language is spoken, and that chiefly when they are at their own houses; but all speak the Scots language, as the rest of the commons do" (p. 453 in Barry: *History of the Orkney Islands*). As late as the last half of the XVIIth century, then, there were those in several places in Mainland, Orkney, who spoke Norse, when among themselves. And Rev. John Brand wrote, in 1701, in

his *Description of Orkney and Shetland*, that Norse was not extinct yet in Orkney, "though there be far more of it in Zetland."

As far as Shetland is concerned, then, Edmondston is no doubt about correct in the general facts, when he writes, in 1809, that "the Old Norse has long been wearing out, and the change appears to have begun in the southern extremity"; and he adds that thirty years ago several individuals could speak it fluently in Unst. Around 1850 the last persons lived who could speak Norse (or "Norn," as there called), so runs the report from different parts of Shetland. The last one who is actually named as speaking Norse is Walter Sutherland in Skaw, Unst; he died *ca.* 1850.⁸ But the process itself, the steps by which the linguistic interchange came about, is left very vague by all such information. We can get a better idea of it from the published dictionary of the Norse element, and from the literary fragments that have been preserved.

I shall now pass to these.

4. On page xix. of the introduction to his *Etymologisk Ordbog over det norrøne Sprog på Shetland*, J. Jakobsen informs us that his dictionary contains some over ten thousand words of Norse origin. Jakobsen's studies were carried on in the isles during the years 1893-95, and the first three parts of his work were published respectively in 1908, 1909, and 1912. The fourth part, much the largest, was issued in 1921; in all it makes a volume of 1107 pages. The dictionary does not claim to present the "Norn" element in the dialect of Shetland as it is spoken to-day; for the author informs us that only about half of this number is in *general* use now, and he includes also words from the literary fragments that have been preserved. In his estimate of about half of the ten thousand he eliminates: (1) those words which remain in certain regions only, and (2) antiquated words which are known, and in part used

among old persons. But for our purpose those of the first group, being living words, should be included; and also many of the second group belong to the dialect of the present. If we assume that the number of such obsolete and obsolescent words was about 2,000 in 1893-95, which is my estimate after an examination of a part of the material, this would leave 8,000 words. It was observed by Jakobsen that since 1895 the number of Norn words no longer understood and used has been rapidly increasing. For the present generation then the number of Norn words in living use is considerably less than ten thousand; and also for the year 1850, when Norn definitely disappeared as a spoken language, the number of such words in the Shetland dialect must have been considerably larger than ten thousand. Possibly about 12,000.

What the total word-stock of the Shetlands is I do not know. However, on the basis of the evidence I have, I would estimate the number to be about 16,000. About the year 1900, therefore, the Norse element on the one hand, and the Scotch and other elements on the other about balance. But in 1850 the number of English-Scottish words was not so large as now, and the Norse element was much larger; presumably the ratio was about as 5 to 12. This conclusion may be regarded as borne out, perhaps, by the number of words in Thos. Edmondston's *Etymological Dictionary of the Dialect of Shetland and Orkney*, 1866 (in which there is but little from Orkney). This work contains *ca.* 3,400 words, of which the Scotch element makes up *ca.* one-third. It may be assumed that Edmondston's dictionary is equally incomplete for both elements, the Scotch and the Norse.

The Shetland dialect might be thought to be one of poverty in words, if we were to judge it merely from Edmondston's dictionary, and many readers would at once draw that conclusion. But Jakobsen's dictionary

shows the Shetland dialect to be moderately rich lexicographically. Linguists and dialect students would, no doubt, expect a larger estimate. However, in view of facts to be brought out below, and in view also of the limited scope of occupations in Shetland—they are fishermen, sheep-raisers, and workers in woollen mills—I feel the estimate should be made so low.'

5. Sub-dialects and lexicographical differentiation. The Shetland dialect has been divided into 16 local forms or sub-dialects, the basis of this division being certain rather prominent differences of pronunciation, as between the conservative west and the more uniform and modernised south and east, between the outlying islands and the different sections of the Mainland. Some of these differences of pronunciation are, however, rather minor, and one could perhaps, just as well divide into 12 varieties, it seems to me. The dialectal differentiation in Shetland is more significant, perhaps, in the vocabulary. In this respect the conditions for the rise of numerous local differences were present here in a greater degree than in most countries. The important factors were those of isolation, and the difficulties of communication between the islands, and even between the north, the west, and the south of the Mainland.

And it is likely that through the greater part of the Middle-Age period, and down into the XVIIth century, each island or district was more or less an independent unit, the people living by their own work, and supplying with their own hands the material needs of food and clothing. Thus as late as Brand's time (1710)¹⁰ the shoes of the fishermen and peasantry were home-made, a kind of shaped skin that was strapped on to the foot. The needs for communicating with or trading with the people of other islands were not many. In such a case numerous differences in the use of the words may arise in the course of time; and the loss of old words, and

the adoption of new words, or the coining of new terms, may be very unequal in the different parts. In illustration of this I shall cite the good example of the different terms used for the dyke or gateway which leads from the sheepfold, or *krø*.¹¹ In Northmavine one says *retta-dyke*, the first element being from O.N. *réttr*, 'sheep-fold'; in the island of Yell it is *stillyers-dyke*, the first part being O.N. *stillr*, 'trap.' In Fetlar one says *rekster-dyke*, using the O.N. *rekster*, a 'driving'; but in Unst the word is *soadin-dyke*, from the Shetland vb. *soad*, which is O.N. *sæta*, 'to waylay.' In place of 'dyke' as the second component, they employ the word *stjaagi* in Foula, from O.N. *stjaki*, 'pole,' and the word there becomes *krø-stjaggi*; in the central sub-dialects of Mainland one says *stuggi-dyke*, or *krø-stuggi*, the new element being from O.N. *stuka*, 'sleeve.' Thus seven Norse words and the English 'dyke' appear in the various formations; in two of them both component parts are Norse. Are we to regard these different uses in the different islands as due, perhaps, to differences in the speech of the original settlers, pointing to different parts of southern Norway? In most cases I think not; at any rate, I shall leave this question in abeyance here.

The local variations mentioned may be just as striking in the most intimate words of the dialect, those that belong to the occupations of the day, terms for utensils and the parts of these, for animals and for the different parts of their bodies, and similarly of course with other words. Such local variations may often be due to differences in the local specialisation of terms. By this I mean, *e.g.*, the use of different words for the same animal, or of different forms of the same word, as a more specialised definition, thus the single term taking the place here of a compound, or an adjective plus a noun, as usually. So an animal will have a different name for the different stages of its growth, as when the gray cod

or *sed* in its first year is generally called *selek*, but in Foula it used to be called *mort*; and as when in Dunrossness the *sed* of two years is named *waelshi pultek*, but in Unst is called *hol-pultek*. It is clear that the great wealth of vocabulary is in no small part due to just this specialisation.

6. Variety of specialised terms. This specialisation here referred to seems peculiarly characteristic of the Shetlands; thus the gray-cod has twelve names, and the ordinary cod has ten; other fish too will have several names, but none quite so many. And it is quite the same in other classes of words. I shall illustrate this by the Shetlandic equivalents for the word 'tail.'¹² Here the whole variety of names is likely to be current in the same region. The O.N. *hali* is a long tail, applied particularly to a cow's tail (as in south-western Norway); *tagl* is the word for a horse's tail (as in western Norway and elsewhere); *skauf* is the bushy tail of a dog or a fox, and for this *skott* may also be used; *derrell* is a sheep's tail; *rovi* or *rovak* is the tail of the cow and also of the dog-fish; *vel* and *stert* are both used for the bird's tail (as in south-western Norway in the case of both); *spord* is the tail of a fish, but in taboo-talk in Aithstthing this is the general term for tail.¹³ Thus there are nine words in regular and general use for tail, one of which serves for all as a taboo-term.

7. The Norn of Shetland of about the year 1700. I shall now try briefly to analyse the language of the literary fragments that have been preserved from about or earlier than 1750; they should reveal to us just about when the native dialect began to decay, and what the first steps in that decay were. After that I shall attempt to trace the progressive disintegration of Norse, until it died out as a spoken language.

The material we have for the time mentioned is (1st) *The Ballad of Hildina*, (2) some bits of poetry, riddles, and proverbs, (3) the *Lord's Prayer*. The Ballad of

Hildina was first printed by George Barry in his *History of the Orkney Islands* (2nd ed. London, 1808, pp. 489-495). The ballad was recited to George Low in Foula in 1774, and embodied by him in his report of his *Tour Through the Islands of Orkney and Shetland*, published (not until) 1879 at Kirkwall, Scotland. A study of it with special reference to its phonology, was published by the Norwegian Scientific Society in 1900.¹⁴

In its vocabulary the Hildina is almost entirely Norse. There are 35 stanzas of four verses each, and a total of *ca.* 500 words; of these 7 words with 12 occurrences are Scotch, counting for the Scotch also the hybrids—*ca.* 2½% of the total. Of these only 3 are regular loan-words, namely the two vbs., *aska*, the conjunction *yift*, 'if.' and the preposition *to*. The occurrence of the preposition is rather surprising, and I suspect that the reciter of the ballad said *te* (*ti* or *tə*),¹⁵ which the writer copied as English 'to.' In the four hybrids a Norse word has been influenced in form or meaning by a Scotch word; these are: *friende*, and *ufriend*, O.N. *frændi*, Eng. 'friend'; and the noun *glasbury*, 'castle of glass,' in which the last part shows Eng. influence; finally the vb. *tinka* may have its vowel *i* from Scotch, or is perhaps the Sco. *tink*. It is to be added that the native *till* and *spira* are also used by the side of *to* and *aska*.

In its grammar the Hildina is Norse, but it shows a stage when the forms are breaking down. The definite article is everywhere the Norse post-positive article (*Jarlin*, *eullingin*, *fruen*, *koningn*, *vadlin*, etc.). The case-endings of nouns are fairly well preserved (gen. sg. *-ar*, gen. pl. *-a*, wk. dat. sg. masc. *frinda*), as also those of the pronouns (*ednar*, etc.), the pprtc. ending *-inn* remains as *-in*, wk. fem. nouns end in *-a*. The infinitive ending of vbs. is *-a* (cf. also the borrowed vb. *aska*); similarly the 3d pres. of strong vbs. shows leveling under *-er*, *genger*, but *stiendi* (*stendr*) once.¹⁶

Elsewhere there is much uncertainty, as e.g., *-inn*, *-in*, is written *-in*, *-en*, and *-on*.¹⁷ I cannot take time to illustrate these things in detail, however.

8. The Hildina ballad was copied down from the lips of an old man, William Henry, a farmer of Guttorm, Island of Foula, in 1774.¹⁸ He learned it in childhood, and it may be assumed that he was born about 1700. But the ballad cannot, of course, be taken as representing spoken Norn of 1700. Its language is probably, however, the language of the generation of his parents. As other things bear out this conclusion, we shall not be wrong, I think, if we conclude that the ballad represents the dialect as spoken about 1660-75. That would be about two generations after the time that Rev. Magnus was obliged to go to Norway to learn Norse, for his congregation understood no other language. The Norn dialect of about 1660-75 then was grammatically a pure Norse; but it had taken over from Scotch a few nouns and vbs., and of other words at any rate the conjunction *yift*, while the influence was beginning to show itself in the meanings and forms of occasional other words, and in a certain irregularity in the inflectional endings. The phonological irregularities that we witness are, however, not due to any special extent to Scotch influence, but are mainly developments within Shetland Norn itself (many of them are paralleled by developments or tendencies at the time in the closely related dialects of the Faroes, and of south-western Norway).

9. There are next a few fragments that apparently belong to about 1750. They are: (1) some lines about a boy who had been to Caithness; (2) the Conningsburgh phrase, and (3) a nursery rhyme. These three read in order:

1. De vare gue ti,
when sone min guid to Kadaness:
hän cän ca' rossa mare
hän cän ca' big bere
hän cän ca' eld fire
hän cän ca' klovandi taings.¹⁹

2. Myrk in e Liora, Luce in e Liunga, Tim in e Guest in
e geungna.²⁰

3. Byun vil ikka teea
tan an leggen
slogan veggen
byun vil ikka teea.²¹

The first is from Unst, the chief of the northern islands; the second is from Cunningsburgh, Mainland, that part of the Mainland where Norn maintained itself longest; and the third again is from Unst. The first, which is in prose, shows the retention of the introductory pronoun *de* (O.N. *þat*), the possessive *min*, the pers. pron. *han*, and the post-position of the possessive (*sone min*); further, the pret. *var*, 'was,' Norse *var*. The 3rd selection shows the suffixal def. art. still in use, and the infinitive of verbs as still ending in *-a*. The fragments contain only two prepositions, *to* and *i* (*vare* equals *var i*), of which the latter is Norse. The pronunciation is clearly a very open *i*; cf. the writing with *e* in all instances in the Conningsburgh phrase.

The grammar of the two fragments is still almost entirely Norse. The vocabulary now definitely shows a growing Scotch element, but the words are still almost only verbs and nouns. And it would seem that the commonest vbs. are establishing themselves rather more easily than the nouns, as here the two vbs. *geng*, and *ca'*. The vocabulary continues to be overwhelmingly Norse. The fragments are too short to give much information about what the condition is at this time in regard to the prepositions. We learn something, however, concerning the question of the break-down of endings if we take into account also the Conningsburgh phrase; but this phrase is metrical²² and alliterative, and its final syllables are no safe test as to what the spoken language was in these respects. *Ljora* shows correctly the dat. ending *-a*, but *liunga* should be *ljung* (or *liunge*); its *-a* is clearly due to that of the preceding *ljora*; and so with *geungna*.²³ Finally the adv. *ikka* was without

doubt pronounced *ikke* at the time; it has received its *-a* by influence of the following *teea*. This same kind of assimilation of forms in verse is again seen in line 2, where we have *tan an* for *ta'n i*, and in the third line, with its *slogan veggen* for *slo* (= *slaa 'n i veggen*.²⁴

10. *Low's list of Shetland words.* *The Lord's Prayer*, 1774.²⁵ Of the first of these I shall speak very briefly. We observed in the first of the three fragments considered above that the boy who had been to Caithness had there learned the Scotch words for *rossa*, namely *mare*; *big*, namely *bere* ('barley'); *eld*, namely *fire*, and *klovandi*, i.e., *taings*. Such everyday English-Scotch terms as 'mare,' 'fire,' 'bere,' etc., had before that been unknown there. In 1784 Low took down, while in Foula, a list of Norn dialect words. This list is of exceeding interest, even though the information accompanying it is not as full as we could wish. We learn from it that in Foula such nouns as *fisk*, *sheug* (sea), *sildin* (herring), *berg* (rock), *bodin*, and *knorrin* (boat), *mostin* (mast), *ednin* (eagle), *kurin* (cow), *fir* (sheep), *hessin* (horse), *heosa* (ladle), and a number of other of the commonest terms still had their Norn names. It would seem that words for the boat and its parts, the sea, and what is connected with it, the various kinds of fishes, birds, and animals, and the names denoting utensils and wearing apparel, were still Norse. But we are left in uncertainty in this case as to whether or not the Norse terms were the only ones used. Low does not inform us whether the corresponding Scotch words were not also, to some extent at least, used in Foula.

The Lord's Prayer reads as follows, in the language of the time:

Fy vor o er i chimeri. Halaght vara nam dit. La konungdum din cumma. La vill din vera guerde i vrildin senda eri chimeri. Gav vus dagh u dagloght brau. Forgive sindorwara sin vi forgiva gem ao sinda gainst wus. Lia wus eke o vera tempa, but delivra wus

fro adlu illu for do i ir Konungdum, u puri, u glori, Amen.

We are here again a step farther on in the change to Scotch; of 43 different words six are English-Scotch. These are the nouns *puri*, and *glori*, the vbs. *delivra*, and *forgiva*, the conjunction *but*, and the preposition *gainst*. Further the Norse *vilya*, which was still *villya* in the Hildina, and is in the Orkney form of the Lord's Prayer *veya*, has here become *vill* by influence of the Eng. 'will,' and the O.N. *heilagt* appears as *halaght* by influence of the Sco. 'haly.' The noun *nam* is clearly Norse *namn*, pronounced *nam* before the consonant *d* of *dit*; on the other hand *forgive* is the Engl. 'forgive,' not Norse *fyrirgeva*. Attention may further be called to the fact that the nouns are given the def. form by the use of the suffixal article *that*, the infinitive ends in *-a*, and that the order of words is Norse. Even here then we have grammatically a language that is Norse. But the fusion between the two languages is now so intimate that the Scotch pronunciation of words has influenced the corresponding Norse word in several instances, while Scotch semantic influence upon Norse words, observed already in the Hildina, is seen in additional instances here. It is also not without interest that the Prayer uses the nouns *glori* and *puri* instead of the Norse *mátt* (*magt*) and *heiður* (*sæmd*, *æra*). It is apparent that the tendency to use the Scotch terms in the case of abstracts has set in, while for concrete nouns the native Norse prevail in most cases, or is still in common use by the side of the borrowed Scotch (or Engl.) word in, what from now on is, an increasing number of words. It is also of considerable interest that the pronouns, and the possessive adjectives, are Norse, and mainly also the prepositions. The evidence here then contradicts the opinion sometimes expressed that in mixed languages the language that prevails established itself as early in the form words and the particles as in nouns and end-

ings. In Shetland Norn these two classes of words are not borrowed to any conspicuous extent until the time has come when the very grammar is changing from Norse to Scotch form.

11. As representatives of the Norn dialectal element after this change had come about we may take now a number of very much distorted poetic fragments, bits of ballads, nursery rhymes, seaman's songs, etc., which have been copied down within the last sixty years, and some as recently as *ca.* 30 years ago. Some of these probably belong to the beginning and the first half of the XIXth century in practically the form in which we have them. They show a language in which the old endings are now and then preserved and understood, elsewhere changed beyond recognition, with extensive levellings under certain vowels or certain combinations of vowel and consonants that are characteristic of the particular fragment, or in some cases also, perhaps, of certain regions. Some of the best are :

To lag de kjøren (O.N. *laga kýrnar*), 'to move the cows.'

Fo me a ðek (O.N. *fá mér einn drykk*), 'give me a drink.'

Mader to de bjadni (O.N. *mátr til barnsins*, or *fyrir barnit*), 'food for the child.'

Others have a more purely Norse form : *oba dona* (O.N. *opna dýrnar*) ; *kwarna farna* (O.N. *hvar fær du ?*) ; and *spongna ligere glegan* (O.N. *spónninn liggr i glygginum*).²⁶ In the last of these the def. article (-inn, -in) has become -an, -na, but the forms are evidently understood as definite. In the line : *to lag de kjøren*, the suffixal article has become petrified and has no meaning to the speaker, hence the Engl. article *de* before the noun. In such examples as *oba dona*, and *kwarna farna*, the meaning was understood, but the endings in themselves have no longer any meaning to the speaker, and we have, further, throughout, that vocalic assimilation so characteristic of all the fragments in the last stages of the decay of the ancient Norn in Shetland.

Of the utter disintegration of inflexional endings, with levelling under *-a*, the following is a good example :

*Skekla komena rina tuna
swarta hasta blaita bruna,
fomtena hala and
fomtena bjadnis a kwara hala.*²⁷

This bogy-rime was related to J. Jakobsen by an old woman in Foula; she understood clearly the meaning, and gave Mr. Jakobsen a translation of it. Observe the almost universal levelling under *-a* and *-ena*, everywhere in fact except in the noun *bjadnis* (O.N. *börn* + the English plural ending *-s*). Levelling under *-a* is, however, not here a regular process of an especially frequent noun ending establishing itself in classes of words and in cases where it did not belong, nor is there such levelling in the verbs. It is merely a generalising of a few prevailing final sounds in such rhymes and other fragments in a period when the feeling for the correct inflexional endings had been utterly lost. A good example is the following fragment of a conversation :

*Kwarna farna ?
farna sikena droka.
farna radna sikena droka ?*
i.e., *hvert ertu farenn ? farenn at spjka sinn drykk. furenn upp a þakit
at spjka drykk.*²⁸

Similar in form is 'The Faire Song,' from an old legend about a man who, riding past a mound, hears some words spoken to him from the mound :

*Høredu, høredu, ria,
ria, ria, ræn,
sina divla dona vivla,
kopera jadla
honjdæna bradna.*²⁹

The first two verses are quite clear. The third and fourth seem to be : *si henna Divla (at) buyn ha falle i koparkjedla*, that is, 'say to Divla, that her child has fallen into the copper kettle.'

There is a more recent variant that reads :

*Trira rara gonga,
tell to divla
at fivla is fa'en i de fire
and is brunt her.*

Another variant reads :

*Du at rides de rød
and rins de grey,
tell tuna Tiola,
at nuna niola
is vālna vātna.*

It is impossible to get any meaning out of the last two lines.³⁰

12. I have in this brief account of the gradual decay of the Norse language in the Shetlands taken into account only the Norse population and the Norn dialect. A complete view cannot be had of course without seeing also the other side, namely the Scotch as spoken through the same period. But I shall have to leave this out of consideration at present. It is clear that the Scotch who first came there to settle had to learn Norse; practical considerations necessitated that. It is clear also that from the beginning of the XVIIth century at least some of the Norse natives were beginning to speak, after a fashion, Lowland Scotch; it was of course especially the young. Thus through the XVIIth c. and perhaps as late as the middle of the XVIIIth c. a considerable part of both nationalities were bilingual. Then this bilingual element increases rapidly among the Norse, and decreases among the Scotch. It is apparent that from the beginning of the XVIIIth c. practically all could speak Lowland Scotch, but the Norse spoke it only when necessity arose. As late as the period from 1750-1775 they learned Norn as the mother tongue. On the other the Scotch language in the islands early took over large bodies of words from the Norse. The court records and the deeds of the time are full of Norse words. I shall merely refer to Gilbert Goudie's "Notice of Ancient Legal Documents Preserved among the Public Records of Shetland," *Proc. of the Soc. of Antiq. of Scotl.*, 1882, pp. 181-203, and the list of Norse words there given; and the "Minutes of a District Court held at Sumburgh in Dunrossness, in August 5th-7th, 1602."

printed pp. 178-189 of Rev. John Mill's *Diary of Shetland*, 1740-1803. The rather rapid and general change over to Scotch in the XVIIIth c. was due in particular to the English schools which were established in Shetland after the visit there of Brand in 1701. The generation of those born in the two decades before 1775 was the first among the population at large to learn Scotch as the language of childhood.³¹

NOTES.

1. The survival of Old Norse forms in its "Norn" words is dealt with by J. Jakobsen in *Det norrøne Sprog på Shetland*, Copenhagen, 1897 (pp. 196), on pages 100-114; the phonology is treated, somewhat more fully, pp. 115-146, on the basis of the material that Dr. Jakobsen had in 1895-96, when this work (his doctorate thesis) was written. I shall below refer to this as *N.Sp.*

2. For the dialect as a whole, though this work is very incomplete, there is Thos. Edmonston's *An Etymological Glossary of the Shetland and Orkney Dialect*, London, 1866. There is now also the Shetland glossary by James Angus, which, however, I have not yet received. For the Norse element we have the monumental *Etymologisk Ordbog over det norrøne Sprog på Shetland*, 1898-1921, pp. xlviii. + 1032 + xvii. + x. An eminently scholarly work. There is also much material in *Old-Lore Miscellany*, London, 1907-1914, publication of *The Viking Society for Northern Research* (abbr. *O.L.M.*); I shall mention especially Jessie M. E. Saxby's articles on "Shetland Phrase and Idiom," and "Food of the Shetlanders Langsyne."

3. As to Pictish names see J. Jakobsen's "*Shetlandsøernes Stednavne*," pp. 213-254 (*Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed*, 1901).

4. For the main historical facts I will refer here to the *Diplomatarium Orcadense et Hialtlandense*, I, Introduction, by A. W. Johnston, 1913, with table of documents and dates. (Published as *Orkney and Shetland Records*, I. xi.). Reference may also be made to *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. xvi. (1882), pp. 181-191; J. Jakobson's *N.Sp.*, Indledning, pp. 1-15; and *Orkney and Shetland*, by J. G. F. Moodie Heddle and T. Mainland, Cambridge, 1920, pp. 167 (*Cambridge County Geographies*).

5. *O.L.M.*, VII., p. 151. According to Mr. Arthur Laurenson of Lerwick, Shetland, who is a descendant, Rev. Magnus Norsk was vicar of Yell in 1590, and his full name was Magnus Manson.

6. Nevertheless there are numerous O.N. words in regular use still in Orkney, which are rarely used or are obsolete in Shetland. It may be noted here, too, that Lerwick, the present capital of Shetland was founded and settled by the Scotch in the last three decades of the seventeenth century.

7. Date "1666 at the latest," Mr. A. W. Johnston kindly informs me.
8. *N.Sp.*, p. 10.
9. J. Jakobsen published in 1897 a little volume entitled *The Dialect and Place-names of Shetland*, Lerwick, in which there is much valuable material on the vocabulary, the numerous words for animals, according to their age, etc., and on the local differences in the vocabulary.
10. J. Brand: *Description of Orkney and Zetland, Pightland-Firth and Caithness*, 1701.
11. From *N.Sp.*; also in *Dialect and Place-Names of Shetland*.
12. See *N.Sp.*, p. 49; Aasen *Norsk Ordbog*, and Ross: *Norsk Ordbok, tillæg til Aasen*.
13. *Etymologisk Ordbog* under *spord*.
14. *Hildinakvadet, med utgreiding um det norske maal paa Shetland i eldre tid*. Av Marius Hægstad. Pp. 98, and facsimile.
15. Which would then rather be O.N. *til*, with loss of final *l* (just as in West Norwegian dialects).
16. But cf. the 3 pres. *askar* (as *kalla-kallar*).
17. Variant writings for a mid vowel.
18. *Etymologisk Ordbog*, p. xiii.
19. *N.Sp.*, p. 8. The meaning is:
It was a good time,
when my son went to Caithness;
he can call rossa mare,
he can call big bere,
he can call eld fire,
he can call klovondi taings.
(bere=barley; taings=tongs).
20. *N.Sp.*, 155. From Low. Also printed in *Hildinakvadet* (see Note 14). The meaning is: "'Tis dark through the louver, but light through the heath; 'tis time for the guest to be gone."
21. From *The Dialect and Place-Names of Shetland*. There is a later variant in *N.Sp.*, p. 149. The lines say:
The child will not be quiet:
take him by the leg,
strike him 'gainst the wall,
if the child will not be quiet.
22. See above §9, 2.
23. *Geungna* would seem to be O.N. *gengenn*, but the *n* of *-na* may in such a case be due to the *n* of the preceding syllable, so that the line would be: 'det er tid at gjesten gaar, or 'det er tid for gjesten at gaa'.
24. With its *g* from *veggen*; but the *-an* is clearly *han*.
25. Printed in Barry, l.c., p. 487, and in *Annaler for nordisk Oldkyndighed*, 1860, p. 198. The list of words printed in Low, l.c., p. 106 was first published in Barry, pp. 488-489. See also *Hildinakvadet*, l.c.

26. The expressions are given by JJ., in *N.Sp.*, and in *The Dialect and Place-Names of Shetland*. Other fragments, much distorted, are given in *N.Sp.*

27. *N.Sp.*, p. 19, and in *The Dialect and Place-Names of Shetland*, p. 52. A bogie has come riding into our yard on a black horse with a white spot on its forehead: it has fifteen tails and fifteen children on each tail.

28. *N.Sp.*, p. 154.

29. This and variants, *N.Sp.*, pp. 153-154.

30. I add the following riddle or "goadik" from Unst which was told to Jakobsen by John Irvine of Lerwick, during the former's studies there in 1893-95 (*DP-NS.*, p. 53):

Fira hongá, fira gonga,
fira staað upo skø;
twa veestra väig a bee,
and ane comes atta driljandi.

The form given in *N.Sp.*, p. 17, is as follows:

Føre honge føre gonge,
føre stad upo skø,
twa vistra vegebi,
and en comes ate driljandi.

The riddle may be translated: "Four are hanging, four are walking, four point skywards; two show the way to the yard, and one comes shaking behind." (bee = O.N. *bær*).

A remarkable instance of preservation of the O.N. endings is seen in the following proverb, given by James Angus, Lerwick: *Guyt a taka gamla manna rō*, "(it is) well to take old men's advice." *Rō* = O.N. *ráð*.

31. See above, §4, on Norse and Scottish in the present dialect.

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BY REV. D. BEATON.

THE names of the families are arranged alphabetically, and references are given to books and articles in which genealogical information respecting them may be obtained. It may be stated that the *John o' Groat Journal* and *Northern Ensign* are Wick papers. The files of the former may be consulted at the office of the paper. A complete file of the *Northern Ensign* will be found in the Wick Public Library. The *Northern*

Chronicle is printed at Inverness, and a file of the paper can be consulted at the office of the publishers. The compiler would take this opportunity of acknowledging his indebtedness to Mr. John Mowat, Glasgow, for help rendered in compiling this list.

ABBREVIATIONS.

C.F.H.—Henderson's Notes of Caithness Family History.

B.M.—Rev. Angus Mackay's Book of Mackay.

Brodies—C.F.H., 308.

Bruce of Ham—C.F.H., 267.

Bruce of Hastigrow—C.F.H., 273.

Bruce of Lyth—C.F.H., 270.

Bruce of Stanstill—C.F.H., 262.

Budge of Toftingall—C.F.H., 181.

Caithness, Earls of—C.F.H., 1; *Scots Peerage*, Vol. II., p. 332; *Saint Clairs of the Isles*, 179-218; and A. W. Johnston's *Orkney and Shetland Folk* (880-1350) in *Saga-Book of Viking Society*, IX., 372-404, contains accounts of the Norse and Celtic Earls of Orkney and Caithness; On the Earldom of Caithness, by Joseph Bain, F.S.A.Scot. (*The Genealogist*, Vol. XV., p. 67, 1899); Caithness Earldom Writs, by Thomas Sinclair, M.A. (*Northern Ensign*, 1 and 15 July, 1896; 11 Aug., 29 Sept., 6 Oct., 1896); Earls of Caithness of the Sinclair Line, by George M. Sutherland, F.S.A.Scot. (*The Celtic Magazine*, Feb.—May, 1887; April—June, 1888); Lord Hemer's Sons (Alexander, 9th Earl), by Thomas Sinclair, M.A. (*Northern Ensign*, 12 May to 7 June, 1904).

Cheyne—Ronald Cheyne and the Mackays, by the Rev. Angus Mackay (*Celtic Monthly*, February, 1899); The Knightly Chenes, by D. Murray Rose (*Northern Ensign*, 29 May and 5 June, 1900).

Calder of Achingale and Newton—C.F.H., 215.

Calder of Lynegar—C.F.H., 209.

Calder of Strath—*C.F.H.*, 217.

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Gordon of Swiney—*C.F.H.*, 326.

Grays—*Grays of Skibo and Skibo and its Lairds*.

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- Henderson of Nottingham and Gersa—*C.F.H.*, 293.
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JEAN BART THUROT IN SHETLAND.

BY R. STUART BRUCE.

IN "Miscellany," Vol. II., p. 79, "T.M." asks if "the celebrated privateer Jean Bart Thurot" was ever in Shetland, as there is a tradition that he was. Before proceeding with our tale, we would ask "T.M." to be good enough to send to OLD-LORE a note of the traditional account, as it would be interesting to compare it with the facts as brought out in the Symbister and Busta Papers.

The first hint of Thurot's presence on the coast of Shetland appears in a letter dated Westshore, Monday, 10th October, 1757, written by Sir Andrew Mitchell, of Westshore, Scalloway, to Lady Busta, in which he says:—

"... I have received a letter from Collectr. Chalmers [Mr. William Chalmers of the Customs in Lerwick] acquainting me that a French man of war of 60 guns and 500 men was yesterday brought into Vidlin Voe in Lunnasting in great distress without either masts, yards or bolt-sprit. This account may very likely be exaggerated, both as to the size of the vessel and the number of men, but I am determined to get the best information I can of this matter without loss of time, that proper notice may be given by the first fair wind, of this incident, to the Commander in Chief of the King's ships in Scotland . . ."

I communicated with the Ministry of Marine in France, regarding this vessel, but received the reply that nothing was known of her.

It now appears from the Symbister Papers that this was Thurot's ship the "Maréchal de Belleisle."

The famous Frenchman had met with a succession of gales in the North Sea, and his vessel, having lost her masts, had been towed into Vidlin Voe by boats from Lunnasting.

In any case, Thurot's people must have managed to get some kind of jury-rig on the ship, as from the

Symbister Papers, he seems to have brought up in Symbister Voe, Whalsay, where, being in urgent need of food and clothing for his men, he sent ashore a letter to John Bruce Stewart, of Symbister [John Bruce of Symbister, who assumed the name of Stewart on his marriage with Clementina James, daughter and heiress of John Lawrence Stewart of Bigtoun, 8th June, 1744], couched in very polite terms, but with a grim threat peeping out in his second sentence. It is written in English:—

“Sir, I have occasion for some beeves, sheep, bread, meal and other trifles which I shall be obliged to you and your people to supply me with. If you do it friendly, I shall pay you the price you expect, but if you refuse, you can't take it ill that I furnish my self according to the Rules of Warr. I am in hopes of your friendly compliance and assistance . . .”

The letter is dated, “From on board the ‘*Marshal Belleisle*,’ in Shetland Road, October 10th, 1757.”

This date is a little puzzling, as it would appear that the ship was in the utmost distress, indeed even dismasted, on the 9th October, and here we find her on the 10th lying, seemingly in a seaworthy condition, in the Voe of Symbister, with her commander preparing to take the sea again. On the other hand, we know that seamen in these days (especially perhaps those who fought “with a halter round their necks”) performed extraordinary feats in the matter of rigging and refitting their ships, so we may perhaps dismiss the question of how the “*Belleisle*” managed to get to Symbister; and go on to Thurot's next letter. From this it will be seen that John Bruce Stewart, making a virtue of a necessity, was on good terms with the French people. This letter, like the first, is in English:—

“Sir, I should be much obliged to you, if you would excuse my parting with any more wine or brandy, as in Norway they will be most necessary for my ship's company, and that I have not a very considerable stock, anything that I

have for your own use is very much at your service, but as you are a judge of my condition you'll think I am right to preserve the few comforts I can for these poor brave fellows that have suffered so much and are likely still to suffer . . .

"I am obliged to you for the lime and shall keep the bread and flower, and am sorry there's not more of the former. I am in hopes to gett away to-morrow, therefore beg the favour of seeing you early and that you'll have the accounts ready that I may give you bills. The weather has been most dismale, but is now clear'd up, and I hope will last. I shall be certainly ready to sail to-night, therefore repeat my desire of seeing you early to-morrow. Wish you could gett the potatoes and other things.

"I am infinitely obliged to you for all your politeness and friendship for us, and I hope this accidental acquaintance will be an introduction of something hereafter to our mutual advantage. Wednesday evening."

This would be the Wednesday following the 10th, *i.e.*, the 12th October. The third epistle is in the nature of an "open letter" to one of his compatriots:—

"Monsieur Desages Commandant le Chauvelin. En cas que vous veniez à cette isle prendre connaissance de moi, vous scaurez que j'étais démâté et venu icy pour me rétablir, et je suis dans l'obligation d'aller en Norwegue, à Christiansand ou à Bergnen pour pouvoir me rétablir. Vous ferez ce que vous jugerez pour le mieux. Pour moi, je ne puis plus tenir la mer; je vous souhaite plus de succès qu'à moy. Tâchez de réparer ma perte. Je vais au rendez-vous où je resterai 24 heures si je peux pour tâcher de vous y rejoindre. J'ay l'honneur d'être . . .
le 12 Octobre, de Shetland."¹

John Bruce Stewart evidently feared that other French ships might bring up at Symbister, since the

¹ "M. Desages, commanding the Chauvelin, in case you come to this island to obtain news of me. I may tell you that I lost my masts and came here for repairs, and am obliged to go to Norway to Christiansand or Bergen in order to be repaired. You will do what you think best. I, for my part, can remain no longer at sea. I wish you more success than [I wish] myself. Try and make good my loss. I am going to the rendezvous [presumably some previously arranged meeting place] where I shall stay for 24 hours, if possible, to try and meet you there. I have the honour to be, etc."

fourth, and last letter is a protection, and, like No. III., is in French :—

“A tous les officiers commandant les navires de sa Majesté très Chrétienne et autres commandants des Corsaires. Salut.

“Nous certifions avoir reçu tous les secours, aide et politesse possible du Sieur John Bruce Stewarts ayant retâché ici demâté et en miserable état et nous les prions en cas de retâche en cette Isle de s’ adresser au dit Sieur pour leurs besoins et de luy rendre en toute occasion les services qu’il mérite en de n’exercer aucun des droits que la guerre autorise en pareil cas d’autant qu’ils m’ont rendu genereusement toutes les services et même plus que l’on ne peut attendre entre nations qui sont en guerre. Fait à bord du Mal. De Belleisle en L’isle de Schetland, le 13 Octob., 1757. Thurot, Offr. de la marine du roy, command, la dité frégatte.”²

From the above it will be seen that Thurot calls himself “Officer of the Royal Navy.” He is usually spoken of as a privateer, so that it may be as well to point out his manner of signing. He does not class himself with *Messieurs les Corsaires* !

An interesting “description of the ‘Marshal de Belleisle’ Privateer,” appears in the “*Caledonian Mercury*,” July, 1758.”

“. . . She is a long straight ship [i.e., with but little sheer] her head stands low, her sprit sail yard equal with the forecastle, four reefs in her main top sail, three in her foresail her top gallant masts low and comes [sic] down abaft the top masts. A pole mizzen-top mast. A gaff mizzen-yard. Red quarters and commonly hoists a brownish red ensign with a small union without a Robin fast [i.e., set flying, modern fashion] mounts 44 guns . . .”

² “To all the officers commanding the ships of his most Christian majesty, and others commanding the Corsairs. Greeting, we certify that we have received all possible succour, help, and courtesy from Mr. J. B. S., having put in here dismasted and in wretched plight, and we beg them, in the event of their putting into port at this island, to apply for what they may need to the said gentleman [and] to render him at every opportunity the services which he deserves, and to exercise none of the rights authorised in such cases by war, because he and his have generously rendered me all possibly service, even more than one may expect between nations who are at war, etc.”

The "Caledonian Mercury," Thursday, 27th October, 1757, says:—

"... There is advice from Shetland that a 40 gun French man of war put in there some weeks ago, without masts or rigging and so much disabled that 'tis thought she won't be able to put to sea for some time. 'Tis said she is one of three who sailed some time ago from Dunkirk to intercept the Baltic homeward-bound fleet. The officers behave with great politeness and pay regularly for everything they stand in need of . . ."

In the issue of Saturday, 29th October, appears the following:—

"By a letter from Lerwick in Shetland, dated October 15th, we are informed that the French man of war (mentioned in our last) which put into Lunas [this means Lunna] in distress, having got all repaired in a few days, is since sailed for Berghen in Norway. At the time she arrived, her distress was so great that had a 20 gun ship been on the station they might easily have taken her, and perhaps her partner too, a 36 gun ship [this would probably be the "Blonde"] that she parted with off this coast, also considerably damaged. We hear they were cruizing to intercept the ships expected this season from Hudson's bay."

The "Edinburgh Evening Courant," of Tuesday, 20th December, of the same year says that there was then in Bergen "... the 'Marques de Belleisle,' who lost her masts in a storm," and that she was "fitting out with all expedition, and would soon be ready for sea." The "Courant" calls her "a 36 gun ship, a privateer," and also mentions that there were at Bergen two other privateers, the "'Comtesse de Lizere,' a snow of 18 [guns], and the 'Marquise de Barail,' a snow of 14 [guns]."

The history of the bills granted by Thurot to John Bruce Stewart in payment of goods supplied to the French is, I think, worthy of preservation. On the 13th October, 1757, the day when Thurot sailed from Symbister Voe, he gave John Bruce Stewart first, second and third bills drawn on Monsieur Binnituit,

merchant in Rotterdam, for the sum of 783 guilders, payable at 30 days notice. "Simbister" [John Bruce Stewart], on 2nd November, 1757, endorsed the bills to Henry Blair, merchant at Sound, island of Yell, who acted as factor in Zetland for James Stephen, a well known Scots merchant in Hamburg. Simbister got from Blair goods to the full value of the bills, and here it may be mentioned that at this time Blair was due money to Stephen. In 1758 Simbister again bought and sold goods with Blair, but there was no mention of the bills. Stephen, in 1767 [seven years after Thurot's death], raised an action against Simbister and Blair for payment of the bills, wherein he averred that M. Binnituit had refused to accept of or pay them, and as evidence thereof he produced a protest taken by Binnituit on 20th January, 1758, and he also claimed that he had written to Simbister and Blair that the bills had been dishonoured. Simbister replied that he had never heard of the protest of the bills, and that if Blair had received notice, he had not been informed thereof. Stephen, however, produced a letter written to Richard Thornton, merchant in Hamburg, which shewed that Simbister had received due notice of protest. Stephen then craved a proof at Hamburg, Bergen and Zetland, and he named John Hanbury, Deputy-Governor of the Worshipful Company of Merchants at Hamburg, to take the proof there; and the British Consul for the time being, at Bergen. Simbister asked Richard Thornton, Hamburg, to act for him, which he did.

A proof being allowed by the Court very little seems to have been done until 1771, when the case came before the Scottish Court. Mr. Andrew Crosbie was to appear as counsel for Simbister, but he became unwell, and Mr. Robert McQueen took up the case in his stead. The Court found Simbister liable for payment of the bills, on the ground that Stephen had proved that Simbister had got due notice of protest, and so

Simbister lost £65 5s. 2d. stg., the amount of the bills, plus a heavy sum in law charges. Thurot was well known to be an honourable man; one who would never have suffered his notes to be protested, but he never knew anything about the dishonoured bills, as he was killed in action in 1760. The "British Trident" gives quite a good account of Thurot's last fight. It is as follows:—

"Engagement off the Isle of Man. At the conclusion of the year 1759 a small squadron had been fitted out at Dunkirk for the purpose of making a descent on some part of the British coast where it was least expected. It consisted of the *Marechal de Belleisle* of 44 guns, the *Bijou* of 36, *La Blonde* of 32, *La Terpsichore* of 26 and *L'Amaranthé* of 24 guns, which had on board 1,900 land forces. The command of this armament was given to M. Thurot, an enterprising officer, who seized an opportunity when the English squadron, by which he was blocked up, was blown from its station, slipped out of Dunkirk, and arrived at Bergen in Norway.

"The *Bijou* having received some damage on the passage, returned to France, and soon after he sailed from Bergen, the *Amaranthe* parted company and proceeded to St. Malo.

"On the 21st of March, 1760, M. Thurot with the other three ships appeared off Carrickfergus in Ireland, and after landing his troops attacked the place. Lieutenant Colonel Jennings with a few Invalids made a spirited defence, but was soon obliged to submit to the bold adventurer. Having laid the town under contribution, and procured a supply of provisions, of which they were in great want, the enemy spiked the guns in the fort, re-embarked and departed; leaving behind them M. Flobert, the general of the land forces, who had been wounded in the attack. Meanwhile, Captain Elliot of the *Æolus*, which with the *Pallas* and *Brilliant*, was then lying at Kinsale, received intelligence that M. Thurot was on the coast, and immediately put to sea in quest of him. The force of Captain Elliot's little squadron was as follows:

Ships		Guns.	Men.	Commanders.
ÆOLUS	..	32	220	Capt John Elliot
PALLAS	..	36	240	„ M. Clements
BRILLIANT	..	36	240	„ James Logie
		<hr/> 104	<hr/> 700	

“ On the 24th of March Captain Elliot sailed from Kinsale, and in the evening of the 26th made the entrance of the harbour of Carrickfergus, but was prevented from entering it by contrary wind and bad weather. About four in the morning of the 28th the ships discovered the French squadron, consisting of the following vessels :

<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Guns.</i>	<i>Seamen.</i>	<i>Soldiers.</i>	<i>Commanders.</i>
Le Marechal Belleisle	44	226	430	M. Thurot
La Blonde	36	200	200	M. La Caisse
La Terpsichore ..	24	60	170	M. Desrandais
	<hr/> 104	<hr/> 486	<hr/> 800	

“ The enemy, when first discovered, were bearing northward towards Scotland, close by the wind, but on perceiving the English ships they changed their course to the southward in the hope of escaping, upon which Captain Elliot pursued ; and about six came up with them. About nine, being then off the Isle of Man, Captain Elliot got alongside the French commodore, who, after an obstinate action of an hour and a half, surrendered. Three of his men were killed in attempting to strike the colors, which was not done till some minutes after M. Thurot’s orders to that effect were given, and during this interval he himself was killed. La Blonde, following the example of the Belleisle, likewise struck ; on which the Terpsichore endeavoured to escape, but was pursued by the Pallas, which soon came up with, and took her.

“ In this action, which was fought between the Mull of Galloway and the Isle of Man, in view of that island and of the Scotch and Irish shores, the loss on board the English was five men killed, and thirty-one wounded. The enemy had about three hundred men killed and wounded, among whom were several officers besides the commander. The ships were all greatly disabled, and it was with difficulty that the Belleisle, which had suffered most, was carried into the harbour of Ramsay, in the Isle of Man.

“ Having refitted, Captain Elliot proceeded to Plymouth with his prizes, of which the Blonde and Terpsichore were added to the royal navy. The thanks of the Irish Parliament were unanimously voted to the three gallant captains for the services they had performed on this occasion.”

It is interesting to note that the number of guns on each side was the same : viz., 104 ; but Thurot had 1,286 men, against 700 English, so that his ships appear

to have been badly fought and handled, as, with such a preponderance in his favour, he should have beaten off the Englishmen.

In the light of further research, it now appears improbable that Thurot brought his ship to Symbister Voe. I am inclined to think that she lay in Vidlin Voe all the time. If this be so, it is curious that Thurot should have sought help from John Bruce Stewart—when he was so near the House of Lunna. It may be that Robert Hunter of Lunna was in “the South” at the time.

In conclusion, I would like to mention my indebtedness to Miss Margaret E. Hunter (a niece of the late Mr. John Irvine, of Lerwick), who has very kindly assisted me in the translation of Thurot’s rather crabbed letters.

ACCOUNT OF SUNDERYS ADVANCED CAPTAIN THUROT. BY JOHN BRUCE STEWART.

	£	sh.	d.		£	sh.	d.
To 4 good Oxen @ £5 each	20	-	-	By 2 hogsheads Claret @ £2 10 sh. per Hd.	5	-	-
„ 12 Sheep @ 6sh. each	3	12	-	„ the ballance per Bills of this date ..	65	5	2
„ 10lb. Twine @ 1 sh. per lb.	-	10	-				
„ 440lb. good Butter @ 5 pence per lb. ..	9	3	4				
„ 6 barrels Pittatoes @ 10 sh. per barrel ..	3	-	-				
„ 216 pairs Course Stockings @ 8 pence ..	7	4	-				
„ 16 ferkins flower @ 13 sh. per ferkin ..	10	8	-				
„ 1 bag containing 100 Bread with the Bag	1	4	-				
„ the boats fraught to Lerwick for the Bread							
and Floure.. ..	-	6	-				
„ 50 pairs more Stockings @ 8 (pence) ..	1	13	4				
„ 22 pairs Mittons	-	14	6				
„ the pilotage	10	10	-				
„ the transport of the Cattell, Sheep and							
sundry others	2	-	-				
	£70	5	2		£70	5	2

Zetland, 13th October, 1757.

Received first, 2nd and 3rd bills on Rotterdam for the ballance and when the same is paid, discharges this and all precedings.

SALDO ERRORE, *Thurot.*

Jean Bart Thurot in Shetland.



NOSS HEAD, SHETLAND.

From the original drawing by G. C. Atkinson (coloured by one of the Richardson brothers) in his MS. "Excursion to the Shetland Islands," in 1832. In the possession of M. H. Atkinson, Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1914.

Old-lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND

VOL. IX.

PART III.

OCT., 1931.

NOTES.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY.—Edited by William Grant, M.A., Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association, Limited. 1931. Vol. I. Part I. With Maps. Pages lii. + 28. Registered Office: Training Centre, St. Andrew's Street, Aberdeen. Subscription £15, payable in annual instalments of £3.

In the short space at our disposal it is almost impossible to give an adequate idea of the broad lines on which this Dictionary has been planned. The purpose aimed at is to give an explanation and derivation of Scottish words in use from 1700 to the present time. One has only to take a glance through the very able introduction and the first part of the Dictionary to realise what an extraordinary labour has been involved in gathering together what is destined to be a monumental work. It brings within its survey words used in Lowland Scotland, Orkney, Shetland and Caithness, and those parts of Ulster inhabited by Scottish settlers. The Editor is to be congratulated on the appearance of the first part of a work that must have entailed long years of work and worry. The whole get-up of the work as indicated by the first part—its beautiful printing, its large page, its evident thoroughness in its treat-

Da Scallowa Lasses

As played in Unst

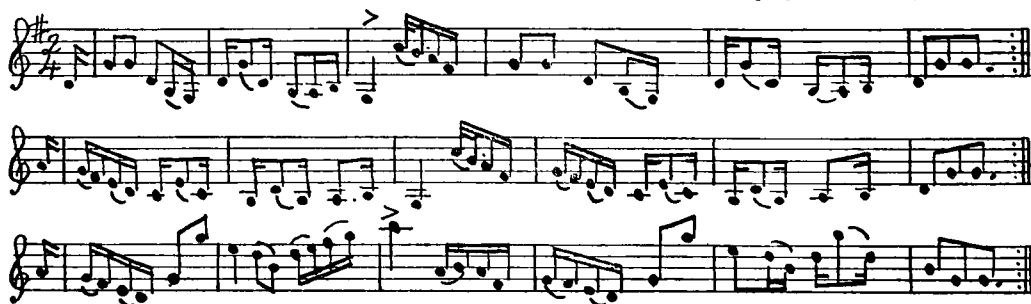
Benort Da Daeks O' Voe

As played in Unst by the grand-nephew of the Composer

Jamie At Da Helm

As played in Whalsey

Aald Swaara

As played in Walls, Shetland*As taken down by M. H. Sutherland*

ment of Scottish words with illustrative examples culled from many sources and the derivations—are fitted to create a most favourable impression on the reader. There are one or two points to which attention might be called, but any critical remarks which may be deemed necessary to be made will be reserved for a future occasion. All connected with the production of this work, especially the Editor, deserve the heartiest thanks of all interested in “braid Scots.”—D. B.

SHETLAND REELS.—These reels were written down by Mr. Magnus H. Sutherland, of Lerwick, viz., “Da Scallowa Lasses” and “Benort da Daeks o’ Voe,” which he heard played by Unst fiddlers, “Jamie at da Helm,” as played in Whalsey, and “Aald Swaara,” as played in Walls, Shetland.

JOHN O’ GROAT JOURNAL, WICK.—This journal continues to supply a wealth of old-lore, such as: The contemporaries of Rob Donn, “Northern Notes” by Norseman, “Smuggling in Caithness,” “Caithness place-names in old maps” and “Some Caithness notables,” by John Mowat, “Old Caithness stories,” including carried away by the Fairies, etc., etc. It is one of the best conducted of Scottish local papers.

OLD MAP OF CAITHNESS AND ORKNEY.—This early map of Caithness and Orkney was engraved by Peter Keer, Dutch artist and engraver who flourished 1590-1620. It was probably engraved about 1599 but does not appear in the Atlas of Keer issued in that year. The Caithness and Orkney map first appeared in the new edition of the Atlas in 1617, and later with other 7 maps of Scotland in sections, in an edition published in 1620, and is numbered 58 in the list. My copy of the Atlas (now in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow), from which the above actual size photo was taken, wants the

Rentall of the Neithertown of Stroma made up in presence of the tennents therof convened at the Manour house of Stroma the sixteenth day of June, 1719, by Sir James Sinclair of Dunbeath as having right to the saids lands and teinds therof from Murdow Kennedy of Stroma, dated the last day of April, 1719 years.

	£	s.	d.	b.	f.	p.	geese.	poultry.	screa.	b.	oyl.	p.	c.
Donald Bowar possesses 3 octo's of land and payes 1£ rs. & 3fr.	05	14	0	02	01	0	1 : $\frac{1}{2}$	9	90	2	0	0	0
Donald Henderson possesses 1 fardinland and payes	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Peter Mudy possesses 1 fardinland and payes	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Donald Bowar, youngest, possesses 1 fardinland and payes ..	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Alexr. Rosie possesses 3 octo's and payes.. ..	05	14	0	02	01	0	1 : $\frac{1}{2}$	9	90	2	0	0	0
.. He possesses a croft and payes	00	00	0	00	02	0	0 : $\frac{1}{2}$	0	00	0	0	0	0
William Linklater possesses 3 octo's and payes	05	14	0	02	01	0	1 : $\frac{1}{2}$	9	90	2	0	0	0
Robert Mudy possesses 1 fardinland and payes	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Margaret Bowar, 1 fardinland	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	0	0	0	0
Donald Bowar, 1 fardinland	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Andrew Rosie possesses a house without land and payes ..	03	00	0	00	00	0	0 : 0	3	00	0	0	0	0
David Rosie, 1 fardinland	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Thomas Kennedy, 1 octo and a half	02	17	0	01	00	2	0 : $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$	9	45	2	0	0	0
.. He payes for the ley quoy	00	00	0	00	03	0	2 : 0	0	00	0	0	0	0
Edward Rosie, 1 fardinland	03	16	0	01	02	0	1 : 0	9	60	2	0	0	0
Alexr. Manson possesses 1 octo and a half	02	17	0	01	00	2	0 : $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$	9	45	2	0	0	0
Alexr. Lyel possesses 1 octo and $\frac{1}{2}$	02	17	0	01	00	2	0 : $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{4}$	9	45	2	0	0	0
Margaret Bowar, elder, 1 octo	01	18	0	00	03	0	0 : $\frac{1}{2}$	0	30	0	0	0	0
James Petry possesses a quoy and payes	01	00	0	00	01	2	0 : 0	0	00	2	0	0	0
Murdow Kennedy possesses a half pennyland and half octo...	08	11	0	03	01	2	0 : 0	0	00	0	0	0	0
Isobell Tennent possesses a croft and payes the 3d. sheaf and teind	00	00	0	00	00	0	0 : 0	0	00	0	0	0	0

NOTE.—The original paper MS is in the possession of Mr. John Nicolson, Nybster, Caithness. The pennylands, amounting to $4\frac{3}{4}$ pennylands, are sub-divided into halfpenny, farthing, and *octo* or $\frac{1}{8}$ d. lands, the *octo* corresponding to the half-farthing land in Orkney. On Dec. 21 and 31, 1687, Sir Alexr. Mackenzie, of Broomhall was seized in an annual rent of £45 Scots to be uplifted out of Neithertowne of the lands of Stroma being the just and equal half of the nine and a half pennylands of old extent, bounded by the dyke of Tofts on the south, the sea on the east and north and the burn of Ramigo on the west. The second column is bolls, firlots, and pecks, probably of meal. Oil is probably barrels, pints and chopins. *Screa* is described in Peterkin's *Rentals* No. 2, p. 154, as a year old saithe dried in the sun without salt, enumerated in *mais* of 1000 or 1500, according to size of *mais*. O.N. *skreiß*, dried fish; O.N. *meiss*, a basket.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

QUERIES.

LEIF ERIKSON.—The tradition exists at North Yell, Shetland, that when Leif Erikson was returning from his discovery of America, he—with his ship or ships—was wrecked on the sands of Brekin. Some of the men got ashore, together with Leif, but the Shetlanders set upon them and slew them all.

As Leif returned home to report his discoveries, this tradition is obviously wrong.

How many ships did Leif have on his voyage, and is it known how many came back?

My Shetland informant adds that a few years ago some Norwegian “Professors” were at the sands of Brekin, digging for the bones of Erikson and his men!

Bones in plenty they would find, as in the past several vessels were wrecked at Brekin, and the men who perished were buried in the sand.

What were the “Professors” digging for—surely not for Erikson and his men?—R. STUART BRUCE.

SCOTT’S YOUNG LADY FROM ORKNEY.—In the abridged Life of Scott, chap. IV., occurs the following passage:—

The grove of stately ancient elms below the ruin was seen to great advantage in a fine, grey, breezy autumnal afternoon; and Mr. Wordsworth happened to say, “What a life there is in trees!” “How different,” said Scott, “was the feeling of a very intelligent young lady born and bred in the Orkney Islands, who lately came to spend a season in this neighbourhood! She told me nothing in the mainland scenery had so much disappointed her as woods and trees. She found them so dead and lifeless, that she could never help pining after the eternal motion and variety of the ocean. And so back she has gone, and I believe nothing will ever tempt her from the wind-swept Orcades again.”

Query:—Who was this very intelligent young lady

from Orkney who was staying in Roxburgshire about 1802-3?—J.A.F.

BALFOUR'S ORKNEY MELODIES.—Why are few, or none, of Col. Balfour's "Ancient Orkney Melodies" known in the other islands (other than Shapinsay)?—J. A. F.

"KISSED YESTREEN."—There is an old Orkney wedding tune called "Kissed Yestreen." There are words to it in which an ancient dame boasts of being "kissed yestreen." Can anyone tell me where to find them?—J. A. F.

SCARTH.—In 1901, Canon John Scarth, of Bearsted Vicarage, Maidstone communicated the following description of the arms and pedigree. Can any reader give further information:—

Arms: Three Scallops or, on a field azure; a dolphin argent.

Crest: Eagle rising from stump of a tree environed by a serpent-head to sinister, a branch sprouting dexter.

Motto: Volando reptilia sperno. All proper.

James Scarth, of Scarth, Firth. (Valuation, 1653)
[married Margaret Sclater, of Burness].

[John Scarth, of Scarth, married Margaret Hourie.]

William Scarth, Corsetter [in Caldale, not Corsetter].

William Scarth, Kirkwall [in Carse, not Kirkwall].

James Scarth, born 1712 [first of the Scarths of Leith].

James Scarth, born 1753 [married Agnes Combe].

James Scarth, born 1796; married in Leith *circa* 1820
[married Eliza Dudgeon].

John Scarth, only surviving son, born 1826.

NOTE.—Mr. Henry W. Scarth, of Skail, has kindly supplied corrections and additional information in brackets.

—A. W. J.

DUTCH WHALERS AT ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

BY R. STUART BRUCE.

AN enquiry as to the wreck of a Whaling vessel of the Netherlands, at Shetland, brought me into touch with Heer G. J. Honig, of Zaandijk; who is an authority of more than local repute on the old whale ships of Holland. His collection of antiquities of the district is well known, and he has a wide knowledge of the history and folklore of the people living near the river Zaan.

He has furnished me with a list of "Whale ship happenings" at Orkney and Shetland, which I think should be preserved, meagre though some of the particulars are.

It will be observed that but few names of ships are given; the Dutch practise being to speak of the name of the master rather than the name of the vessel. I have ventured to amplify one or two of the notes, so far as I have accurate information.

Heer Honig uses the old term, Boekhouder, "book-keeper," rather than the modern "Reeder," or ship-owner.

We may then take our little list chronologically, and we have:—

- 1732. Commander Gerbrand Kruyt, bound from Amsterdam to Davis Straits. Boekhouders: Zomer & Mourits of Amsterdam. Ship wrecked "at Hitland" (Shetland). It is probable the crew were saved; the master certainly was, as he made his last voyage in the year 1765.
- 1748. Commander Reltje Groenendijk, bound from Amsterdam to Davis Straits. Boekhouder: Simon Scheltes of Amsterdam. This vessel was taken by

the French when she arrived on the coast of Shetland, "being this the only ship which this year sailed Straet Davis bound." In 1747, Groenendijk commanded the ship, "Bon Avontura," belonging to the same "directie" (owners).

1753. Commander Sietje Klaaszoon, homeward bound, probably from Davis Straits. Boekhouders: Blok & Van Heyningen of Amsterdam. Off Shetland, was abandoned by the master, but the mate and crew brought her into port there; place not mentioned. Her catch is quaintly given as "2 whales, 78 barrels of blubber and 115 guardeelen of whale-oil." In 1752 Klaasz. was in command of the ship "De Biscayer," belonging to the same owners.
1771. Commander Jurriaan Jacobszoon, outward bound to Greenland. Boekhouder: Samuel Crena of Dordrecht. The master abandoned his ship off Shetland.

The "Edinburgh Advertiser," 1771, and "Caledonian Mercury," 1772, give a few additional particulars of this vessel.

It appears that the whaler was a snow of Dordrecht, called the "Zeerob"; of about 200 tons, and six years old. She was towed into Baltasound in the month of May (I suppose by the Unst fisher-people). The weather must have been bad about the time she was abandoned, as, when brought in, she was "stripped of all rigging,—cables, anchors and masts excepted." Her hull was little damaged, but her rudder had been carried away. She had 300 or 400 blubber-casks aboard, "mostly wooden hooped."

Her hull, materials, fishing gear, and 262 casks "fit for holding blubber, 96 whereof are iron bound," were offered for sale at John's coffee-house in Edinburgh, on Wednesday, 30th October, 1771, at 12 o'clock forenoon.

The "Zeerob" arrived at Aberdeen, in ballast, on 14th January, 1772, in charge of Captain Byers, "the wind being from the S.E."

1775. Commander Pieter Visser, outward bound to Davis Straits. Boekhouder: Jan de Vries, who lived at Wormerveer, near Zaandam. Visser's ship was "De Vreede" (Peace), and became very leaky at sea; hence she put in at Shetland, where she was repaired, and afterwards proceeded to Greenland (not Davis Straits) via Spitzbergen.

1777. The same master "fell in with a heavy gale" off the Orkney islands, and the ship (name not mentioned) becoming leaky, put into Orkney, was repaired, and then sailed to Greenland.

„ Commander Jacob Jacobszoon Hasselaar, outward bound to Davis Straits. Boekhouders: E. H. van Marle & Jacob Speciaal Aartszoon, of Zaandam. Lost 17th March at Shetland, one man only being saved.

In 1775 Hasselaar was in command of the Whaler "De Onderneming" (Enterprise), belonging to the same "directie."

The "Edinburgh Evening Courant," "Edinburgh Advertiser," and "Caledonian Mercury" for 1777, furnish a few details of this wreck. A letter in the "Mercury," dated 29th March, 1777, from Orkney, says: ". . . Captain Blair of Newcastle brings advice that a Dutch ship bound for Davis's Straits was wrecked near to Lerwick, and that the crew consisted of upwards of 60 hands, 49 of whom perished." This was corrected in a later issue to ". . . . only one man saved." Captain Blair "was put into Shetland," on his voyage to Dublin, and called at Stromness, "from which place the news of the loss was conveyed to Leith."

The ship was wrecked on Hamera Head, Leva-neap, Parish of Lunnasting, during a gale of wind

from the south-east. Robert Hunter of Lunna was present when the vessel went on the rocks, and offered £5 for every man saved, but the dreadful weather prevailing at the time, together with the dangers of the place at which the vessel was lost, prevented aid from being given to the Dutch seamen, who with a single exception, perished before the eyes of the people on shore.

The cliffs at this part of Lunnasting Parish are very bold, and with a heavy sea rolling in from the south-east a vessel would be smashed to fragments in a very short time.

1778. Commander Dirk de Leeuw, outward bound to Davis Straits. Boekhouders: Pan & Kirberg of Enkhuizen. The ship was lost in the Orkneys, on Sandey. Nothing is said as to the fate of the crew.

„ Commander Tjelling Tromp, homeward bound from the whale fishing grounds. Boekhouders: Jongewaard & Tip, of Westzaan. This vessel was lost on Sandey. Her catch was “1½ whales and 60 guardeelen oil.” Nothing said of the crew.

1788. Commander Daniel Hasselaar, outward bound to Davis Straits. Boekhouder: Denijs ten Tije, of Amsterdam. The name of the vessel was “De Zeevaart,” and she is given as “lost off Hitland.” She was wrecked on the 1st April, on the Muckle Fladdicap, a rock lying about two miles S.S.E. of Whalsay.

The “Caledonian Mercury” (May 1788), says that the crew numbered 45, of which the master, the “spikesineer’s mate,” the carpenter’s mate, the “skeeman” and three seamen were with the greatest difficulty saved. The survivors, after being for sixteen hours on the rock, the waves beating continually over them, “were preserved by the humanity and assiduity of John Bruce Stewart, Esquire, of Simbister, who ordered boats

and men to take the wrecked people off the rock."

The Rev. John Mill says, in his "Diary":—
 "... several men being discovered by a glass from said rock, the Captain and mate with 5 more were saved by a boat sent off to them . . ."

Yet again, the tradition, current in Whalsay, runs that the people on the south end of the island descried the wreck, and on using a telescope, several men were seen on the rock. A sixern put off from Sandwick, and despite the bad weather, managed to save one man. It is said that when near the Fladdicap, a "baa," or sunken rock, "broke," and the wave nearly swamped the boat. Six of the crew of the whaler were swept off the rock by a heavy sea, when the men were endeavouring to save a cask of "bread" that had been washed up.

It is further said that the remainder of the crew, fifty in number, perished, and that the man who was saved was going on his first voyage to the Arctic Seas.

In the newspapers of the time, the rock is called the "Easter Flathaap."

1789. Commander Jacob Kraaij, homeward bound from Greenland. Boekhouder: Dirk Yff Corneliszoon, notary and secretary at Zaandijk. The ship belonged to Zaandam, and was called "De Vrouw Anna Maria," after Yff's wife, who was Anna Maria Alberti.

The catch is given as $11\frac{3}{4}$ whales, 175 barrels of blubber, and 273 guardeelen of oil.

No particulars as to the voyage are given in the Dutch records, but the "Caledonian Mercury" tells us that the ship had met with very bad weather at sea, and became waterlogged, and on 17th April, she was brought into the West Voe of Lunna, Parish of Lunnasting, in a disabled con-

dition. She was repaired, and on 5th May, sailed, according to the "Mercury," for the Greenland fishing. This must be incorrect, as the vessel had her catch aboard, and must have spent the winter of 1788-89 in the ice.

The authorities given by Heer Honig are:—

1. Van Sante, "Naemlijst van Groenland en Straet Davis Commandeurs." This list runs from 1700 to 1770 in printed form, and for later years is filled up in writing.
2. Other lists that were published annually, but Heer Honig says that they are incomplete.
3. MS. notes in the possession of the descendants of certain of the ship-masters.

NOTES ON THE FISCAL ANTIQUITIES OF ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

(See p. 53 *ante*.)

AMENDMENTS.

BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

THE "Shetland Payment" of debt meant that two-thirds had to be paid in the appraised value of cloth and the other third in the appraised value of malt or meal, and latterly in butter, whereas "Orkney Payment" was two-thirds in butter and one-third in malt or meal. The old appraised values of these commodities naturally did not always correspond with their relative current market value, *e.g.*, in 1628 'a shilling wodmell' was worth 24s. Scots, while 'a shilling butter' (2 lispunds) was worth 96s. Scots. But, in the 16th cent., the ell had been increased by $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, viz., from 18 inches (the old Norse *qln*, from the elbow to the tip

of the middle finger) to 24 inches (the Danish ell); and the lispund of 24 marks, or 12 lbs., had been increased to 24 lbs.; hence the relative prices were: wodmell, 18s. Scots; butter, 48s. Scots, *i.e.*, 2.6:1, instead of 1:1.

'Marks of land' cannot possibly be the *plógsloṇd*, ploughlands, which the óðalsmenn redeemed from earl Rognvaldr. The *plógsloṇd* were the *eyrisloṇd*, eyrislands, corresponding in area with the Scottish *ploughland* and the English *hide*, of 120 acres. To show the absurdity of the suggestion that the marks of land were redeemed from the earl at a mark each, one has only to remember that there were 14,000 marks of land in Shetland and probably quite as many, if not more, in Orkney; then 28,000 marks = 84,000 first class cows of wergeld quality at 3 to the mark, which at the present modest sum of £10 stg. apiece would now represent £840,000, enough to build several cathedrals. If the óðalsmenn paid one mark for each eyrisland, or ploughland, then, in Shetland there are at least 232 eyrislands and in Orkney 201, but taking derelict and subsided land into account, as in the case of Sanday, we will not be far out in estimating that there were originally 240 eyrislands in Shetland and the same number in Orkney, *i.e.*, 480¹ eyrislands which paid earl Rognvaldr 480 marks = 1,440 first class cows of the present value of about £14,400 stg., a much more appropriate sum for carrying on the completion of the building of St. Magnus' Cathedral. In actual sterling money 28,000 marks = £48,566, and 480 marks = £833 11s. 2½d. stg. £1 stg., 4 oz. of silver, weighs 124.414, and 1 old Norse mark, 215.8 grammes.

The solution of the question now is that the duties paid by the eyrislands were really maintenance skatt,

¹ The correspondence of this amount with the fine exacted by king Haraldr is a coincidence, unless it was assessed as one year's skatt. The fine of 60 gold marks was the wergeld of a king.

(**borð-skattr* in addition to *fararkaup*, or *leiðangr*, war tax, the true *skatt*), amounting in value to one silver mark, or one-third of the rent of the normal *eyrisland* of 3 marks rent. Of this *skatt* one-third was retained by the earl, while the other two-thirds had to be paid to the king of Norway. King *Haraldr hárfagri*, on his second expedition, confiscated all lands and gave them in *lén* or *fief* to the earl, and remitted his (the king's) two-thirds of the duties. Similarly, in Norway, king *Haraldr* confiscated all *óðul*, and gave them in *fief* to his *feoffees*, who retained one-third of the rent and paid the other two-thirds to the king. However, in the end the king had to restore the *óðul* to the *óðalsmenn*. Earl *Sigurðr*, in 980, also restored the *óðul* to the *óðalsmenn*, who thereafter paid the earl the *board-skatts* as a *feu* duty; and, corresponding with feudal practice, they apparently paid a duplicate of the *board-skatt* on the succession of each heir, or as the *Saga* expresses it, the heirs after the death of the *óðalsmenn* had to redeem their *óðul* from the earl, which was thought to be a hardship. Earl *Rognvaldr* then gave them all the option of extinguishing this feudal casualty by everyone paying a mark for each *plógsland*, or *eyrisland*, once for all, which was agreed to.

Assumably all the *eyrislands* of Orkney and Shetland and the *tirungs* of the Hebrides were of the same value when that valuation was made, probably by king *Haraldr*. Although the Orkney *board-skatts* were remitted to the earls, those of the Hebrides continued to be paid to Norway in the time of earl *Sigurðr hinn digri*.

A mark of land was a plot of the purchase value of one silver mark of 240 pence, of which the rent was $\frac{1}{24}$ th, or 10d., and the tithe one-fifth of the rent = $\frac{1}{120}$ th of the produce, or 2d. In Norway and Scotland, rent was calculated as one-half of the produce, 24 years'

rent = the purchase price, and one-fifth of the rent was consequently a tithe of the produce. The explanation of the varying rents of marks of land of from 3d.—10d., etc., while the tithe remained stationary at 2d., was simply this—about one-third of the rent value had to be paid in board-skatts, (borð-skattr), and consequently the rent paid had to be adjusted accordingly, as, in time, the eyrislands varied in value from 27 to 144 and more marks each. A simple method of calculation would be to ascertain the value of the eyrisland in marks and deduct from the rent (10d.) of each mark the amount of borð-skattr payable by each mark. For example an eyrisland of 18 pennylands of the normal value of 72 marks (4 marks per pennyland) would be of the rent value of 10d. per mark, while the whole eyrisland paid borð-skatt amounting to 216 pence ($1\frac{1}{2}$ Norse mark = 1 old Orkney mark of 8 ounces of 18d. each), or 3d. per mark, which would then be deducted from the full rent of 10d., leaving 7d. to be paid to the landowner—the earl or óðalsmaðr.² In addition, the tenant would have to pay tithe at 2d. per mark; wattle, *veizla*, $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per mark; and grassum (Norwegian *tredieaarstage*), a duplicate of the rent every third year, as a premium for the renewal of the three years' lease.³

² The actual allowance for board-skatt could only have been approximate; because in Unst the rent of all marks of land was uniformly 6d. (which represented the balance of the full rent of 10d. after deducting 4d. for board skatt, viz., the skatt of an eyrisland of 54 marks), whereas the eyrislands actually varied from 40-64, with single cases of 72, 75, 80, 148 and 211 marks per eyrisland.

³ The following would be the rents and duties paid by the normal eyrisland of 72 marks, in Orkney, on the assumption that the rent is the balance of the gross rent after deducting the skatt.

Rent (72 marks at 7d.)	504d.	Produce (double
Skatt (72 marks at 3d.)	- 216d.	the gross rent).
	— 720d.	1440d.
Fararkaup	- 12d.	
Veizla (1d. per pennyland) -	- 18d.	
Ásætiskauþ ($\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the rent)	- 168d.	
Tíund (at 2d. per mark) -	- 144d.	
	—	1062d.
Tenants' net balance for working expenses,		
profit, etc. - - - -		378 = $\frac{1}{3\frac{1}{2}}$ of produce

In Shetland grassum was paid by instalments, viz., $\frac{1}{3}$ of the rent extra, every year, which went to the factor for his trouble—so that there was little left of the produce for the tenants' expenses and profit.⁴

Although the tithe was one-fifth of the rent, which in Scottish law included parsonage and vicarage tithes, and amounted to a full tenth of the produce, latterly vicarage tithe was charged as well on lambs, wool, butter, fish, etc., etc., and the 2d. per mark was treated as 'corn' or parsonage tithe.

The reason why the Shetland board-skatt was only one-third of that paid in Orkney was because Shetland payment was based on the cloth currency, which depreciated to one-third its original value, whereas in Orkney it was based on the butter payment, which more than maintained its value. It also can be shown that the Shetland cloth currency was a 5 ells ounce. The weighed ounce was 30d., so that each ell, of 5 to the ounce, was 6d., reduced to 2d. in the 13th century, when 15 ells went to the weighed ounce. In Shetland two-thirds of the board-skatt of an eyrisland, originally 24 ells at 6d. = 144d. (corresponding with Orkney butter-skatt) was reduced in the 13th century to 48d., and the remaining one-third of the board-skatt, viz. malt or butter, which had to be half the value of the cloth, was reduced from 72d. (corresponding with the Orkney malt-skatt of 12 meils at 6d.) to 24d., viz. 4 meils at 6d.

The following amplified chronological statement appears to solve all difficulties.

Ante 872. Early Norse Settlement of Orkney, Shetland, Hebrides, etc.

⁴ *Circa, 1536-1557*, grassum, in Shetland, was described as *aasete köp* (O.N. *ásætiskaup*, the later Norwegian *tredieaarstage*), of which one half was called *landbølevetla* (O.N. *landbòlavetla* for *landbòlaveizla*) and was paid in ale to the landlord, or his agent, on visiting the farm, at the rate of 3 Shetland gylden (*gudlings*) = 3 shillings of Shetland payment, per barrel of ale. If the landlord did not come to drink the ale its value had to be paid. N.G.L., iv., p. 441n and glossary. The same price of a barrel of ale is mentioned in 1575, in Balfour's *Oppressions*, p. 40.

872. Norwegian united kingdom founded by Harald hárfagri. Further settlement of Orkney, Shetland and the Hebrides by those dispossessed and indomitable hersar, hǫldar, etc., who would not submit to Harald's over-lordship and who used the islands as a base for reprisals on the old country.
880. Harald's first expedition to the West, in which he subdued Orkney, Shetland and the Hebrides. He imposed a skatt [or feu-duty of one eyrir of gold on each of the existing plógsloñd, or ploughlands, afterwards called an *eyrisland* in Orkney and Shetland, and a *tirung* in the Hebrides, amounting to about one-third of the rent], of which his feoffees had to pay two-thirds to the crown and retain the other third for the expenses of government. Harald erected Orkney and Shetland into an earldom, which he granted in fief to earl Sigurðr hinn ríki, whose revenue consisted of one-third of the skatt [and one-third of the yearly rents of the earldom landed estate which had been formed of the confiscated estates of the vikings. As a basis for the payment of rent and for the equitable division of óðul among the heirs, all lands were valued at their purchase price in marks, of which $\frac{1}{24}$ th was fixed as the yearly rent subject to an allowance for the heavy skatt].
900. Slaughter of Harald's son in Orkney. Harald's second expedition to the West, in which he :
- (1) laid a wergeld of 60 gold marks on the islands which was paid by the earl, and
 - (2) Confiscated all óðul and gave them in fief to the earl and remitted the crown revenue of two-thirds of the skatt, owing to the viking raids to which the islands were subject—on account of which the previous earl had resigned the fief. After

this the óðalsmenn were tenants *in capite*, and had to pay yearly rent for their ancestral estates.

980. Earl Sigurðr hinn digri, in order to get the support of his subjects in his wars against the Scots in Caithness, restored the óðul to the óðalsmenn (for the same reason as Harald had done so in Norway) on condition that they continued to pay the skatt to the earl, and (as stated in 1137, *infra*) on condition that upon the death of each óðalsmaðr his óðul reverted to the earl, from whom it had to be redeemed by the heirs [on payment of a duplicate of the skatt, amounting to one silver mark per eyrisland or plógsland].

1137. The existing law [enacted in 980, *supra*] by which all óðul were inherited by the earl on the death of the óðalsmenn and had to be redeemed by their heirs [on payment of the duplicate of the skatt of one silver mark per eyrisland or plógsland] was brought up for consideration by the earl. He offered to abolish this casualty on condition that all the óðalsmenn should, there and then, pay him, once for all [the amount of that casualty, viz.] one silver mark for each plógsland, which was agreed to. Thereafter the óðalsmenn continued to pay the annual skatt, as before, and to render the usual military service to the earl.

THE SCATTALD MARCHES OF YELL, SHETLAND, 1667.

By GILBERT NEVEN, Bailie of Yell.

Edited by R. Stuart Bruce.

[The following is taken from the Symbister Papers, and may perhaps be thought of sufficient general interest to be printed in *Old-Lore*.]

THE Description of the Marches of the several Scattalds in the Island of Yell, according as they were found to be bounded, the time when they were surveyed by me, Gilbert Neven, Baillie of the said Isle, which was begun upon the 27th day of March 1667 years, being accompanied by the persons after named, or the most of them, at the several Marches who did all agree thereto, and approve the boundary thereof, conform to the description thereof, in manner under written; they were to say Andrew Fraser portioner of North Seatter, William Henderson portioner of Gloup, Magnus Mansone there, David Spence portioner of Houlland, Jas Spence of Midbrick, Andrew Henderson and James Fraser Portioners of Brughe, James Spence in Turfhous, Ninian Henderson of Gardie, James Nisbet portioner of Kunnigsetter, Peter Nisbet in Sella-firth, Magnus Ollavesone, Peter Donaldsone, Andrew Bartlesone, Portioners of Basta, Andrew Edmonstonn of Hascosea, Andrew Johnsone, & Hosea Johnsone, Portioners of Houll and Camb, Osea Scott portioner of Reafirth, Fransis Johnson portioner of Aywick, Laurence Tyrie of Quoyon, John Sinclair of Gossaburgh, Arnold & Antony Mansone portioners of Nebo-back, Robert Petersone, Portioner of Hamnavoe, Daniell Erasmussone, portioner of Arisdaell, Thomas Mathewsone and John Peterson, portioners of Coppasetter, Magnus Mathewsone, portioner of Ulsta, Robert Irving Portioner of Seatter, Laurence Garthsone, por-

tioner of Nether Houll, Daniell Hawick, portioner of South Ledie, with many other Witnesses, who were present.

HOULLAND SCATTALD. Being the first Northmost Scattald, is bounded to the West and North with the Sea, to the East and South with Brugh Scattald and the Sea. The first March Mark dividing these Scattalds, stands upon the top of the little Hill or Hillock, be-east the little piece of dyke, which is builded from the North end of the Loch, or water, beside the Kirk of North Yell, to the head of the gooe, at the North Sea banks (called commonly Dyelda-gooe), upon which Hillock be-east the said Piece of dyke as said is; there has anciently been as it seems, a Warder or Watch Place is to be found; the first dividing March Stone standing near about in the middle of the waste grounds between the dykes of Houlland and Brugh, acknowledged to be from the said Watch place, the second March Stone, from which Stone the line of the March was found to go, streight to a great Flat-Stone which lies at the distance of an pair of Butts or thereby, from the Northmost crooke or bught of the ancient hill dykes between Houlland and Brugh, which by the consent of all present was found to be a March Stone, and accordingly was renewed by laying a heap of stones upon it, from which March, the March goes to the hill or hillock called Houlnahoule, and from that the line of the March inclining a little more Westward to the hill or hillock called the westmost Mossahoule, which was by all foresaid acknowledged to be a March, and was renewed by rearing an heap of Stones upon it, from thence west to the head of the mire called Kinna-loiahe or the dividing Mire, and from the foot of that with a straight line to the little hill or hillock called Touglafeyll, and from that to a great flat rock (which is called the Heilla) lving at the south side of the Slack, called Marka or Merkeiesmoode at the Neep or West Sea

banks, which is the last or Westmost March pointing out the Southmost bounds of the Scattald of Houlland, and the Northmost of the Scattald of Brugh.

BRUGHE SCATTALD is the second bounded, the North part with the Sea, and West and North with Houlland Scattald as said is; and then the rest of it, both to the West and East is bounded by the sea and to the South with Sandwick Scattald. The first March Mark dividing between it and Sandwick Scattald is a conspicuous March Stone with Stones set about it for supporters, at the west Neep or Sea banks, upon the North side of the wick, called Brawick, from whence the March lies East and South, with a streight line to that place of the hill above and be-north Sellafirth (called Markin's Houle) or the March hillock, where a March Stone stands which is not very conspicuous, nor could the March at that time be made more manifest, because there were no stones thereabout, only the sure mark to know that March infallibly is, that when you stand beside it the Kirk or Cheaple, which stands in the town of Gudsher,¹ will appear from that place to stand, as if it stood at the foot of the hill, which lies West and North from that Town, from which March of Mirkins-houle, the line of the March goes to the East Sea banks, at the stripe or little burn, running down without the Northmost Garth dykes of Sandwick into the sea, at the place called Mill-goe there being no other March at the East Sea Banks to distinguish between these Scattalds but the said stripe or burn, and this according to the foresaid description, is the South bounds of Brugh Scattald, and the North bounds of Sandwick Scattald.

SANDWICK SCATTALD is bounded as said is to the North with Brugh Scattald, to the West and East with the Sea on both sides (except so much as by the follow-

¹ Gutcher.

ing description will be found to be bounded to the west with Windhouse Scattald), on the South it is partly bounded by Windhouse Scattald, and partly by Reafirth Scattald. The first mark dividing between Sandwick and Windhouse Scattald, is to be found at the West Neep or Sea banks where there has anciently been a piece of dyke built with stones nearest the sea banks, and farthest from it, as it seems built with feals and stones together; which piece of dyke is called Gersgood, the line of the March goes East and South, as the said piece of dyke Steeth points to a piece of ground, which as it seems has anciently been dyked about, and as it is said has been manured and dwelt upon, which is called Beneserge, the line of the March lying without that part of the dyke Steeth, which surrounds it towards the North as said is, there lies a little loch or pool rather, between which and the said dyke steeth, the line of the March goes (the said Beneserge lying close to it within Windhouse Scattald, upon the right hand as ye go from the West to the East), East and South to the brew of the hill, which lies West and South from Dasetter, in sight of Bastovoe and then it turns South by the descent of that hill, and in the descent down towards the burn, commonly called the burn of Colvasetter; there stand some stones which seemed (but could not be certainly determined) to be March Stones. The line of the March going over the burn a musket shot or thereby beneath and be-east the Loch, out off the which the foresaid burn proceeds (which Loch lies in Windhouse Scattald), and so the line of the March goes by the ascent of the hill be-south the said burn, having Sandwick Scattald on the left hand, and Windhouse on the right, southwards by the ridge of the hill, to the highest rise or promontory thereof, to the Knowe or Hillock called Frulla-Keldaeshoule the line of the March goes East and South with a streight line, having yet Sandwick Scattald on the left

hand, and Raefirth Scattald on the right, to the South end of the Loch or water called Siglaravatten, out of the which there runs a burn into the sea called Marcamudes-voe, which burn is the only March at the East Sea Banks, dividing between the Scattalds of Sandwick and Reafirth, and this, according to the former description, bounds Sandwick Scattald to the West and South, partly with the Sea, and the rest with Windhouse and Reafirth Scattalds, being bound to the East always with the Sea.

WINDHOUSE SCATTALD is bounded on the North and East, according to the former description with Sandwick Scattald, till it comes to the said place or hillock called Frulla-keldaes-houle, from whence the line of March comes South, along the ridge of the great hill be-east the house of Windhouse, and down by the descent thereof, having always Reafirth on the left hand, and Windhouse Scattald on the right, at the foot of which hill to the South, and in the westmost creek of Reafirth Voe, there are two Boats nousts between which there stands a conspicuous March Stone; the Eastmost Noust belonging to Reafirth, and the other to Windhouse Scattald, from which March Stone, the line of the March goes up by the ascent of the hill, South and West, to the South end of the Loch which lies be-south setter, called Vaneringa-Vatten (because the line of the March which divides Reafirth to the East, from Windhouse Scattald, goes nearest South through the middle of the Loch) and in the brow or ascent of the hill be-south the said Loch, there is a March Stone set up with stones about it, from which the line of the March goes Southwards along the hill, to the knowes or hillocks called Anna-stackaes-houla, where stands a great stone, acknowledged to be the southmost March pointing out the bounds of Reafirth Scattald to the West, and Windhouse Scattald to the East, from the which stone,

the line of the March goes East and South having Reafirth Scattald on the left hand and Otterswick on the right, to the slack upon the great hill, which comes South from Reafirth, called Suira-scord, on the North side whereof, there stands a March stone from whence the line of the March goes streight a little be-north the North Dyke of Quoeyen, and so from thence to a place at the Sea banks called Lamba-hifda, where there stands a very conspicuous March stone, which is the Eastmost March boundary, Reafirth Scattald to the South, and Otterswick Scattald to the North.

REAFIRTH SCATTALD as manifestly appears by the description above is bounded to the North with Sandwick Scattald, to the East with the Sea, and to the West and South with Windhouse and Otterswick Scattalds.

OTTERSWICK SCATTALD is bounded to the North as said is, with Reafirth Scattald, having its Westmost border from the said great stones which stand beside Unna-Stackes-houlla, with a streight line southward to the Wart or Watch Place which stands upon the top of the great hill, be-south Stoura-scord, called Moe-feyll from which Wart or Watch Place, the South border of that Scattald, and the North border of Nebeback Scattald goes down with a streight line to the East sea banks, where stands a very manifest March, beside the gooe, called Markmaa-Gooe, or the March Gooe, and this conform to the above written description points out the bounds and Marches of the Scattald.

NEBEBACK SCATTALD is bounded to the North with Otterswick Scattald as said is, and to the East and South with the Sea the West border thereof going down from the said Wart or Watch Place upon Moe-fyll southwards to the head or place, where the great burn running from thence to the sea bounds the said Scattald to the West, and Ulsta Scattald to the East.

ULSTA SCATTALD being bounded to the East by Nebebach Scattald, and the burn of Ariasdaill foresaid has its North border bounded by a burn which runs from the West, and falls into the said burn of Arisdaill, called Viga-dales-voe, and from the head of that burn, the line of the March goes West and South, to the top of the hill above Setter in South Yell, called the Wart of Setter, and from that Wart the line of the March goes down West to the burn, which is between Setter and Clodon, called Mada-dales-voe, or the burn in the March dale, and by the foresaid description the East and North borders of Ulsta Scattald, or Cata-hala, as it is anciently called (it being always bounded on the South by the sea) and the West border thereof which is the East border of Strand Scattald is pointed out.

STRAND SCATTALD being partly bounded to the South and East by Ulsta Scattald, has its boundary to the North by a straight line coming from the head of the said burn of Araisdaill, Westward and be-north the said burn called Viga-dales-voe, and goes to the Southmost end, and highest part of the great hill, lying upon the North side of the great Slack or Valley called Noube, from whence again the line of the March goes streight to an stone March standing at the Sea Banks, between Brough and Westsandwick, beside the gooe called Mer-kies-gooe, so that this description points out the East, North and West border of Strand Scattald, and the south border of Westsandwick Scattald.

WESTSANDWICK SCATTALD being bounded as said is, with Strand Scattald to the South, and always to the West by the Sea, comes to its East border, with a streight line from the brow of the said great hill, be-north Noube (where Strand Scattald terminates to the North and to the West) and goes North with a streight line along the Westmost side of that hill, till it comes to some great stones lying in the way, which runs from

Westsandwick to Holsagarth, which Stones are well known, being called Helbonowhida, from which Stones called Helbonowhida, the North border of Sandwick Scattald, and the South of Graveland Scattald goes westward with a streight line to the Sea banks, at a place called Bonagardie, towards the south side thereof upon a piece of rising ground there stands a conspicuous March.

GRAVELAND SCATTALD being bounded to the South, as hath been said, with Sandwick Scattald, is bounded all along the West and North from the said March at Bona-gardie by the Sea, and to the East it is bounded by a line coming North from the said Stones or Stony place, called Helbonowhida by the ridge of the said hill lying between Raga and Gremesta to a certain point at the sea banks well known by the name of Scarva-tonga, which is the Eastmost sea banks March of Graveland Scattald, and the West March of that part of Windhouse Scattald, which lies be-south and Westward from Windhouse, so that the North part of Windhouse Scattald lying be-north Setter is bounded all along by the Sea to the West, and to the North and East with Sandwick and Reafirth Scattald, and continues to be bounded in the South part thereof by Reafirth, Otterswick, and Nebeback Scattalds to the East and to the South with Strand Scattald, only it is to know that be-north the line of Strand Scattald which goes from the head of the burn called the burn of Arisdail to the face of the hill be-north Noube, as is above described, there is wasts ground not strictly marched, which is anciently called Woll-mennis-hoga, or the hill wherein all the Scattalds of Strand and Nebeback may as fairly pasture, as any in Windhouse Scattald may do; and this is the true description of the bounding of the fore-said Scattalds, as they were found to lie and to be bounded, conform to the above written Description in

all points—IN WITNESS WHEREOF and of the truth of the haill premises, in so far as it was possible to determine the same, I have written and subscribed this present Description and Declaration this Twenty fourth day of April, Sixteen hundred and sixty seven years.

(S.S.) GILBERT NEVEN,

Baillie of Yell.

THE FAMILY OF GROAT.

By H. L. NORTON TRAILL.

“Sande ” Groat, witness to disposition of 3 merk lands in Clouston. 24th February, 1527-28.

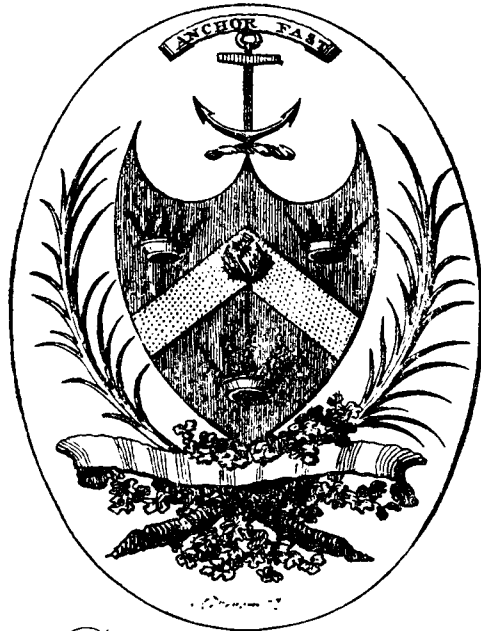
- I. William Groat, of Duncansbay in Caithness, portioner of Tankerness and Burgess of Kirkwall. He is mentioned in documents from 1543 and 1563, and married Agatha, daughter of Sir William Sinclair, Knight, of Warsater, by Ellen Gordon, his spouse, and had issue :—
- II. Malcolm Groat of Tankerness, named as son of the above in a precept by the Sheriff of Orkney, dated 26th February, 1564-65. He is mentioned in deeds up to 1597 and had issue :—
- III. William Groat, named as son of the above in disposition by Agnes Sinclair, and Henry Sinclair, her spouse, to Malcolm Groat of Tankerness, of lands in Græmsay & St : Ola, dated 6th February. 1586-7. He was probably the father of :—
- IV. William Groat of Tankerness, who (according to Clouston) on 13th September, 1625, sold one pennyland in Duncansby that had pertained to his grandfather, Malcolm Groat of Tankerness.

William Groat, Assizman, Head Courts (South Ronaldsay) 1558/84.

John Groat of Tresness, Suitor of Court (Sanday) 1617.

Note.—All the above information is abstracted from “Records of the Earldom of Orkney,” edited by J. S. Clouston.

Edward Groat of Wattenhall, in the Island of Stronzay, and Helen Fea, his spouse, are mentioned



Robert Groat M.D.

in a deed dated 1666. Donald Groat, mentioned in a letter dated 18th March, 1779, from Mrs. Riddock to Charles Steuart as being the father of:—

Marjorie Groat, who married 19th February, 1747, James Traill, second son of William Traill, Treasurer and Dean of Guild, Kirkwall, by Anne Sabiston, his spouse.

The above Donald Groat may also have been the father of:—

Eliza Groat, who married 19th November, 1766, Capt: John Traill, Royal Marines, third son of the above William Traill and Anne Sabiston, and is probably identical with:—

- I. Donald Groat of Newhall, Chamberlain of the Bishopric, who had a son William, and:—
- II. Dr. Robert Groat of Newhall, Senr., who had by Elizabeth Baikie, his wife, a son:—
- III. Dr. Robert Groat of Newhall, who married 1802, Jean, daughter of Thomas Traill, fifth of Holland, by Anne, fourth daughter of Archibald Stewart of Brugh, by whom he had an only son:—
- IV. Alexander Græme Groat, advocate, who died un-married at Edinburgh, 30th November, 1888.

Malcolm Groat of Wards (or Warse), who died 1772, is stated on a monument in St. Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, to be a “relative” of the above-named Donald Groat of Newhall, Chamberlain of the Bishopric.

Extract from “Orkney Armorial”:—

GROAT.

The Orkney Groats are descended from a family of the same name, said to have been settled in Caithness in the time of James IV.

Mentioned in a deed in 1666 are Edward Groat of Wattenhall, in the Island of Stronzay and Helen Fea, his spouse.

On an oak panel, in St. Magnus Cathedral, is carved a shield bearing the arms of M'Lelland (see M'Lelland), impaling three eastern coronets, probably for Groat, over all a chief. (See Plate No. 23).

On a mural tablet in St. Magnus Cathedral, to the memory of Malcolm Groat of Wards, his relative, Donald Groat of Newhall, Chamberlain of the Bishopric, and Dr. Robert Groat of Newhall and William Groat, sons of Donald, is the family crest, an anchor, with the motto “Anchor Fast.”

The arms depicted on the book plate of the above mentioned Dr. Robert Groat of Newhall are:—Gules, on a chevron, between three eastern coronets, a thistle. CREST, an anchor. MOTTO, “Anchor Fast.” Dr. Groat married in 1802, Jean, daughter of Thomas Traill, 5th of

Holland, by Anne, fourth daughter of Archibald Stewart of Brugh, by whom he had an only son, Alexander Græme Groat, advocate, who died unmarried at Edinburgh, 30th November, 1888.

NOTE.—(Correction of "Orkney Armorials.")

The Dr. Robert Groat who married Jean Traill and whose arms appear on the book-plate was a son of Dr. Robert Groat of Newhall, Senr., and grandson of Donald Groat of Newhall, Chamberlain of the Bishopric.

Capt. John Traill, Royal Marines (born 1728, died 1786), had by Eliza Groat, his spouse, an only daughter, Elizabeth, born 21st March, 1767 and died unmarried, 21st June, 1852. In Hossack's "Kirkwall in the Orkneys," p. 195, it is stated that in 1785 Prince William (subsequently King William IV.), who was a naval officer, on visiting Kirkwall, called on his old shipmate, Captain John Traill, Royal Marines, and before leaving presented his only daughter, Elizabeth, with a ring. A miniature of the above Elizabeth Traill is in the possession of Mr. Henry W. Scarth of Skaill, formerly in the possession of the late Mr. Wm. Watt of Breckness.—H. L. N. T.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF CANISBAY, CAITHNESS.

BY JOHN MOWAT.

Introductory Note.

THE place-names of Caithness have not yet received the attention they deserve. The Celts and the Norsemen were at the making of them. The mingling of Celtic and Norse influence in the county would prove an interesting field for the student of Scottish etymology. The late David B. Nicolson made a valuable contribution to the subject in the paper prepared for *The County of Caithness*, published in 1907, but it is more suggestive and illustrative than exhaustive.

In the following list it is proposed to deal only with Canisbay, the parish of John o' Groats, in the north-eastern corner of the county, and the most distinctively Norse. In this parish were some of the earliest Viking settlements. As a basis the Ordnance Survey map has been used, but this has been supplemented from old

maps, charters, and local tradition. Of the three hundred names noted, only about sixty appear in Nicolson's list, and only six in J. B. Johnston's *Place-Names of Scotland*.

The writer is indebted to Mr. William Bremner ("Norseman"), Freswick, and to Mr. George Green, The Breck, John O' Groats, for helpful descriptions of local place-names; to the Rev. D. Beaton for derivations and notes marked (D.B.), and for the revision of Gaelic derivations; and particularly to Mr. A. W. Johnston and Dr. Jón Stefánsson for Old Norse derivations, etc. Mr. D. B. Nicolson's derivations have been revised by Mr. A. W. Johnston, and are marked (N.). Dr. Jón Stefánsson's derivations are marked (J.S.). The author's derivations (A.). All other derivations, which are not marked, and quotations from, and references to, the Sagas are by Mr. A. W. Johnston, whose examples of Shetland names are taken from J. Jakobsen's *Shetlandsøernes Stednavne, København, 1901*.

The derivations given seem to fit the description and situation of the places mentioned. Old maps and records have been searched for varied spellings of the more prominent names. Some modern and commonplace names have been omitted. In the order of arrangement the coast-line has been followed from the south boundary of the parish at Nybster, working north to Duncansby Head, and west to Mey, giving group headlines to various townships.

NOTE.

O.N.	Pronounced as :	Changed in Gaelic to :
Þ, þ	th in thorn	t
Ð, ð	th in the	th, dh
Q, q, Ø, ø = ö)	eu in French feu	o
		} non-initial

For non-initial interchanges between Old Norse and Gaelic, see Professor W. J. Watson's *Place-names of Ross and Cromarty*, p. lvii.; e.g. O.N. *k* > G. *g*; *kk* > *c*; *g* > *gh*; *gg* > *g*; *t* > *d*, *t*; *tt* > *t*; *p* > *b*; *pp* > *p*; *d*, *dd* > *d*; *f* > *f*, *bh*; etc. Initial *h* frequently develops to *t* in G., being mistaken for *th*, aspirated *t*; e.g., *hólmr* > *tolm* and *tuilm*; *hóll* > *tòll*, etc.

There are, however, examples in Shetland and Norway of O.N. *kk*, *k* > *g*, and in Shetland of *pp* > *b*, *tt* > *d*, etc.—A. W. J.

CANISBAY PARISH.

Canisbay Parish probably took its name from the township of that name on the shore of the Pentland Firth and surrounding the pre-Reformation church. The name is first mentioned in an ecclesiastical document of bishop Gilbert, about 1222, in which it is spelled "Canenisbi." The following are later forms:

Cananesbi, 1223, 1245; *Cranesby*, 1275; *Cananby*, 1276; *Canysby*, 1437; *Canesbi*, 1445; *Cannasby*, 1455; and so on until 1620, when Pont's map gives *Conansbay*, and thereafter *Canesby*, *Cannisbay*, in 1744.

There is some difference of opinion as to the derivation. D. B. Nicolson gives it as meaning King's Town, or Village, O.N.* *Konungs-bær*.¹ Pont's Map of 1620 gives *Conansbay*, and Dr. Joseph Anderson, accepting this spelling, thinks the name is derived from an early Celtic chief, Conan, viz., Conan's by, *býr*, *bær*, a farm. Just as *Dungalsby* was named after *Dungal*. But we have no mention of *Canisbay* in the Sagas. J. B. Johnston, in *Place-Names of Scotland*, favours "Canon's bi,"² the clergyman's place. The oldest part of the village lay around the present pre-Reformation church built on the site of an even earlier church dedicated to Saint Drostan. The chief foundation connected with that saint was at Deer in Aberdeenshire. The Book of Deer, which contains the records of its history, mentions a family, or Clan Canan, who conferred land on it. Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, Bodley's Librarian, suggested that one of this clan or family in founding a church in Caithness dedicated it to St. Drostan, and that *Cananesbi* would mean "Canan's Settlement." If this is so, and the probable date the middle of the 12th century, then the village gave its name to the parish.³

¹ In comparison with *Conningsburgh*, in Shetland, one would expect the form: *Conningsby*. A. W. J.

² O.N.* *Kanoka-bær*

³ O.N.* *Kennenda-bær*, with English possessive *s*: **Kennends-bær*, cleric's farm, seems possible and appropriate seeing that the church is in the township of *Canisbay*. If the adjoining little *ness* had been G.* an *Ceannan*, then possibly O.N.* *Kannan-s-bær*; in the same way as it is suggested G. *tràghad* > O.N. *Þrað-s-vík*.—A. W. J.

NYBSTER AND AUKINGILL DISTRICT.

NYBSTER. Situated on a rocky place facing the sea.

O.N. *Ný-bólstaðr, new farm (N.). In Shetland the only *Ni-* names are NIBERG and NIFJAL. *Ni-* derived by Jakobsen from O.E. *nið*, abyss, a deep, (found in the Edda mystic names “Niðafjöll” and “Niðavellir”); *Niberg* is a rocky place facing the sea, and *Nifjal* a dip or hollow in the land. Hence *Niðbólstaðr, farm on a rocky place facing the sea.

AUCKINGILL or AUKENGILL. Old forms: *Okyngil*, 1361; *Ockyngill*, 1406; *Ouchtingill*, 1549; *Okingill*, 1661; *Oughingill*, 1652; *Okengil*, 1722; O.N. *Hákonar-gil, Hákon's gil. In Shetland *Hákon* > *Ukin*.

ROCKHILL. A croft standing on a rocky rise.

HALF-WAY-HOUSE. Farmhouse originally built as a wayside inn, half-way between Wick and Canisbay, now called Summerbank House.

SUMMERBANK or NYBSTERHAVEN. The summer landing place for boats. Old name: “Crookmooth,” crooked entrance. O.N. *Krók-minni.

HELL BERRY. A flat rock near Summerbank. O.N. *Hellu-berg, flat rock.

BROUGH HEAD. So named from the remains of a broch on the headland. O.N. *Borgar-höfði.

SGARBACK. “A high cliff promontory of a curved form bearing the name SGARBACH . . . The landward end is crossed by a . . . wall . . . it runs from the edge of a deep ravine on one side to the cliffs on the other.” (*Inventory of Monuments in Caithness*, p. 18). O.N. *Skarð-bakki, crevice-cliff.

MILTON OF AUKINGILL. Site of old mill. O.N. *Mylnú-tún, mill farm or enclosure.

RUFF O' AUKINGILL. A small projecting reef of rocks. Also *Ruff* of Freswick, *Lang Ruff*, etc. O.N.

*Rófa, an animal's tail applied to a reef. O.N.
 *Langa-rófa, long reef. In Shetland *Røv*, and
Røvie Head. *Rófa-Hákonar-gils.

THE HULLION. A sunken rock on the coast at Aukin-
 gill. O.N. *Hóllinn, the hillock. *Hóll* > *hul* in
 Shetland and *li* > *lyi*, hence *Hullyin*.

POINT OF SORTA. Old name of fisherman's "meeze"
 for the headland above the *Ruff*, as seen from the
 north, projecting beyond the nearer land. O.N.
 *Svarta-nes, black point. "Meeze" is O.N. *mið,
 one of the landmarks by which a fishing-bank is
 found, or the term for a fishing-bank itself.

SAMAL'S GEO, or SAMUEL'S GEO. Took its name from
 a man who lived in the vicinity. It had an older
 name, "Carl Geo," from a stack in the centre.
 O.N. *Karl-gjá, old man's geo; *Karl-stakkr, old
 man's stack.

DIAS GEO. On the south side of *Brough Head* with
 the remains of a cairn. O.N. *Dys-, or *Dysja-
 gjá, cairn geo. (J. S.).

TARRY-GEO, or TARRIEGEO. Seaweed gathers here.
 O.N. *Para-gjá, seaweed geo. (J. S.).

DOUNAL, or DOONAL. O.N. *Dyn-áll, noisy channel.
 (J. S.).

BLACK SCORE. So named from a black fissure in the
 cliff. O.N. *Svarta-skora. (J. S.).

KING'S GEO or KINGAN GEO. Near Buchollie Castle.
 There is a tradition that King James V. landed
 here on his voyage around Scotland. ? O.N.
 *Kynginna gjá, the magic, or witchcraft geo; or
 *Kingunnar-gjá, geo of the brooch, with which
 cf. Kambs-nes, where Queen Auðr lost her comb.

THE TIPPET or TIPPAD. Near King's Geo. A
 pyramid-shaped rock. O.N. *TYPPI, the tip or
 apex, from *typpi*, n. a tip.

CASTLE-GEO. The creek or landing-place below Buchol-
 lie Castle.

BUCHOLLIE CASTLE. *Boquhillie*, 1549; *Balchollie*, 1554; *Bolquhollie*, 1593; *Buquhollie*, 1598. On 18th century maps: *Buchollies*, and *Bucholly's Castle*. Commonly called *Buchles' Castle*. Also often printed "Old Freswick Castle." The seat of the Mowat family in Caithness, probably so named from their estate in Aberdeenshire, viz., *Balquhollie*. It has been identified, by P. A. Munch, as the Lambaborg of Orkneyinga Saga, the stronghold of Sveinn Asleifarson, the famous viking, who fortified the borg, which was afterwards blockaded by Earl Rognvaldr. Sveinn made his escape by being let down by a rope into the sea and swimming to the nearest break in the cliffs. Mr. A. W. Johnston suggests that the broch at the Ness answers the Saga description of Lambaborg better than Buchollie. Here we have an actual *borg*, with a well-built stone wall at the land end, and the rocks *projecting out seawards*, as described in the Saga, whereas Buchollie is a peninsular rock *lying parallel with the shore*, without any evidence that there had been a borg upon it.

BACKLESS. A croft on a sloping ness or point. O.N. **Bakka-hlíðir*, bank slopes.

HILL O' HARLEY. On both sides of the hill-rise the soil is shallow and rocky. O.N. **Harða-hlíð*, hard slope. (J. S.).

CRAW HILLOCK. *Craw*, a sheepfold. Gaelic, *crò*, O.N. *kró*, a sheepfold, O.N. **Kró-hóll*, fold hillock.

CROCANS. A piece of marshy grazing moor to the S.W. of Aukingill, locally associated with "crow," rheumatism in cattle. G. **na Crògan*, the paws or hands (of pasture among the moor).

TOOAGS. *Too-*, with Gaelic diminutive, *ag*. Two round mounds inland between Freswick and Aukingill. O.N. **Þúfur*, mounds, *Þúfurnar*, the mounds. Cf. the *Tuaks o' Oddi* in Orphir, Orkney.

FRESWICK TOWNSHIP AND DISTRICT.

FRESWICK. The township on Freswick Bay was an early landing place of the Vikings. *Njálssaga*, or *Njála*, relates that about 990: *Hávarðr í Þraðsvík*, *mágr Sigurðar*, was killed, *Hávarðr* was a brother-, father-, or son-in-law of Earl *Sigurðr*, who fell at Clontarf in 1014. In the same *Saga* we next hear of a *gofugr maðr*, a worshipful or good man, *í Þrasvík*, called *Skeggi*, also referred to as *Skeggi bóndi*, who in 1014 lived *í Þrasvík á Katanesi*. The *Orkneyinga Saga* relates that, in 1152, *Sveinn Ásleifarson* was in *Þrasvík á Katanesi*, described as *hús í Þrasvík*, also *bær*, with a *skáli* or *skála hús*, a hall. Close by was a *borg* and *ár-ós*, river mouth. Later forms: *Barony of Freschwyk*, 1549; *Frescewik*, 1554; *Freschewick*, 1565; *Fresyck* (Ortelius), 1570; *Fresick* (Speed), 1610; *Fresik* (Hole), 1610; *Freshwyck* (Morden), 1649; *Fresh-wick* (Gordon), 1653; *Mains of Freshweik* (Retours), 1653; *Fresh Wyk*, 1651-1700, etc. Torfæus' Latin translation of the *Saga* name, in the 17th century, is *TRASVIK*, and *TRASVICH*. O.N. *Þras-vík*, the wick of *Þrasi*, a man's name (J.S.).¹

RUFF OF FRESWICK. The sloping headland or reef running out to the south of Freswick Bay. O.N. **Rófa*, or **Rófa-Þras-víkr*.

¹ *Þras-vík* in *Orkneyinga Saga*, and *Þraðs-vík* in *Njála*, suggest that it was not the wick of a man *Þrasi*, i.e., *Þrasa-vík*. Although the omission of the genitive *a* is quite common, the form *Þrað* is not a Norse word. Possibly, as Gaelic *Innsi Orc* became O.N. *Orkn-eyjar*, similarly, *Þraðs-vík* may be the Norse rendering of a Gaelic place-name. Freswick is a bay with a sand-beach, for which an appropriate Gaelic name would be *Camas na Tràghad*, and so rendered into O.N. as *Þraðs-vík*, the bay of *Þraðr*, possibly taken as a man's name.

Queen Auðr, c. 890, when in *Katanes let gera knörr í skógi á laun*, let build a boat in a wood secretly, probably in *Þras-vík* where there is a wood, and sailed in it to Iceland calling at Orkney and Faroe on the way.

O.N. *Knörr*, gen. *knarrar*, a boat (O.E. *cnearr*, gen. *cnearres*), was borrowed into Irish and Gaelic as *cnarra*, now obsolete. In the *Annals of Loch Cé*, Vol. 1, p. 325, in 1235, occur the words *narrtraighe*, plural *narrtrach*, a boat, evidently made up of (c)*narr(a)*, boat, and *tràigh*, gen. *tràghad*, beach, meaning *beach-boat*, and appears to indicate that the *c* in *cnarra* was silent.—A.W.J.

HORSE GEO. A green slope down to the beach used for grazing horses. O.N. *Hrossa-gjá.

SELLY GEO. O.N. *Sela-gjá, seals' geo. (N.).

LYBERRY. A rock with a sloping back and a deep water face, used as a common fishing place for lythe or saith. O.N. *Lýra-berg. (N.). Icelandic *Lý-berg. O.N. *lýrr*, gen. *lýrs*, pl. *lýrar*, gen. pl. *lýra*, the pollock; Norse *lyr*; Icelandic *lýr*, gen. *lýs*, in compounds *lý-*. The name *lythe* for the pollock (G. *pollag*), is used in Scotland and parts of Ireland, but no derivation has been suggested; it has been borrowed into G. as *liùth*. In Shetland there are two fishing rocks for pollock, viz. *Løraberg* and *Lørhelja*, O.N. *Lýra-berg and *Lýr-hella. Probably *Lyberry* in Freswick, *Ly-skerry* in Duncansby, and *Liath Skerry* in Canisbay were originally *Lý-*, or *Lýra-*, and the latter one *Liath* intended for *lythe* as a translation of *Lý-*, or *Lýra*. *Liath Skerry* can be G. *Liath-sgeir, grey Skerry.

THE TAA. A toe of land, but more like the *baa* (O.N. *boði*) in Shetland, a rock submerged at high water. O.N. *Tá, a toe. (N.).

SKRITHE. A dip in the rock strata on the south side of Freswick Bay. O.N. *Skriða, a landslip. (N.).

TANG HEAD. Also Tang Head in Mey. O.N. *Tangi. A spit of land running out into the sea. (N.). O.N. *Tanga-hofði.

CLETTS. Two rock pillars, nearly as broad at the top as they are at the base. O.N. *Klettar, rocks. (N.).

RIVES. Low-lying rocks running out into the sea. O.N. *Rif, reefs.

SANNYPEEL. A creek with a sandy bottom in which the fishing boats could lie before hauling up, or after launching. O.N. *Sand-pollr, a little sandy creek. The form *peel* here and in *Tammies Peel*, in Gills, is probably the dial. *peel* for *pool*.

BURN MOUTH. O.N. *Ár-óss*, burn-mouth, in *Þrasvík*, mentioned in *Orkneyinga Saga*.

LODBERRY. A rock at the entrance to *Sannypeel*, once used as a pier for the loading of vessels. In former times the grain from the home-farm was shipped from this place. O.N. *Hlað-berg*, loading rock, the Shetland *Lodberri*. (N.). Cf. O.N. *Hlað-hamarr*, loading rock, from which is derived Gaelic *laimhrig* and *lamraig*, the Shetland *lahamar*, etc., also O.N. *hlein*, rock used as a pier. In Lewis, O.N. *hlað-hamarr* becomes *lathamur* (Watson).

FRESWICK HOUSE. At the mouth of the Burn of Freswick, built by Sir William Sinclair of Freswick, about 1670. Old local name for the farm is "Burnside," in documents, "Burnsyde." Pont's map, 1638, gives "Burnsyde" with Castle.

BURNSYDE, BURNSIDE. Barony of Burnsyde and mill, 1549; *Burnesyde* (Janson), 1700; *Burkside* (Cary), 1805—a misprint. In O.N. **Ár-síða*.

ST. MODDEN'S CHAPEL. Site of pre-Reformation chapel, around which lingered popish rites. Sir William Sinclair built, on the old site, a modern building with vaults which was never used and has been in decay for over a hundred years.

BRAIDRIGS. Originally the rigs belonging to the *tuns* and worked on the runrig system. The rigs were held by tenants alternately, none holding two adjoining rigs. According to this plan the tenants had equal shares of good and bad land. The rigs were separated by a ridge of uncultivated land. O.N. **Breiðu-hryggjar*. In Orkney the ridge separating the rigs was called a *balk*, O.N. *bálkr*.

THE LINKS. The sand dunes along the shore of Freswick Bay. May be from O.N. **Lykkjur*, hedged fields, or **Lykkjurnar*, the hedged fields. (A.). The O.N. for *sand dunes* is *sand-melar*.

THE FITCHES. Reclaimed mossy ground. O.N. *Fitjarnar, plural of *fit* with article, meadow land on the banks of a river, etc., the Orkney and Shetland *Fitsjes*, *Fidges*, etc.

SHILLING HILLOCK. Near the old mill of Freswick. A shilling-hill, a hill or eminence used for winnowing corn. (E.D.D., s.v. shill.).

BLAEBERRYQUOYS. Crofts or farms below the present county road, added to the Mains Farm shortly after 1800. *Blayberin quoys* (Retours), 1653. "Janet Mowat, relic of David Bain, Blaeberry-quoys, December 6th, 1661." See *Commissariat of Caithness*. O.N. *Bláberja-kvíar, blaeberry pens.

THE HEATHER. Local name for several crofts, probably having been reclaimed from the hill pasture. O.N. *Heiðrin, the heath.

EASTER-WALL. An old charter name for a district on the south side of the burn of Freswick, comprising, or adjoining, the district now known as "The Heather." *Astrowell* (Charter), 1653. O.N. *Austr-völlr, east field. (N.).

GILL BURN. O.N. *Gil-á, gill-burn.

TOTAL GILL. O.N. *Tǫðu-vall(ar)-gil, gill of the in-field.

LITTLE GILL. O.N. *Litla-gil, little gill.

BRAID GILL. O.N. *Breiða-gil, broad gill. Gill o' Brabster. O.N. *Breiða-bólstaðar-gil, or *Gil-Breiða-bústaðar.

WOLF GILL. Said to be where the last wolf was killed in Caithness. O.N. *Úlf-gil.

THE ELF MIRE. So named as elf-stones (arrow-heads) were supposed to be found there. O.N. *Álf-mýrr.

THE DRUM. The ridge of the burn of Freswick. Gaelic *an Druim, the ridge. (N.).

THE FALL 'E DRUM. The place of a fold for the ingathering of sheep or cattle. Gaelic *fal*, pen, *druim*, ridge. The 'e is all that is left of o' 'e, the Caithness dia-

lectical form of *of the*. *Fal o' 'e Drum* may be a translation of G. *Fàl na Droma. (D.B.).

TOFTS. Locally called TAFTS. A group of house- or home-steads. O.N. *Toftir, house sites. Old forms: *Toftes* (Pont), 1638. In Charters *Toftis*. In several 18th century maps, *Tostes*, but probably a slip of transcribers, *s* for *f*. Cf. THURDIS-TOFT in Olig, *O.N. Þórðar-toft, Thord's toft, (J.S.), and TOFT-KARL in Wick, O.N. *Toft-karl, karl's or servant's toft.

THE HAAS. The haa, *i.e.* hall, the chief farm in a township in Caithness. (E.D.D.). Cf. O.N. *høll*, hall, a king's or earl's house, also used as name of a farm in Iceland.

THE HAA, DUNCANSBY, and HAA O' GILLS. O.N. *Gills-hall.

THE SLUGS. A broad swamp about quarter of a mile long, near the N.W. boundary of Freswick arable land. Gaelic *slug*, *sloc*, a miry puddle, a *slough*, which latter is supposed to be derived from the Old Gaelic or Irish. For a possible Norse derivation *cf.* *slage*, *slok*, Shetland *slag*, *slog*, a wet depression in the land.

THE PRIEST'S MIRE. Slightly to the north of the Slugs. Local tradition makes it the place of the murder of a priest in pre-Reformation times. O.N. *Prests-mýrr.

WESTER QUOY. A patch of pasture near the southern base of the Warth Hill. O.N. *Vestr-kví, west enclosure.

HAGS. A piece of broken moor touching the boundary between the lands of Mey and Freswick. Scotch *hag*, broken ground, probably connected with O.N. *hogg*, a cut or blow, applied to a ravine or cut-like gap in a hill.

HILL O' THE WARD. A well in the north-west of Freswick. (See below).

THE BIRLERS. An irregular burn flowing, through sloping clay banks, past Wester Quoys. ? O.N. *Bugar-hlíðir, burn-bend slopes, from *bugr*, a river-bend, and *hlíðir*, slopes. Cf. O.Ir. *bir*, *bior*, water (Watson, lxxii, 204) and G. *lorg*, track, Welsh *llyr*, channel, water-course (Macbain, s.v. *lorg*).

GURQUOY. Part of a holding. O.N. *Geira-kví, the quoy of the gore. (J. S.).

EVERLY. *Overley*, in Charter, 1653. O.N. *Efrihlíð, over slope. (N.).

OUTERTOWN. At the outer circle of the township of Freswick. *Owirtye* (Charter), 1549. O.N. *Ytri-tún.

MIRE OF TROWSKERRY. *Ow* in *Trow* pronounced as *ow* in *how*. A mire of hollows and swamps, traditionally associated with trolls or fairies, being in the vicinity of the Warth Hill, the place where the fairies were last seen. In Shetland, O.N. *ker*, a tub, is applied to a swamp, mire and pool, and to a mire with hollows; and in Denmark, *kær* is applied to a swamp, bog and pool. In Norse mythology *troll* and *þurs* were giants, as compared with *álfr* and *huldu-fólk*, fairies, elves. In Shetland O.N. *þurs* > *trus*, hence *Þurs(a)-kera-mýrr > *Trus-kera-mýrr, trolls' hollows' mire. If *trolla* > trows', or *trolls* > trow's, then possibly the original name may have been *Trolla-, or Trolls-kera-mýrr.

HILL O' KIRSHAN. The west-ward ridge of hilly moorland between Freswick and the low-lying districts of Canisbay on the north. O.N. *Kýr-tjarnar-hóll, cow's pool's hill, or *Kýr-tjörn.

WARTH, or WART HILL. The highest eminence in the district. Eastward is the Black Hill (O.N. *Svarta-hóll), so named as from its dark heathery surface. On the top of these ward-hills are usually a heap of stones, the ruins of ancient watch towers or beacons used for signalling purposes. The

- kindled fires on the wards could be seen from long distances. O.N. *Varða, a beacon; cf. Icelandic *Vorðufell*, beacon fell, and *Varðberg*.
- GYRES. O.N. *Geirar, plural of *geiri*, a gore or strip of out-lying grass in the moorland. (N.).
- GYER, or GIAR HILL. Westward of the Warth Hill, has patches of green on the slopes. O.N. *Geira-hóll.
- LOCH O' LOMISHON. An inland moorland loch. O.N. *Lóma-tjörn, loch of the ember-goose, *lómr*. (N.).
- THE SHONS. A tract of boggy moss. O.N. *Tjarnirnar, the pools.
- SHONS OF BRABSTER. O.N. *Breiðabólstaðar-tjarnir.
- LINT LOCHIE. A loch so named from the abundance of cotton-grass which whitens the black bog and was at one time gathered and spun. The O.N. name would have been *Fífu-vatn, cotton-grass loch, and the Gaelic Lochan an Lìn.
- BLACK LOCHIE. A loch in the black moss. O.N. *Svarta-vatn, black loch. G. *Dubh Lochan.
- SHONS, SHUNS, SHEENS. O.N. *Tjarnir, pools. (N.).
- DYANS. A marshy piece of moorland stretching from the base of the Warth Hill. O.N. *Dýin, the marshes, from *dý*, pl., marshes, with article and English pl. s. added.
- DYSSETTER. O.N. *Dý-setr, the boggy pasture. (N.).
- THE BROW, THE BROO. The rise to the north-west of Freswick township. O.N. *Brá, brow. (N.). O.N. *brá*, described by Vigfússon as the *eye-lid*, and by Fritzner as *the fringe of hair on the eye-lid*, and does not appear to be used in place-names. O.N. *brún*, the *eye-brow*, is applied to the brow of a fell or moor, hence *Brúnin, the brow.
- THE RED ROW. A row of four cottar houses, probably so named because of their being built of red sandstone.
- MIDTOWN, or MIDTON. Local pro. "Mittan." Perhaps the middle *tún*. O.N. *Mið-tún, middle en-

closure. (N.). O.N. *Meðal-tún; cf. *Midland* (in Orkney) < O.N. Meðal-land, (*Hákonar Saga*).

THE HECKLER. Originally "The Heckler's Well."

A well made in connexion with the lint-spinning industry about 1794, and used for bleaching purposes.

WATT'S WELL. Name of a well. O.N. *Vatns-lind, a spring well. *Vats* (pron. *wats*) is an old gen. of *vatn*, and *vatns* in Shetland > *wats*.

QUOY ANGUS. Locally understood to mean the black quoy from its black mossy soil. Also called "The Gutters." In Orkney a number of *quoy* names end in a personal name, and possibly this may be the quoy of Angus. O.N. *Kví Enguss; G. *Cuidh Aonghais (pronounced *innish*).

QUOY DYKES. The dykes of the quoys between which was the old cattle or cart track or "caa." O.N. *Kvíá-díki.

CAA ROAD, and THE CAA. The ancient track passing through the township. Gaelic *an Cadha, the narrow passage, pass. The O.N. term is, *geil*, or *sund*. There are several *Caas* in other parts of the parish.

SONSIQUOY. The quoy at the end of the sands, or links, of Freswick. In 1563, *Sownsaquoy*. It also appears as *Sondisquoy*. ? O.N. *Sands-kví. Cf. O.N. *sund*, *syndi*, applied to a passage or lane, the G. *cadha*. O.N. *Sunds-kví, lane-quoy. At the old Bú of Orphir there was a *Synde-hús*, between which and the grave-yard there was a *sund*, or passage, also called the *Masey gate* (Mass road, O.N. *Messu-gata).

RED HEAD. Red sandstone cliff on the north-west side of Freswick Bay. There is a suggestion that this might be the *Verubium* of Ptolemy,¹ A.D. 150.

¹ Macbain identifies *Verubium* with Noss Head, and derives it from *ver.*, prep., and *ub*=Irish *ubh*, sword-point, meaning "Sword Head." —A. W. J.

O.N. *Rauði-höfði. This may be the *Rauðu-björg* of the *Orkneyinga Saga*, off which a sea battle took place, c. 1045, between earls Þorfinnr and Rognvaldr; but it is much more likely to have been Dunnet Head. *Rauðu-björg*, red cliffs, has been unaccountably identified as "Rattar Brough"! *brough* = *borg*, *broch* or *castle*. *Rattar* is probably Gaelic, *Ràth-t-ar, the place of the *rath*, residence.²

FERRAD. A boggy place. O.N. *Forað, an impassable place. (N.).

FEETONSQUOY. O.N. *Fítóns-kví, wizard's quoy. (N.).

CLAVEY GREEN. A sloping green break in the cliffs. O.N. *Kleifin-græna.

JENNY HARROW. Name of a well. Probably a contraction of "Jenny Harrow's Well," from the name of a woman who lived in the neighbourhood.

THE BRACK. O.N. *Brekka, a slope, *Brekkan, the slope.

WATRESS. The watery field. O.N. *Vatns-rás, a water course, or a road alongside water. In Shetland, *Vatsaros*, a road alongside water.

SLACK O' E' STACK. A hollow between two hillocks, used at sea as a *meeth* (O.N. *mið*) or landmark. O.N. *Slakki, a hollow in the ground, applied in Orkney to a hollow or depression between two hills in a range, *Slakki-Stakksins.

THE HAVEN. Old natural landing place now replaced by a pier.

CORFF-HOUSE. A house or shed for curing salmon and keeping nets. (Jamieson's *Dict.*). This place is still used for that purpose in a limited way.

² The Rev. D. Beaton points out that Macbain, in his *Place-names of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, pp. 141, 158, refers to the use of "*ràt*, apparently for *ràth*, a fortified residence," as a common prefix in place-names confined to Pictland; hence, if this is the *rat* in *Rattar*, then the *-ar* may be the usual extension: G. *Ràt-ar, place of raths.

THE POW. A large pool of water left by the tide between high flood and ebb. "The Back o' e' Pow." O.N. *Pollr, a pool. *Pollrinn, the pool.

SKIRZA, SKIRZA HOUSE and SKIRZA HEAD. Old forms : *Skirssarie* (valued Rent Roll), 1683; *Scourzie Head* (Brown's map), 1730 ?; *Skersarie* (old parochial map); *Scarskerry*, 1812. The endings *-arie* may be either *erg*, *airigh*, a shealing, or *øyrr*, a gravel beach, which latter > *eri* in Shetland. O.N. *Skersu-, or Skars-øyrr, or -airigh, the ogress's beach or shealing.

CRAIGWELL. An iron-stone spring at Skirza Head. Cf. "Tobar Chragag," well of the little rock, a holy well in Avoch. See Watson's *Place-names of Ross and Cromarty*, p. 133. Gaelic *Tobar Chrag, well of the rock or craig, or well-rock, or -craig; *Tobar na Creige, well of the craig.

THE SLATE. Flat rock surface under Skirza Head with outlying rock known as "The Stane o' e' Head." O.N. *Slétta, a flat, or *Sléttan, the flat.

THE SELKIE STANES. A common resort of seals. O.N. *Sela-steinar, seals' stones, or *Sela-steinarnir.

LANG RUFF. A long projecting submerged rock. O.N. *Langa-rófa, long reef.

RUSHIE GEO. O.N. *Hrossa-gjá, horse geo. (J. S.).

HOLE OF THE HEAD. O.N. *Hofða-hola.

EFFIE'S GEO. O.N. *Efju-gjá, muddy geo.

THE NEVS. Rocks north of Effie's Geo. O.N. *Nafir-nar (plural with article), the naves, from O.N. *nof*, nave, hub.

SKIPPIE GEO. O.N. *Skipa-gjá, ships' geo.

HOWBURN HEAD. Half-way between Skirza Head and Duncansbay Head, appears on Thomson's map of Caithness *circa* 1832, attested by several prominent proprietors and Peter Manson, surveyor. *Howburn Point*, on map attached to Henderson's *Caithness*

Agriculture, 1812. Not identified. O.N. *Hallbjarnar- or Hábjarnar-höfði, Hallbjörn's headland. (J. S.).

LANG GEO. O.N. *Langa-gjá, long geo.

STAISH ROCKS. Placed on Black's map to the south of the stacks of Duncansby. O.N. *Steði, a stithy, anvil; applied in Shetland to a skerry of triangular form, pointed at the top and broader below, like an anvil with pointed end. *Steðja-[sker.].

WIFE GEO. Named from a Stack, the centre of which resembles a woman. O.N. *Víf-gjá, woman-geo, probably a *görninga-víf*, witch. *Víf-stakkr, woman-stack.

FAUSE GEO, or FAST GEO, or FASGEO. O.N. *Fasa-gjá the geo of Fasi, a nickname. (J. S.).

SALTSKERRY, or SALSKERRY. Given in Black's map. O.N. *Salt-sker, salt skerry; cf. *Salt-eyrr*, salt beach, in Iceland. Cf. G. Sgeir an t-Salainn, (in Applecross) skerry of the salt, a rock uncovered at low water only (Watson, 216).

CROGODALE. (*Croc-o-dile*, O.S.M.). O.N. *Króka-dalr, the winding valley of the Duncansby Burn; name now applied to hill.

THE STACKS OF DUNCANSBY. Locally designated: Muckle Stack, O.N. *Mikli-stakkr, the big stack (high rock in the sea); Peeri Stack, *peerie*, *piri*, derived by Jakobsen from Norse *pirre*, small; and Tom Thoom, O.N. *Þumli, a 'tom thumb,' a nickname, from *Þumall*, a thumb, cf. *þumal-tá*, the big toe. Collectively O.N. *Stakkarnir, the stacks, *Dungals-bœjar-stakkar, stacks of Duncansby.

FISHGEIL. Sometimes called *Fish Scale*. A large flat reef of rocks partly submerged at high water. There is a channel between the reef and the cliffs large enough for a fishing boat at high water. O.N. *Fiska-geil, fish channel.

THE GIRNS. In this place the cliff slopes gently, and is covered with grass for some distance from the top, in marked contrast with the perpendicular cliffs on either side. It is said to have been a fox lair, when these animals abounded in Caithness. O.N. *Grenin, the foxes' lairs (N.); or O.N. *Gjograrnar, the clefts or rifts, from *gjogr*, a cleft or rift; the local name for a fishing place in N.W. Iceland, viz., *Gjogr*, or *á Gjogri*. In Shetland *de Gørn*, the name of a sea rock, derived by Jakobsen from O.N. *Gýgrin, the ogress.

PARTAN GIRNS. A flat shoal jutting out from the beach at The Girns, through which deep channels run, noted for being a good place for fishing lobsters and crabs locally known as *partans* (Gaelic, *partan*, a crab). The shoal probably took its name from the adjoining cliffs, The Girns.

THE STRIDIN MAN. A rock near Fasgeo having the appearance of a striding man. Cf. O.N. *stigandi*, a strider.

DUNCANSBY AND DISTRICT.

DUNCANSBY. Heimskringla relates that earl Þorfinnr hausakljúfr (920-963), married Grelǫð, daughter of Dungaðr (Gaelic *Donnchadh*, Duncan), earl of Caithness, by his wife Gróa, daughter of Þorsteinn rauðr. Njála, c. 991, mentions *Dungalsbær*, or *Duggalsbær*, or *Dungansbær*, and *Dungals-nípa*, or *Dugals-nípa*. Orkneyinga Saga, c. 1034, gives *Dungalsbær* in Katanes; c. 1128, Ólafr Hrólfsson (father of Sveinn Ásleifarson) lived in Gareksey, Orkney, and had another *bú*, house, in *Dungalsbær* in Katanes; 1140, Sveinn Ásleifarson in *Duggalsbær* in Nes; 1145, *Dungalsbær*. Other forms from charters, rentals and maps are: 1540, *Dungesbey* (Mey Charter); 1610, *Dunisbe* (Hole); 1611, *Duncasbie* (Groat Charter); 1650, *Dungsby* (map); 1653, *Dungisby*

(Gordon); 1674, *Dungansbay* (sasines); 1695, *Dungisby* (Morden); 1697, *Dungesbey* (rental); 1725, *Dungsby* (Moll and Camden). The old spelling in local records is "Dungasby," and is so pronounced by the older inhabitants.

O.N. *Dungals-boer*, the farm of Dungall, the O.N. rendering of the Gaelic name *Dùghall* (Dugald), in its old form *Dubgall*, i.e. *dubh gall*, black foreigner or Dane. In Shetland there is a *Dunglegjo*, derived by Jakobsen from **Dungalsgjá*.
DUNCANSBY HEAD. Professor W. J. Watson (in his *History of the Celtic Place-Names in Scotland*, p. 36) agrees with Macbain in his identification of the *VIRVEDRUM PR.* of Ptolemy as Duncansby Head, meaning "Very Clear (Cape)." P. A. Munch has identified this as *Dungals-nípa*, or *Dugals-nípa*, of *Njála*, c. 991. O.N. *gnípa*, or *nípa*, a peak (*Vigfússon*), a high steep mountain with overhanging top (*Fritzner*). Other forms: 1560-70, *Dungesbe Prom.* (Italian map of Scotland); 1570, *Dungsby Heade* (Ortelius); 1578, *Dungisbe Prom.* (Leslie); 1599, *Dungysby*, (Kier); 1610. *Dunesbe Head* (Speed); 1638, *Dungsby Head* (Pont's map). In c. 991, earl Sigurðr and Njálssons went from Orkney to Caithness, when he was informed that the Scotch earls Hundi and Melsnatdi (who had killed earl Sigurd's relative, Hávarðr í Þraðsvík) were "a short way off with a great host. Then earl Sigurd turns with his host thither, and the name of that place is Duncansnip (*Dungalsnípa*, or *Dugalsnípa*), beyond which they met. And it came to a great battle between them . . . (having defeated the Skotor they chased them) until they learnt that Malcolm (Melkolfr, the Scots king) was gathering a host together at Duncansby" (*Dungalsbær* or *Duggalsbær* or *Dungansbær*). After this they turned back and went to Stroma (Straumey).

SANNICK. A sandy bay, west of Duncansby Head.
O.N. *Sandvík. (N.).

MAIGIE AND CUTTIECRAIG. Fishing rocks near the bay of Sannick. *Maigie* is a kist-shaped shoal with the rocks sloping seaward, submerged at high water. There is deep water between it and the land. O.N. *Magi, stomach, a stomach-formed rock. In Shetland applied to a geo of that form, *Gjomaga*, **Gjá-magi*. Gaelic *Cutach Crag; Scotch, Cutty Craig.

FLUTHERAN. A long sharp-pointed skerry, that is only submerged at high water with spring tides, and surrounded with water at half tide. O.N. *Flæðrin sker, the high water (covered) skerry. In western Iceland *flæðr* is used instead of *flóð*, high-tide, and *flæði-sker* and *flæðar-sker* is applied to a skerry which is submerged at high-tide; also *flæðar-urð*, rocks reached by high water.

FLISS, or FLESS. A flat skerry in the bay of Sannick submerged at high water. O.N. *Fles, a flat skerry.

GIBSCRAIG. A high stack near Duncansby Head, which from its leaning appearance is likely to topple over. Viewed from the land it appears to be leaning outwards towards the sea, and viewed from the sea it appears to be leaning inwards towards the land. Hence the old local rhyme:—

“ If Gibscraig faa’s ta ’e lan’,
Dungasby ’ill sink for sin.
If Gibscraig faa’s till ’e sea,
Dungasby hid spared will be.”

? *for sin* = O.N. *fyrir sinn*, before it. For *Gib*, cf. Gaelic *gob*, a beak, hill.

SHINSLAVE. The valley north of the Head of Crogo-dale, a grassy slope with perpendicular cliffs on either side, with a footpath winding down to the beach and a small burn running down the slope. O.N. *Tjarnar-kleif, tarn’s cliff, with English genitive *s* for O.N. *ar*.

HUMLIE'S HOLE. A cave in the face of Duncansby Head, probably caused by the action of the waves wearing away the lower strata of rocks. Cf. Icelandic *hömul-grýti*, earth-fast stones, and N. *humul*, stones, especially small round stones.

LANG GEO O' SLATES. A geo at Duncansby Head. O.N. *Langa-gjá, long geo. *Sléttur, flats. O.N. *Langa-gjá-slettna, long geo of flats.

THE KNEE. A pierced rock at the point of Duncansby Head. O.N. *Kné, knee.

THE BOCHT, or BUCHT. A place where sheep were gathered for shearing. Several bights at the sea-side were used for this purpose, such as this one at Duncansby Head and the Bocht o' Mey. Scotch, *bught*, sheep-fold.

QUINICLAVE. The place of an old water mill in a valley, north of Shinsclave, where a footpath also leads down to the beach and a burn falls over the cliff. O.N. *Kvernar-kleif, quern cliff.

THE BEIL, or BEILD OF DUNCANSBY. A hollow where cattle or sheep from the common pasture were collected and *beilded* or folded at night. Most townships had a *beild*. Cf. Gaelic *Buaile, a fold, pen; or *Buail, place for resting and milking (in Lewis); cf. O.N. *ból*, a pen, *bæla fé*, to pen sheep for the night. In Orkney the farmers had to take their turn to *bæla* the cattle in the common *ból* or pen.

FAAL OF THE BEIL. A fold; at one time a turf-walled enclosure for sheep, but now only a green square patch in the heath. ? Gaelic *Fàl na buaile, dike of the fold. The Rev. D. Beaton suggests that *Beil* may be Scotch *bell*, top of a slope, or more likely, *beil*; *beild*, shelter. See foregoing.

BAXTER ROCK. To the south of Duncansby Head, shown on the Caithness section of Black's map of Scotland. It is a sunken shoal, a ridge or rock still below the surface at low tide. A typical *blind-sker*

over which the *boði*, breaker, 'bodes' the hidden or blind skerry; *boði* is now applied to the rock itself. O.N. **Bakka-staðr*, bank place.

KNAPSTER. A stony ridge covered with heathery braes.

O.N. **Knapp-staðr*, hill-top place.

THIRL DOOR. An opening through a small promontory south of Duncansby Head. O.E. **Thyrel*, opening. (A.). Cf. Icelandic *þyrill*, (1) a whisk or stick for whipping milk; (2) Shetland *tirl*, the upright axle of the horizontal water-wheel, from which two stacks and a geo are named, the latter from its churning water; (3) the Faroese churn and butter-sticks; with which compare the Cumberland *thyrel*, a porridge-stick. In the present case it may have been applied to the outer support or pillar of the opening, or to the churning surf washed through the opening.

GEEDIKETTLE. A curious wide and deep cauldron-shaped depression on the edge of the cliffs near the Stacks of Duncansby. O.N. **Gjótu-ketill*, from *gjóta*, a long depression or hollow, which occurs in a Shetland place-name, *de Gjudas*, and *ketill*, a cauldron. The English "kettle" may be a tautology.

KILL O' FLUX. Right opposite the Big Stack. In this cliff there is a gentle bend projecting towards the Stack, and deep channels run between the cliff and the Stack, in one of which there is room for a small rowing boat. O.N. **Flugs-kíll*, channel of the precipice, *flug*, n., a precipice, and *kíll*, an inlet or canal, or **Kíll-Flugs*.

THE OSS. The mouth of a burn. O.N. **Óss*, burn-mouth (from which is derived Gaelic *òs*); or **Óssinn*, the burn-mouth. G. **an Òs*.

THE GLOOP. A cave with an opening to the surface at its inner end. O.N. **Gloppa*, **Gluppa*, or **Gloppan*, the gloop.

LYSKERRY. A flat sloping rock near the Gloop.
Icelandic *Lý-sker; see *Lyberry* in Freswick.

JOHN O' GROAT'S HOUSE. So called after John de Groat of traditional fame. Also the Ferry-house of John o' Groat. Now the popular postal name for the older name of Duncansby. Bryce's map, 1744, gives *John o' Groats*; Bowles, 1791, *Johny Grotts*; Cary, 1805, *Johnny Groats House*; Thos. Brown, 18—, *John o' Groats House*; Thomson, 1832, ditto.

PENTLAND FIRTH. The Sagas give *Pettlands-fjørðr*, Pictland's Firth; 1403, *Mare Petlandicum*; Speed, 1610, *Pinthland Firth*. Called *Caol Arcach* by the Gaelic-speaking people of Caithness and Sutherland, *i.e.*, Firth of Orkney; the Gaelic name for Orkney being *Arcu*. *Proceeds*. S.A.Scot., 1908, p. 87.

THE SOON. The sound between Stroma and the mainland. Ortelius map, 1570. O.N. *Sund.

NIS, or NESS OF DUNCANSBY. O.N. *Nes, a point or headland. (N.).

BRAID EBB. A level part of the beach seen at low water east of the Ness. O.N. *Breiða-fjara.

BLEGO. A small geo running into a shelly beach. At the outer entrance is a half submerged flat shoal. On one side of the geo are large boulders of blue lava or molten rock. ON. *Blá-gjá, blue geo.

IRONCRAIG. Volcanic rocks of ironstone near the Ness. G. *Creag an Iaruinn, or *Creag Iarnaidh.

ROBBIE'S HAVEN. A landing place for small boats west of the Ness.

THE EASTIN. The east end. ? O.N. *Austrinn, the east.

THE BRECK. A piece of uncultivated land used as common pasture. O.N. *Brekka. (J. S.).

LINNIEQUOY. There are two places in John o' Groat's which are called by this name. Both have been level ground covered with heather and lie close

beside a burn. In one part of the district a piece of ground is called *The Quoy*, and right across a burn is *Linniequoy*, a level piece of ground covered with heather. A ridge of braes at the top of this is known as *Broos o' Linniequoy*. O.N. *Lyng-kví, heather quoy, or *Lyng-á(r)-kví, heath burn quoy. *Lyng-kvía-brýnn, *brýnn* is plural of *brún*, brow of a hill.

GLITTERIEQUOY. A level bit of ground in the centre of the township. O.N. *Glitrandi Kví, glittering quoy.

PLASHMIRE. A wet marshy place near Stemster.

BURN OF LYNEGAR. A small burn north of the Beil of Duncansby. O.N. *Lyng-garðs-á, heather-farm's burn.

LEENS and LEEN BURN. Pasture land with burn in centre. *Leens* is the Scotch for low-lying land, e.g. the *Leens* at Loch of Stemster, in the parish of Bower (D.B.). Cf. G. *lian*, *lèan*, *lèana*, swampy plain, meadow, lea, *na lèanan*, the leens.

BOGSDALE. G. *Dal a' Bhuig.

BARQUOY. ? O.N. *Býjár-kví, farm quoy; or O.N. *Barkar-kví, bark quoy, from O.N. *borkr*, applied to root of tormentil in Faroe; also a man's name.

BRUNTLAND. English: brunt = burnt.

RUTHERLAND. ? O.N. *Rjóðr or Ruðr, a clearance (of wood or heather), with English *land* added; otherwise *Ruð-land, Ruðr-land.

SWARTIGILL. The black gill. O.N. *Svarta-gil. (N.).

THE TARNIES. Small lochs in marshy moorland. O.N. *Tjarnirnar, the tarns.

LADY'S KIRK. The remains of an old Roman Catholic chapel, a short distance east of John o' Groat's House, dedicated to the Virgin.

KNOCKIN STANE. A rock, east of John o' Groats, which at one time had a basin-shaped cavity in which the

people used to *hummel* the awns from their bere, or barley. So called from its resemblance to a *knocking stone*, a stone bowl in which corn was knocked with a wooden mall to remove the awns.

WINNIN HILL. A place where, in olden times, the corn was winnowed.

GEATS HOLE. A small geo running into a sandy beach, where refuse was thrown. At the outer entrance are large boulders, and in the centre a circular pool often containing sea-weed. The Knockin Stane forms one side of Geats Hole. O.N. *Gat, a hole, probably *Gats-gjá.

FERRY HAVEN. Now the pier at John o' Groat's, at one time the haven from which the ferry-boat left for Orkney.

THE KNICKELS. Two shoals, one at each side of the entrance to the Ferry Haven. The top of each shoal is round or clew-like in appearance, and both are submerged at half tide. There are deep channels around both the Knickels. O.N. *knykill*, *m.*, and *hnykill*, *m.*, are both explained by Fritzner as a swelling, node; the former is explained by Jakobsen also as a rock, cliff, projecting rock. Vigfússon gives *hnykill* only, and as a *clew* of yarn, metaph., a *clew-like* thing. O.N. *Hnyklarnir.

HAMMERS. The old name was *Haimers*. The name at one period was applied to a jib-shaped piece of ground near the beach, and also to a flat skerry jutting out into the sea. A narrow channel runs through the shoal. The beach is sand, and a small burn at one time flowed through the corner of land which was known as *Haimers* or *Hammers*. It is situated within a hundred yards of Ferry Haven. O.N. *Hamrar, pl. rocks. (N.).

JUBIGILL. *Wester* and *Easter Jubigill*, small ravines east of John o' Groat's. O.N. *Djúpa-gil, the deep gill. (N.).

HANG. A small bay. There are no overhanging rocks, or waterfall, to suggest O.N. *hangandi*. At the base of the surrounding cliffs there is a grass flat called "Ha' Green," about twenty-five yards wide and four feet above high-water level, suitable for a fold. ? G. *an Fhang (pronounced *ang*), the fold; or G. *Buaile-, or *Faich-Theangaidh, fold, or green of the point, *an Teanga (see next below). "Ha' Green" takes its name from the adjoining Ha' of Duncansby.

POINT O' HANG. A reef of rocks below the mill of John o' Groat's.

FULLIGEO. Often full of rotten seaweed. O.N. *Fúlagjá, foul geo.

STOBIE'S HOLE. A cave near Scarfskerry Point frequented by tinkers. Cf. O.N. *stobbi*, *stubbi*, *stubbr*, a stub, stump or block; also a nickname. *Stubba-hola.

SEATER. In Pont's map, 1638, *Setre*. O.N. *setr*, a residence, seat, *sætr*, mountain pasture. (N.).

STEMSTER. In 1674, *Stembuster* (Groat charter); 1683 (Valued Rent Roll), *STAIMSTER*; 1768, *Stempster*. A farm-steading near John o' Groat's. There is a green mound (divided from the stead by a deep gully, through which a burn runs) said to cover the ruins of an ancient keep or stronghold belonging to one of the earls of Orkney who kept a governor residing there. The *Orkneyinga Saga* states that Ólafr Hrólfsson (father of Sveinn Asleifarson) had the *yfirsókn*, wardship of Dungalsboer, in 1135. A *stein-kastali* is mentioned in Orkney in 1148, as an unusual building compared with the usual wooden houses. O.N. *Stein-bústaðr. The Rev. D. Beaton states that all the places called Stemster in Caithness, known to him, occur where there are or were standing stones. The name would, therefore,

be *Steins-bústaðr, 'farm of the standing stones,' like Steins-nes, now Stennes in Orkney.

HUNA. A crofting township two miles west from John o' Groat's, situated at the foot of the Mool Hill. Bordered on the west side by the burn of Huna, and on the east by the Ness of Huna, a small crest-like peninsula which terminates in a beach. On Huna links are the remains of a Picts' village and several burial cairns. It is supposed to be the burial place of earl Hlōðver, who, the saga states, was buried at Hofn in Katanes, about 975. The haven of Huna is a sandy beach. O.N. *hofn* > *ham* in Orkney and Shetland, and there is a *Ham* in Dunnet adjoining an earth-house. Myrkkol, now Murkle, where Hlōðver's brother, earl Arnfinnr, lived, is much nearer Ham than Huna. In Caithness charter, 1574, *Hwnaye*; 1777, *Houna*. Cf. *Huney* in Shetland, O.N. *Húna-ey*, the island of a man Húni. O.N. **Húna-á*, the burn of Húni. Cosmo Innes in *Orig. Par. Scot.* suggested, "Huna appears to be the Hofn where earl Hlodver was buried"—a suggestion which apparently arose from an impossible derivation.

SCARFSKERRY POINT. East of Huna, a common resting place for cormorants. O.N. **Skarfa-sker*.

MOOL HILL. Between Huna and John o' Groat's. From the east end of the Pentland Firth it looks like a promontory which would indicate a derivation from O.N. *múli*, an animal's snout, in place-names also meaning a rounded hill especially on a promontory. (A.).

TRESDALE. A low lying stretch of ground which might be termed a valley, strath or dale. Near Tresdale is Trooskerry, traditionally known as a place where the trolls held high revelry. ? O.N. **Þurs-dalr* > Trusdale.

CANISBAY TOWNSHIP AND DISTRICT.

CANISBAY. The township on the shore of the Pentland Firth. For derivation see notes under Canisbay Parish.

QUOYS. Quoys of Canisbay. O.N. *Kvíar, enclosures or pens. (N.).

NISS, or NESS OF QUOYS. The point opposite the farm of Quoys. O.N. *Nes, or *Kvía-nes.

LYREQUOY WELL. Below Kirkstyle. O.N. *Leir-kví, clay quoy. (N.).

OLD DISTILLERY WELL. The distillery has long since been out of existence.

KIRKSTYLE. The farm beside the church.

KIRK OF CANISBAY. Early site dedicated to St. Drostan.

CLAY POTTS. West of Canisbay, given in the map of the soil of Caithness attached to Henderson's *Caithness Agriculture*, 1812.

WEST CANISBAY HOUSE.

SCAABANK. A small sandy channel below Canisbay church. Several large boulders form one side. Often full of sea-weed. O.N. *Skagi, a low ness, probably the name of the adjoining ness, hence *Skaga-bakki, the bank of the ness.

SLAEAL, also SLAYEL. A narrow inlet quite close to Scaabank always covered with green slimy weed. O.N. *Slý-áll, slimy seaweed channel.

SUEMEYL. Given in Cary's map, 1805, lying to west of Canisbay. Not identified.

WARSE. There is a burn-mouth below Warse. Old forms: *Warrs*, *Warss*, *Warres*; *Warris*, 1574. One of the earliest possessions of the Groats. O.N. *Ár-óss, burn-mouth. In Shetland *Woros*, etc.

HAA O' WARSE. The ancient hall of the Groats of Warse.

SMIDDYS or SMYDDIES. A place-name associated with Warse, in Mey charters, 1574, also part of the Groat

lands. O.N. *Smiðjur, smithies. Shetland names : *Smidja(s)*, de *Smis*, de *Smitaps*, i.e. O.N. *smiðju-toptir.

FOWLTAIL or FOOLTAIL. Locally called *Fooltel*, adjacent to Warse, also Groat lands.

PYPER'S CROFT. Associated with Warse, Smyddies and Foultail, in old charters of the Groats. Location doubtful. There was a family of pipers in a neighbouring croft within the last century, but this name goes back to the 16th century. There was a traditional Pyper's Croft near the Haa of Duncansby and another adjacent to Wick Burgh.

GILLS AND MEY.

GILLS, GILLS BAY, GILLS HAVEN, UPPER and LOWER GILLS. O.N. *GIL, n. sing. and pl., a small narrow glen. (N.).

HAA O' GILLS. The hall or chief house, the residence of the laird.

SOE-SKERRY. O.N. *Sjó-skerry, sea skerry.

THOMAS PEELS ROUGH. Locally called "Tammies Peel." O.N. *Þambar-polls-hróf, boat-shed of Þomb's pool or creek; *rough*, may also be O.N. *rófa*, applied to a reef or point. O.N. þomb, gen. þambar, (1) a bow-string, and so applied to place-names, probably meaning out-stretched. Iceland, Þambar-vellir, -dalr; Shetland, *Tommaland*s, etc.; (2) a nickname, now "Tomma." This name probably means Þomb's creek's boat-shed. Þambar-polls-hróf > *Tamma* + *s peel's hróf*, and the creek itself would be *Þambar-pollr, "Tammies Peel."

DEUBIE GILL. *Bigill*, 1662; *Jubigill*, 1685. O.N. *Djúpa-gil, deep glen. (N.).

SHEAVIE GILLS. Unlevel, up and down ground. O.N. þýfi, n., uneven ground, cf. þýfi-teigr, a rough paddock, hence O.N. *Þýfi-gil, pl. uneven gills. As in Shetland, þý > *shu*.

PIRLY CRAIG. ? Gaelic *Pùirleag-chraig, craig-crest, or *Pùirleag na Creige, crest of the craig.

KEALY CRAIGS. Possibly a tautology, O.N. *Kilir, keels, applied to mountain range, and Gaelic, *Creagan.

HEAD OF CREES. The point at the east side of Scotland Haven. On the opposite side is St. John's Point, and near this the site of the old pre-Reformation chapel of St. John. Cf. Icelandic place-name *Krýsu-vík* = *Kross-vík*, holy-rood-wick. ? O.N. *Krýsu-Hqfði, or *Kross-Hqfði.

MEY. East and West Mey. Old forms: *Mai*, Matthew of Paris map, 1250; *May* in Ortelius, 1570; P. Kerr, 1599; Pont, 1638; Gordon, 1653; Mordon, 1695. J. B. Johnston says *Mey* is one of the forms of Gaelic *Magh*, a field or plain. In Watson's *Place-Names of Ross*, etc., p. 105, *Moy*, in Urray, is derived from Gaelic *à mhuaigh*, locative case of *magh*, a plain. In Shetland *Mawik*, *Maywick*, is derived by Jakobsen from Gaelic *magh*, like all the other Scots place-names *May*.

SCOTLAND HAVEN. (*Scotland's Haven*, O.S.M.). *Scatland Haven*, 1662, 1685. It is also called "Orkney Ferry" in the maps of the N.S.A., 1840, and Henderson's *Caithness Agriculture*, 1812; but the old ferry to Orkney was from Duncansby.¹

SCOOR BERRY. O.N. *Skuru-berg, score rock.

¹ That this haven was called "Scotland Haven" (e.g. because it was one of the nearest landing places in Scotland from Orkney), seems unlikely; and, as the haven is surrounded by uncultivated land which was exempt from *skatt*; it cannot be "Scatland," i.e. *Skattland*. On the east side of the haven is the head of Crees (?Krysu-hqfði, Holy-rood Head), and on the west, St. John's Point with the site of a chapel in a remarkable enclosure of some ten acres at the outer extremity of the point, formed by a deep trench fifty feet broad cut right across the promontory, with a rampart about ten feet high along the outer side of the trench. With this enclosure cf. G. *lann*, locative *lainn*, an enclosure, W. *llan*, O.W. *lann*, area, church; and G. *sgot*, a plot of ground, a small detached croft; or G. *sgod* (derived from O.N. *skaut*), the corner of a square sheet, applicable to the triangular shape of the enclosure. G. *Sgot-, or *Sgod-lainn. A. W. J.

- BLAE GEO. O.N. *Blá-gjá, blue geo.
- FA'EN CRAIG. A geo with overhanging rocks and falling stones.
- BALE GEO. O.N. *BALA-GJÁ, geo of the grassy bank.
- RED HEAD. O.N. *Rauði-hqfði.
- BARBERRY HEAD. O.N. *Bar-berg hqfði, needle-rock head.
- WINDY GEO. O.N. *Vind-gjá.
- BOAT GEO. O.N. *Bát-gjá, boat geo.
- MALLIE GEO. O.N. *Mala-gjá, pebble-beach geo.
G. *Mal, or Mol a' Geòdha, pebble beach of the geo.
- BLACKENBERRY. A black point of rock with one deep water face. ? O.N. *Svarta-, or Blakka-berg.
- ROCKS O' GIRSAL. Also called Girsal. A stack or clett. O.N. Gýgjar-súla, witch's pillar.
- FAS BERRY. O.N. *Fasa-berg, the rock of Fasi.
- LONG GEO. O.N. *Langa-gjá.
- BRAES O' GERSTAL. Grassy braes sloping down to a sandy beach. O.N. *Gerðis-stoðull, enclosure for milking cows. *Stoðull* > *støl* in Shetland.
- MEALIN TANG. An oval-shaped boulder. G. *Meall na Teanga, lump of the point.
- FULLIGEO. Full of rotten sea-weed. See *Fulligeo*, Duncansby.
- LIATH SKERRY. A fishing-place for lythe. See *Lyberry*, Freswick.
- MEN O' MEY. A tidal current, or bore, at the west entrance of the Pentland Firth, commonly called "The Men of Mey," or "The Merry Men of Mey."
- ST. JOHN'S POINT. Named after an old chapel in the neighbourhood dedicated to St. John. See *next below*.
- CHAPEL OF ST. ARDOCH. This chapel is mentioned in Canisbay Kirk Session Register. Ardoch is probably Gaelic *ardach*, eminence, (St. John's Point) as seen from the sea. Why it received "St." is a

problem, unless the natives transferred it from St. John to the place-name which was probably much older than St. John's Point. (D.B.).

HUNSPOW. Name of a farm. O.N. *Hunds-pollr, dog's pool.

BARROGIL CASTLE. Originally called Castle of Mey, or House of Mey. Near by is the site of an ancient burial cairn or barrow. The gill would come down the burnside to Fulligeo, hence there would be the barrow and gill adjoining. O.N. *Borgar-gil, the gill of the borg.

BERRIEDALE ARMS. Opened when the shipment of flagstones was taking place at Philips Harbour. O.N. *Berg-dalr, rocky ground dale. In Shetland O.N. *berg* > *berri*.

PHILIPS HARBOUR. Named after Louisa Philips, daughter of Sir George Philips and wife of James 14th earl of Caithness. Formerly "Wester Haven."

WESTER HAVEN. The haven of Mey. There is also an Easter Haven.

TROWS GEO. O.N. *Þursa-gjá, trolls geo; in Shetland Trussegeo, in which *trus* is the metathesis of *turs*; or O.N. Tros-gjá, geo of refuse, cf. *Trosvík* in Shetland.

TANG HEAD. O.N. *Tanga-hofði; *tangi*, a spit of land running out into the sea. (N.).

REDCASTLE. A geo with red sandstone cliffs and a block of red sandstone detached from the cliff. There is a tradition that there was a building at the inner end of the geo which collapsed and fell during a night of festivity held inside. O.N. *Rauði Kastali; G. *Caisteal ruadh.

HARROW. Near Barrogil Castle. Probably O.N. *Hǫrgr, a heathen place of worship. (J.S.). Cf. Gaelic, *Aroch, a hamlet or dwelling.

SCORRIE MOSS. O.N. *Skorra-mosi, the pie (bird) moss.

- EBBS GEO. O.N. *Fjǫru-gjá.
 JUMPAG. A hillock facing the sea. Cf. G. *tiompan*, a one-sided *tom*, or *toman*, diminutive of *tom*, a hillock. (Watson, lxxv.).
 WATTY'S CRAIG. O.N. *Vatns-(craig), water craig.
 HASTY LOUP. A detached rock with a space of water between it and the shore. There are several "loup" along the coast. O.N. *Hesta-hlaup, horse leap. This rock, like many others, may have been called 'The Horse of' (the name of the adjoining place).
 GREEN GEO. O.N. *Grœna-gjá.
 ROTTEN GEO. ?O.N. *Hrotna-gjá, geo of ember geese.
 TREE GEO. O.N. *Tré-gjá, driftwood geo.
 GEO SETTER. O.N. *Gjá-sætr.
 GEO O' BEDSDALE O.N. *Gjá-beitis-dals, geo of the pasturedale. But cf. Norse *bedja*, a fold for animals, O.N. **beðja*; **Beðjar*-, or **Beðja-dalr*, dale of the fold or folds, with English possessive *s* for O.N. *a* or *ar*.
 HOW SKERRY. A rocky point on the foreshore in a line northwards from an old mound. O.N. *Haugsker, mound's skerry.
 BLACK GEO. O.N. *Svarta-gjá.
 PEARL GEO. ?N. *Perlu-gjá, pearl geo. Cf. *Pirly Craig* in Gills.

BRABSTER, SLICKLY AND INLAND DISTRICT.

- BRABSTER. O.N. *Breiðabólstaðr, or Breiðabústaðr, broad farm.
 BRABSTERMIRE. O.N. *Breiðabólstaðar-mýrr, broad-farm mire.
 CRAIGHILL. A low hill in Brabster district with a craig at one side.
 BATTENS O' BRABSTER. O.N. *Beitin, or Beitinar, the pastures, from *beit*, f., or *beiti*, n. *Beitin-Breiðabústaðar.

SHONS OF BRABSTER. O.N. *Tjarnir Breiðabústaðar, the tarns of B.

THOMSON'S FIELD. Between Gills and Brabster.

STROUPSTER. *Stroubuster*, 1574. O.N. *Stór-bústaðr, the big farm, *stór* > *stró*.

FIELDS OF BRABSTER. There were 6 tenants in 1697 (Rental). O.N. *Foldir Breiðabústaðar, the grass fields of B. Cf. *Foldir* in Iceland and Shetland.

SCHOOLERY. *Skilarie*, 1664; *Schoolary*, *Scoullary* (rental), 1697. O.N. *Skúla-erg, the shealing of Skúli. Earl Skúli was killed in battle *í Dǫlum á Katanesi* c. 975.

SLICKLY. *Slickly*, *Sleiklie* (rental), 1697. O.N. *Slakka-hlið, the slope of the *slakki*, a sinking in the ground, or hill-slope.

TOFTTRANALD. O.N. *Toft-Rognvalds, Ronald's toft.

STONEYHILL. O.N. *Stein-hóll, -hváll, -hvoll, stone hill.

RIGIFA, HILL OF RIGIFA. *Rigifa*, 1662; *Rogifa*, 1685. O.N. *Hryggjar-fjall, ridge hill.

NISSETTER. O.N. *Neðsta-setr, lowest setr, which, in Shetland > *Nestasettar* > *Nisseter*.

PHILIPS MAINS. Originally *Nissetter*. Renamed after Louisa Philips, wife of the 14th earl of Caithness.

GROTTESTOFT MOSS. If *Grott* is not a personal name, then ? O.N. *Grjótunnar-toftar-mosi, the moss or moorland of the giant's toft. Or O.N. *grjót*, n., stones, stony ground, in compounds *grjót*-, *Grjót-toftar-mosi, *Grjóts-toftar-mosi.

CRACKERSFIELD. Green fields in the moor between Brabster and Mey, at one time reclaimed into seven crofts, but now back to sheep-grazing. It is not associated in any way with the crow, O.N. *kráki*, and cannot, therefore, be *kráka-fold*.¹

¹ Cf. O.N. *kraki*, a, m. a palisade, pale or stake, and the nickname for a tall thin man. *Kraka-fold, or -*vǫllr*, field of stakes. The only field of stakes in Caithness, mentioned in the Saga, is the *haslaðr vǫllr* in *Skíða-mýrr*. Circa 976, earl Ljótr fought earl Magbjóðr at *Skíða-mýrr*; and c. 980, *Finnleikr Skota-jarl haslaði Sigurði vǫll á Skíða-mýri*: *Finnleik*

HOLLAND MEY, or MAIK. *Hole o' Mey* (Pont), 1638; *Holland Mai*, 1662. Was at one time large commons, but now a farm. "Hollands," once a local name for "commons." The land is raised but not high in the sense of a hill. There is a ruin of an old tower in one field. Mey, or Maik, G. *magh*, a plain, O.Ir. *mag*. *Holland* may be O.N. *háland*, high land, which would be applicable to the hill commons, or *hallandi*, a slope, declivity.

STROMA.

STROMA. O.N. *Straumey*, stream island, *Orkneyinga Saga*; *Stroem Oy* (Pont), 1638; *Stromay* (Sasine), 1681.

CULLIEGEO. ON. *Kolla-gjá, knoll geo.

HIMRAL. O.N. *Humar-áll, lobster channel. (N.).

LARGUOY. O.N. *Leir-kví, clay quoy. (N.).

OVERTOWN. O.N. *Øfra-tún.

NETHERTOWN. *Neithertoun*, *Nethirtown*, 1681; *Neather-ton*, 1719. O.N. *Neðra-tún, lower *tún*. (N.). In a charter of 1687 part of it was bounded by the dyke of Tofts on the S., the sea on the E. and N., and the burn of Ramigo on the W. Ramigo, O.N. *Hrafna-gjá (pronounced *ramna*), ravens' geo.

TREESGEO. O.N. *Tré-gjá, driftwood geo: usually *tre-gjá*, but possibly *Trjá-gjá, trees' geo.

SWELKIE. A dangerous tidal whirlpool off the point of Stroma. O.N. *Svelgr*, mentioned in *Orkneyinga* and *Hákonar sagas*. The myth about the magic quern, *Grotti*, which grinds salt to make the sea salt, at the bottom of this *Svelgr*, is too well known to be repeated here. See *Saga-Book*, Vol. VII., and *Old-Lore Miscellany*, Vol. III., and *Snorra Edda*.

staked out a pitched battle-field for Sigurd at Skíða-mýrr. O.N. *hasla* (-) *voll*, to stake out (for someone) a field with four hasel stakes for a pitched battle. Earl Sigurd's famous *merki*, banner, bearing the magic *hrafn*, or *krákr*, was first unfurled here. Skíða-mýrr has been unaccountably identified as Skitten! It may be derived from *skíði*, a, m., a man's name. Also cf. G.*Cróc-ar, place of branching (pastures). A. W. J.

PUNNIE. A house in the rock once used for smuggling, and still intact. O.E. *Pund, with dim. *ie*, a small fold or pound.

THE CASTLE OF MASTIK or MESTAG. A detached stack N.W. of Mell Head. On the top are the ruins of what is said to have been the residence of a pirate. There was once a draw-bridge between the stack and the adjoining cliff. Probably called 'Mey Stack,' as it stands across the Firth from Mey. (A.). O.N. *Má-stakkr, sea-mews' stack.

MELL HEAD. A round lumpy promontary. O.N. *Múla-hqfði, ness head.

LANGATON POINT. A long point at the north, nearest the Swelchie. Usually called Langa-tan. O.N. *Langi-tangi, long point, with *Point* as a *tautology*.

THE GLOUP. O.N. *Gloppan, the gloup.

BARNEY'S GEO. O.N. *Bjarna-gjá, the geo of Bjarni.

SCARFSKERRY. O.N. *Skarfa-sker.

RED HEAD. O.N. *Rauði-hqfði. G. Ceann Dearg, red head. (*Proceeds. S.A. Scot.*, 1908, p. 88).

DUTHIE GEO. G. *Dubh-gheòdh, black geo.

BUTTON GEO. O.N. *Botn-gjá, from *botn*, head of a bay, etc.

BROAD GEO. O.N. *Breiða-gjá.

MILL GEO. O.N. *Mylnu-gjá.

FALLA GEO. O.N. *Fella-gjá, geo of the fell.

LAMIECLETT. A long point with a deep geo at one side and the other side sloping down to the sea. Exposed to the continuous beating of the west sea. O.N. *Lamba-klett, klett of Lambi. ? O.N. *Hlamma-klett, noisy clett, from *hlamm* = glam, m. noise (Fritzner).

GEIRIECLETT. O.N. *Geira-klett, klett of the gore.

SCAR CRAGGAN. ? Gaelic, *Sgor, or Sgòr Chragan, notched crags. The Rev. D. Beaton points out

that *sgòr* sometimes means a tail in the sea, a concealed rock jutting into the sea.

SANDY GEO. O.N. *Sand-gjá.

RED GEO. O.N. *Rauða-gjá.

HORSE GEO. O.N. *Hrossa-gjá.

UPPERTON. O.N. *Øfra-tún, English *upper* substituted for *øfra*.

GEO OF BAGWA. A little geo with sloping bank. O.N. *Bakka-vágr, bank bay, with 'geo of' as a tautology. In some Shetland and Norwegian place-names *kk* > *g*.

SGEIR GUT. O.N. *Sker-gat, or -gøt, skerry hole or holes. Or Gaelic *Sgeir-ghòt, skerry hole, or hole of the skerry. O.N. *gat*, a hole, has been borrowed into Gaelic as *gòt*, in place-names in Tarbat.

MOW SKERRY. O.N. *Mjó-sker, narrow skerry, or *Má-sker, sea-mews' skerry.

FULLIGEO. See *Fulligeo* in Mey.

FINNIES HAVEN. An old landing-place facing Orkney. Near by are the remains of early settlement and burial place. O.N. *Finns-höfn, Finn's haven. The modern *haven* is suggestive of an addition to an old name, such as *Finn-nes, ness of the Finns, probably associated with the adjoining earth-works.

SGEIR BHAN. Gaelic, white skerry.

HAMMER. A sharp projecting rock. O.N. *Hamarr.

SAVIN SKERRIES. Seven skerries. O.N. *Sjau-sker.

TARRY BERRY. A rock covered with sea-weed, with deep waters around, used as a fishing rock. O.N. *Þara-berg.

CLETTOG. A rock surrounded by the sea at high tide. O.N. *Klett, and G. diminutive *ag*. Or G. *Cleitag, small clett; a mas. noun with a fem. termination, which occurs in old names, *e.g.* *Lìanaig*, in Urquhart. (Watson, pp. xxxvi., 117).

GEO OF FLENDIE CLETT. A landing-place for boats. The stack is of thin slaty formation. Cf. Norse *flindra*, a splinter of stone, a flinder.

GEO OF GOUGAN. A long geo with water in it and full of foam in stormy weather. In summer it is a mooring place for boats. ? O.N. *Gjá-gin, geo mouth. Or *Gaukanna gjá, geo of the cuckoos, or green sand-pipers or snipe (*hrossa-gaukar*).

CORBIE TUAG. O.N. *Korpa-þúfa, ravens' mound; *þúfa* > *tua* with G. diminutive -ag added.

THE KIRK OF STARA, and THE KIRK OF OLD SGOIL. Mentioned in Macfarlane's *Geographical Collections*, cannot now be identified.

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Edited by A. W. JOHNSTON.

II.

(*Continued from p. 45 ante*).

SUNDAY, June 15th. We rose later and, whilst at breakfast, the bell, for there is but one in all the town [Lerwick], sounded for church. As none of us felt inclined to witness the Scotch forms of worship, we walked out to the north of the town, and collected a great number of coleopterous insects, none of which, however, appeared to be very rare. The ground was covered with the beautiful blue flowers of the *scilla verna*, a plant which at this season of the year has long withered in more southern climes. The sweet-smelling

—ILLUSTRATING—
PLACE - NAMES
BY - JOHN - MOWAT.

PARISH BOUNDARY

BOATS

MEN OF MEY

THE SOON

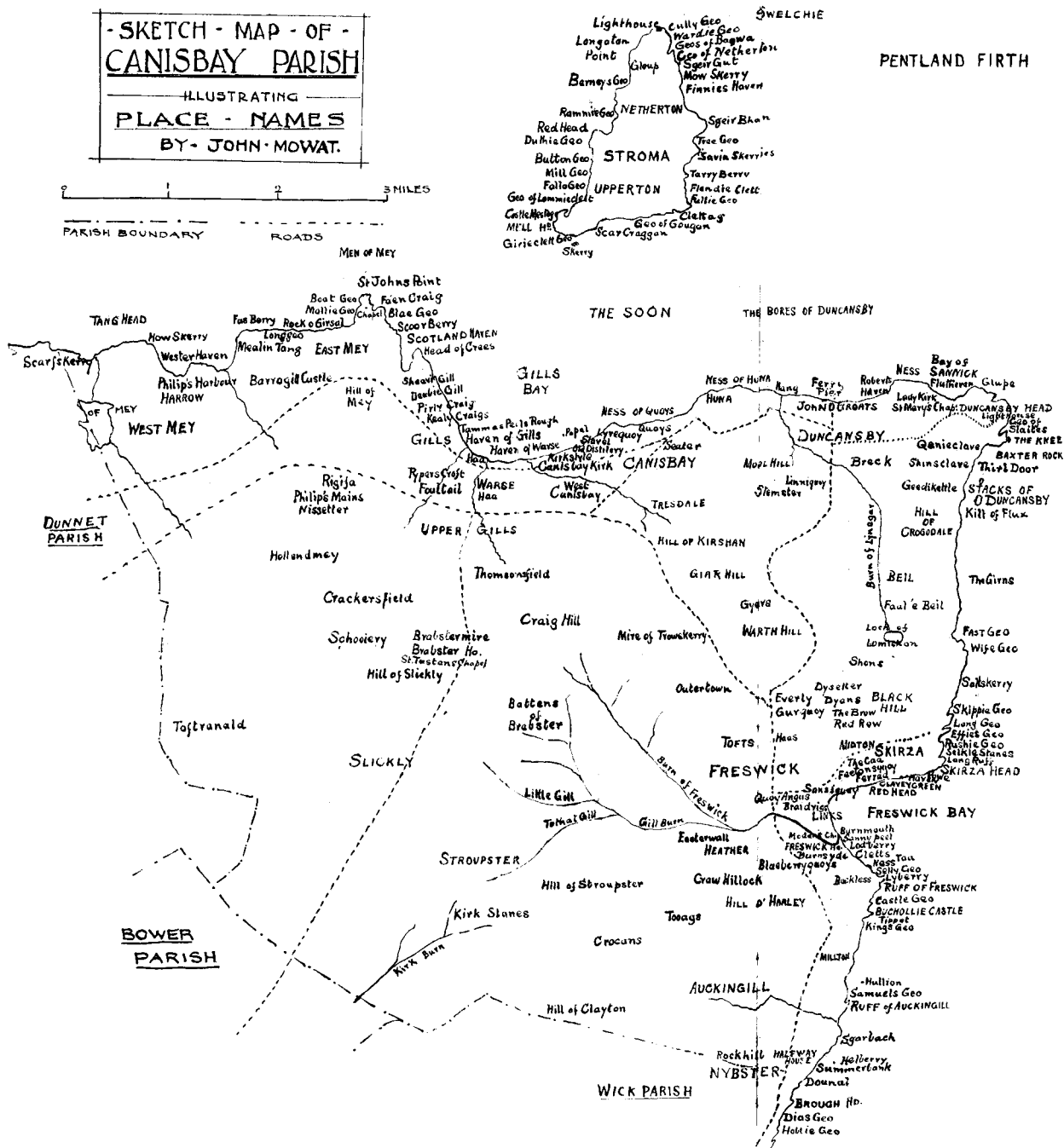
THE BORES OF DUNCANSBY

PENTLAND FIRTH

DUNNET
PARISH

BOWER
PARISH

WICK PARISH



thyme was abundant and the marshy grounds were covered with the graceful white tufts of the cotton grass. A pair of hoarse croaking ravens flew over our head, and the hooded crow sate leisurely on the bare rocks near the shore. Returning towards the town, we stopped to inspect the interior of a Shetland water-mill. The mill ¹

“ was signified by a low shed of unhewn stones that stretched across a diminutive streamlet, over which it was possible in many places to stride; compared indeed with a water-mill of Scotland or England, the grinding apparatus of Shetland seemed designed for a race of pigmies. The millstones are commonly formed of a micaceous gneiss, being from 30 to 36 inches in diameter. Under the frame-work by which they are supported, is a sort of horizontal wheel, of the same diameter as the millstones named a *tirl*, which consists of a stout cylindrical post of wood, about 4 feet in length, into which are mortised twelve small float-boards, placed in a slanting direction or at an oblique angle. It has a pivot at its under end, which runs on a hollowed iron plate, fixed on a beam. A strong iron spindle attached to the upper end of the tirl, passes through a hole in the under millstone, and is firmly wedged in the upper one. A trough conducts the water that falls from the hill upon the feathers of the tirl, at an inclination of 40° or 45°, which, giving motion to the upper millstone, turns it slowly round. To the hopper that surmounts the upper millstone, there is a log of wood fastened, which, striking upon the uneven upper surface of the stone, shakes this repository for the corn and makes it come out, whilst too quick an escape is checked by a device for lessening the size of the aperture. But sometimes there is no hopper at all, and a man patiently feeds the mill with his hand.” (Hibbert’s *Description of the Shetland Islands*, 1822, p. 466 and plate 6).

The flour or meal, which I can assert from personal experience to be freely mixed with micaceous and quartzose particles, is received into a receptacle placed below, and this is often nothing but a cassie or straw basket, of good native manufacture. *Captain Preston, the author of an old nautical chart of Shetland, was, during his detention on this coast [by shipwreck], shewn a Shetland mill, and was, at the same time, informed that it had been for many years a source of dispute between two landed proprietors. The Englishman

¹ See illustrations *Miscellany* I., p. 113, II., pp. 75, 76.

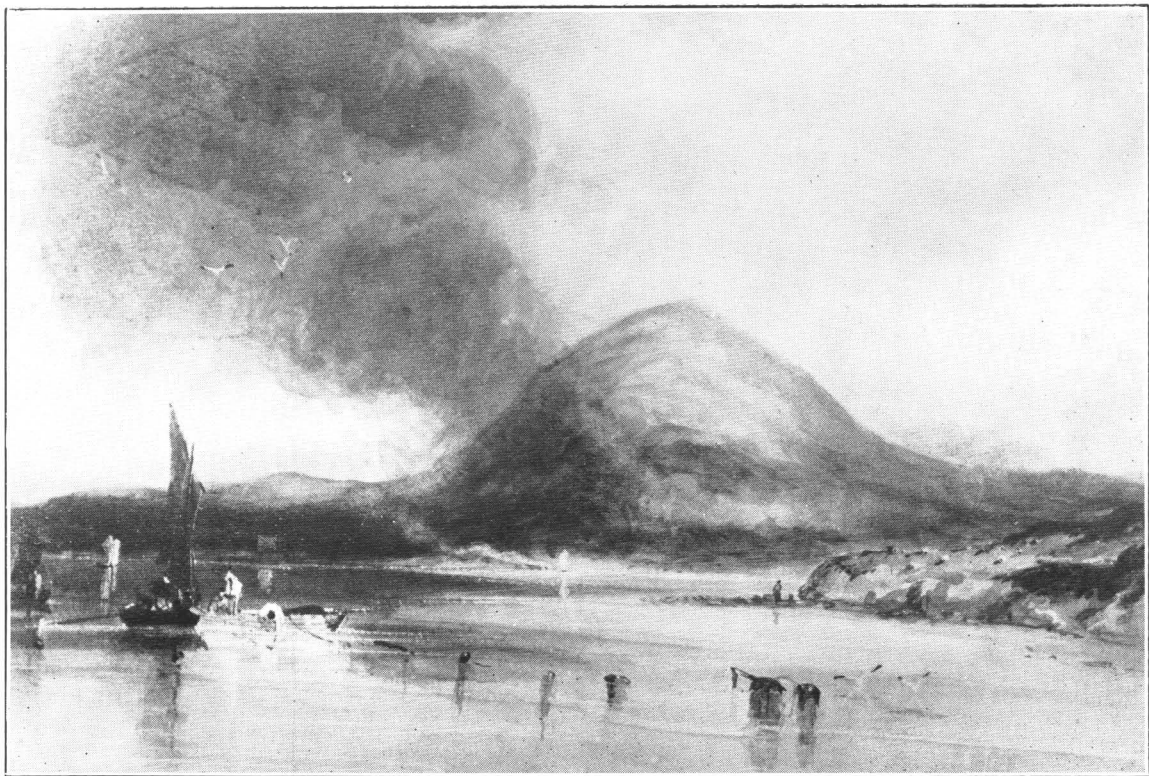
looked at his cicerone with surprise, and significantly eyeing the object of contention, replied with a sneer: "I can certainly see [conceive of] no dispute which such a subject [structure] ought to have reasonably occasioned—but whether it is a mill or no."*

* Captain Preston . . . or no,* copied from Hibbert, p. 466.

The quern, or hand-mill, which was formerly very common in Scotland, is still to be found on the banks of Gloup Voe, and in other equally remote districts of Hialtlandia.

At dinner we were agreeably surprised by the entrance of a large rhubarb tart, far exceeding in dimensions the tarts of the south and certainly not falling short of them in excellence. We then crossed Bressay Sound to visit Mr. and Mrs. Mouat at Gardie, on the island of Bressay, opposite to Lerwick. Mrs. Mouat met us at the door, but did not at first recognise me, but memory, however, soon came to her aid, and we were courteously invited to tea. The rest of the household were attending divine service at Bressay Kirk, distant about a mile from Gardie, and we soon saw them returning through the pleasant green fields into which Mr. Mouat has laid out this part of the island. We were joyfully welcomed back then to the isles of the north, and I enjoyed a hearty laugh over by-gone times with Miss Eliza Cameron, who had been a fellow sufferer with me in the long weary quarantine I passed through two years ago in this harbour.¹ After tea we walked in the garden, which was really kept in beautiful order, though all exertions had proved unavailing to raise the trees above the height of the garden wall, which was ten or twelve feet from the ground. The tulips here were in the greatest profusion, and in the hothouse was an excellent shew of grapes, and some peach trees bearing a very slender crop. Melons are raised in abundance under frames as in England. During the summer

¹ See *Miscellany*, Vol. III., 159.



VIEW FROM THE ANCHORAGE IN THE SOUND OF BRESSAY, SHETLAND.

From the original drawing by G. C. Atkinson (coloured by one of the Richardson brothers) in his MS. "Excursion to the Shetland Islands," in 1832. In the possession of M. H. Atkinson, Newcastle-on-Tyne, in 1914.

months, when the harbour is crowded with foreign vessels, the Dutch sailors frequently come to walk in this garden, and readily admitted to enjoy this privilege. Nothing is ever injured here by these quiet inoffensive foreigners, whilst all English sailors are included without reserve and for the most obvious reasons. Surely, I trust, the time is not far distant when this disgraceful stain upon our national character will be removed.

During our visit to Gardie, Proctor,¹ who had accompanied us across the Sound, walked about the island and reported on his return that he had seen a species of linnet which was quite unknown to him. We returned home about 10 p.m. and then walked out to see the sun set beyond the fort, and as we sauntered along the shore we procured some beautiful moths. Some of these, I found on my return to Scotland, were rare and others had not been known to inhabit such high northern latitudes. As the weather appeared to promise well, we resolved to visit, the next morning, the island of Bressay [Noss] and to proceed thither in a boat if the wind was fair.

Monday, June 16th. At seven o'clock we started in high spirits for the island of Noss, but the wind was east and the sea was consequently too heavy to allow of our going thither in a boat. We determined, therefore, to walk over the island of Bressay, and cross the narrow sound to Noss, and take what shooting we could get by the way. We landed at a small geo near the church of Bressay, and as soon as we got on shore, we loaded our guns and put ourselves in order for the day. Our engines of destruction were soon called into play. Scarcely had we turned our steps inland, when Proctor discovered a swift (*Cypselus*) chasing his prey around the head of the inlet. Farther to the south this poor wretch might have flown on unmolested, but

¹ See p. 37.

in Shetland the swift is a bird that is seldom or never seen. Edmondston does not even mention it in his catalogue of the birds of Shetland, nor did I once observe it during my former visit to these islands. Crack! Crack! Bang! Bang! away went all our barrels in succession, and away wheeled the unscathed swift caring as little for our artillery as for a child's pop-gun. A charm seem to shield the life of this lonely wanderer from the south. At that time I did not consider myself a very bad shot, so that my vanity as well as my acquisitiveness stimulated me to every exertion. But it was all in vain, and tired out, at length I left our swift to the chasing of others and chased him myself no more. He afterwards flew within ten yards of my head, but I never raised my gun, for I felt convinced that I could not hit him. I must not forget that we were this day accompanied by Peter Williamson, the person with whom we lodged in Lerwick, and in true Lerwick fashion, he shut up his shop for the day, and trudged away with us up to the hills, carrying a huge gun, or rather musket, of antique fashion. "Slow and sure" should have been the name of this ancient weapon, for slow enough it was in the explosion, and sure enough too, if you but aimed well, to carry many feet wide of the mark. Proctor, last night, observed a house-martin flying near Lerwick, but the common swallow is here merely a straggler. Having invaded the school, and carried off one of the stoutest boys to be the carrier of my rifle, we struck straight across the island in the direction of Noss. On our way we observed many pairs of the linnets which Proctor had seen yesterday. They evidently had their nests in the heather, but though we searched with diligence we were unable to discover them. I have no doubt of their being nothing but the mountain linnet, which is at certain seasons of the year so abundant in Northumberland. On a loch about the middle of the island we saw

a considerable number of the herring-gulls and lesser black-backed gulls, with two or three pairs of Richardson's skua (in reality the true *Lestris parasit*), at which Proctor fired without success. Such bad success was dispiriting enough, but I trusted we should improve ere the day be past. We moved on towards Noss island, by the side of a huge stone wall, the only work of man visible in our immediate neighbourhood. A solitary ring-dotterel flitted before us, and by his plaintive cries, only added to the desolation around. Thousands of the larger gulls flew over our heads winging their flight to the Holm of Noss to nestle in safety from the intrusion of man. A poor kittiwake too passed near us, carrying a fine fish in his bill, dreaming no doubt of the beautiful supper or luncheon he was bearing home to his *wife and family*. On a sudden, a cowardly herring-gull stooped and struck him with his wing violently on the back. The fish dropped from the bill of the kittiwake, but nothing daunted he caught it again after it had fallen a few yards. Again was he attacked by his ruthless persecutor, his screams were redoubled, but all in vain, he was too distant to receive our help, and who else was there to relieve him. At length, wearied out, he abandoned the object of contention, and the herring-gull, with a scream of delight, caught up the savoury morsel and wheeled off in triumph towards the island of Noss. But vengeance from a higher and mightier hand followed fast upon his track. An immense black-backed gull, in size, at least in spread of wing almost equal to an eagle, had calmly, from a great height, viewed the contest between the herring-gull and the kittiwake. As it was decided I turned my eyes towards the swabie, who now moved from his position aloft and followed the herring-gull like an arrow. His strength of wing enabled him soon to overtake the spoiler, who now turned round and with a frightened scream flew, nearly over our heads. The svart-bakar followed him

close but deigned not to strike so cowardly an adversary, he but pretended to do so, and the frightened robber yielded up his ill-gotten prey to one who had no better title to it than that of superior strength. The fish fell to the ground, and with a noble swoop, which an eagle might have envied, down came the svarbak to bear it off in triumph. Down he dashed, the fish was already in his maw, when Proctor, no doubt enraged at such tyranny, fired a heavy charge of buck-shot at this mighty autocrat. The pellets rattled like hail upon his thick feathers, frightening if not wounding him severely, for the distance was not less than 130 yards, and with a scream of pain and terror he dropped the fish, flapped his heavy wings, and made all sail at no great height from the ground away to the eastwards. As we came down to the banks of the narrow sound which separates the island of Bressay from that of Noss, the shrill pipe of the oyster-catcher resounded along the shore. Away went Proctor and Cholmely, the former wanted specimens, the latter wanted sport; and while the boat was getting ready at the ferry, they fired three or four times, yet scatheless flew the beautiful sea-pie over my head. With all my veneration for this persecuted bird, I could not resist firing in my turn, yet still unharmed he flew on, and I thought myself or else my gun assuredly bewitched. On a sudden it struck me that I was in the immediate neighbourhood of the veriest witch in all Shetland, and who assuredly, had she lived but a century ago, would have been sentenced like poor Marion Pardon to be "wyret til ane staike and brynt til deid."¹ I half expected as I looked round to see the old hag at her door muttering incantations dire against those who dared to trouble and massacre her familiar spirits. Like the Lapland witches so feelingly dwelt upon by old Knud Leems, Betty Yorston sells

¹In Hibbert's *Shetland*, 1822, p. 602: "wryt at ane stak, and brunt in ashes."

winds to the sailors, and many a crown has she received from the superstitious ship-captains as they touched at Bressay on their way to the Greenland seas. Oh, Betty Yorston! most dangerous witch art thou, hast thou forgotten the dinner of three half-boiled potatoes and a pint of whiskey that you gave to me two years ago?¹ for there you bewitched *me too*, and to this day I know not whether I walked or swam or sailed across Bressay Sound that night. Six glasses of whisky, unless the potion was drugged, indeed could never have produced such an effect upon a fasting man! At length our boat was ready, and we crossed the narrow sound, through which a strong tide continually runs, and raises a heavy sea in the very calmest weather. Here from the unsteady boat I was at length enabled to shoot with some effect, and several gulls and terns soon lay dead upon the water. As we jumped on shore I recognised, with an odd half-melancholy feeling, some rejected specimens which I had broken off here two years before. All the events of that day then crowded back upon my mind. I remembered my solitary walk to the summit of the Noup of Noss, and watching the heavy moist October clouds as they sailed over my head, and even the vague suspicions that I then felt, that the wind which for many days had kept every vessel prisoner in Bressay Sound, had changed or was about to veer to the east and that I should perhaps lose my passage. And this indeed very nearly happened, for the next morning I left Shetland, and as I then thought, for ever. The island of Noss is of very small extent but affords excellent pasturage for sheep. It formerly abounded in rabbits, which were still very numerous when I before visited this spot, but they are now nearly extirpated. The western side, opposite to Bressay, is low and sandy, while to the east it rises pretty suddenly to the height of 400 to 500 feet. From this altitude the

¹ See Vol. VIII., 191.

rock is cut sheer down into the sea, forming a hideous perpendicular precipice, covered with numberless sea-fowl. We walked up towards the Noup, or highest peak, and kept our course along the top of the cliffs of the northern side of the island, whilst Cholmely pursued with great vigour the unsuccessful chase of the oyster-catcher. For my part, I turned my steps towards the breeding place of Richardson's skuas, and following some of these birds pretty closely, I soon found myself surrounded by ten or a dozen pairs, screaming and stooping boldly at me, as if to drive away the intruder. I sat down upon the smooth turf to watch their manœuvres, which appeared to me most exquisitely beautiful and interesting. Their flight was in rapid jerks, but this unseemly motion was atoned for by the beauty of their slender forms and by the graceful spread of their fan-like tails. In colour this gull also differs considerably from others of the same genus. Most of the other gulls of the *Lestris* tribe have a good deal of white upon their plumage, this bird has frequently little or none, and the plaintive scream they utter, not unlike the mewing of a cat, is not the least remarkable of their peculiarities. I soon procured as many specimens as I required, and laid them out before me in good order on the grass, cleaning their feathers and stuffing their bills with tow to prevent the blood from oozing out upon the plumage.

Proctor soon came up; he had been very unsuccessful, and so at first was Cholmely, though now his jolly rubicund countenance shone like the sun, as he threw down three or four pair of parasitic gulls, and exclaimed, "There! old boy! beat that if you can." Snipes abounded here and were fat and luscious to the palate, they would have afforded good sport, had we been willing to spare time for such ignoble game. On the summit of the island of Noss is a small cairn of very modern date, having been erected a few years ago by

the gentlemen conducting the trigometrical survey of these islands. We ascended the Noup by its northern side, and at every step we saw deep gios or inlets, whose banks precipitous on every side were covered with long rows of guillemots and razor-bills. There they sate, closely huddled together, innumerable eggs lay apparently almost unnoticed at their feet, and a more booby stupid looking set of creatures never excited the risible faculties of man. Yet they were peaceable, let alone, looking birds, and would harm no one, like the Dutch burgomaster and his tobacco pipe, they only wished to be left to themselves. And we had no reason to wish otherwise, we thirsted not for their lives, for they are common enough on the English coast. I wish I could say the same of some poor green shags, whose isolated situation, as they stretched forth their long necks on some projecting ledge rendered too tempting a mark for the rifles to be resisted. I know not why the cormorant should be everywhere persecuted and condemned. True! it is not a bird of very beautiful or graceful appearance, yet it is harmless, though it is daring enough in the pursuit of its prey. The great black cormorant is indeed a hideous bird, and the poor green shag, though far more graceful in form and more beautiful in plumage, has shared the fate of its abhorred "congener." In what numbers do they congregate upon the low rocky islets around Shetland. There they may be seen in flocks of from two to four hundred, basking in the dim sunbeams when the weather is calm and serene, or when the waves beat wildly on the shore, these singular birds fly in long lines or files along the surface of the water, just topping the crests of the billows and rejoicing in the tumult around.

We ascended the Noup of Noss¹ by its northern side, by the edge of a tremendous precipice which grew more deep and powerful as we mounted higher. The face of

¹ See illustration facing p. 121.

the rock beneath us was covered with innumerable sea-birds, though from the crumbling state of the "banks" we could not in many places venture near enough to inspect them. Half-way up the Noup a peregrine falcon flew out from her eyrie, a foot or two below, and filled the air with her wild cries. In vain did I wait, lying down on the bare rock, for her return; she flew in wide circles over my head, always keeping out of gunshot, and screaming louder and louder, when I moved from my position. In a short time we all stood upon the summit of the Noup, and looked down upon the ocean five hundred feet below. At this distance the murmurs of the mighty sea were almost unheard, and the heavy rolling billows seemed but as tiny streaks of white upon the blue expanse of waters. Behind, to the west, the view is shut out by the island of Bressay, on whose southern extremity we could discern, even at this distance, some caves and arches, worn through and through by the action of the sea. What a wild discordance in air around us was here, to supply the loss of the "distant ocean's roar." The shrill screams of the peregrine falcon, which still circled high in air above our heads, clashed (I will not say mingled) with the hoarse croakings of the raven, and the still harsher gutturals of the black-backed gulls, which sailed some forty feet below and almost unconscious of our presence. Ever and anon some more aspiring bird would rise up from below and almost brush with his wings the muzzles of our guns, but, as soon as he became aware of so near a proximity to man, he fell back with a frightened scream beneath the shelter of the cliff. Here, as in Foulah, the lower ledges of this magnificent precipice are tenanted by the shags, razor-bills and guillemots, while the puffins, herring-gulls and lesser black-backed gulls occupy the upper portion of the cliff. The entire height is estimated at 484 feet above the level of the sea, which, though lower by 1,000 feet than the cliffs of Foulah,

presents from its great perpendicularity a most imposing effect.

Descending from hence, we soon arrived opposite the famous Holm of Noss, of which I have seen many representations, but not one the least like the original. All of them err in placing the Holm too insulated, and in making it at the same time much too high. The engraving in Hibbert's *Shetland* is the most faithful of any, though but a miserable specimen of the graver's art. The Holm, in fact, instead of projecting boldly into the sea, is rather encased among the surrounding rocks, yet between them there is a chasm of frightful depth. The herring-gulls and great black-backed gulls now hold undisputed possession of the Holm, for some malicious fool has cut the ropes on the landward side, and the remains of them were plainly to be seen hanging down the opposite rock. The expense of a new set of ropes is considerable, and it is not at present the intention of the owner, Mr. Mouat, of Garth, to replace them. These ropes, I am sorry to say, were found cut the day after two Englishmen had visited the island of Noss, and really I do not believe that any of the inhabitants would have been guilty of so mean an action. Everyone has heard of the cradle of Noss, and of the circumstances under which it was first slung across the gulf. A Foulah man, induced by the tempting offer of a cow, first accomplished the perilous undertaking. He climbed up by the north side of the Holm, carrying along with him two large stakes to fix in the ground at the summit, and from the moment he first set foot thereon the undivided empire of the gulls was at an end. But they enjoyed a terrible revenge. The daring rock-man refused to return by the rational mode of the basket, but insisted upon descending by the way that he came, and in the attempt, as might have been expected, he fell and was dashed to atoms. But the cradle was slung every year, and the Holm frequently

visited, sometimes to place a few sheep thereon to crop the rich rank herbage, or again for the sake of the eggs of the sea-fowl, and lastly by the bold and adventurous to prove the strength of their nerves. And not a few of the fair sex have "hung in midway air in the rough cradle of Noss." The rope left by the poor foolhardy fowler on the Holm served as an easy mode of ascent to others, who were then enabled to procure eggs and sea-fowl upon it, but it was some time before a contrivance was made to get it from the opposite cliff; this, too, was at length effected by throwing over a stone with a string attached to it, and by it drawing over a cord strong enough to bear a man; an improvement on this followed in the shape of a much stronger rope, doubled and carried over in parallel lines, this was firmly fixed to posts on the opposite sides, and a sort of cradle made to slide upon it, and by this means the tenant of Noss was enabled to graze his sheep upon the Holm, and enrich himself with the "plunder of its feathered inhabitants. The cradle was not slung to-day, but was lying on the grass on the main island; in form exactly like a small strong four-legged table, with large round holes through the legs for the rope to pass. This inverted table served both for the owner and a single sheep, who were then conveyed across the abyss" (G. C. Atkinson's MS. *Journal*, 1832).

(To be continued.)

Old-lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND

VOL. IX.

PART IV.

OCT., 1933.

NOTES.

FOULA LORE.—One fine morning when the Foula men came down to the shore, they found that a number of Finns had landed, and were lying asleep on the rocks below the Banks. The Foula men armed themselves with stones, and attacked the Finns with great fury. The Finns jumped up in alarm, and getting into their skins, plunged into the sea, leaving one of their number dead on the shore. They drew together in the sea, calling to each other and lamenting the death of their comrade, beating their breasts with their hands and enquiring of one another who it was that had been killed. One replied that it was ULGA-NA-MEIGA, the son of GEOGA, and she was a widow and had lost her only son.

Told me by Mr. John Spence, Whalsay, who heard it from an old Foula woman, in whose family the story had come down for many generations.—R. STUART BRUCE.

WHALSAY LORE.—Mr. D. J. Williamson, J.P., Whalsay (December, 1932), gives me the following:—

KOMA, KOMA, HESTA KOMA,

SAE SKALDU EKKA SKAM,

FILAL-DI-RAL DE KOERA. [?KURIN=COW.]

LANG NAANIE, STRIPPIT NAANIE,

SAE KOM HEUR MI SHOLMA.

Is this a call to beasts? "Hesta" and "Sholma" are familiar.—R. STUART BRUCE.

In *Miscellany* Vol. IX., Part II., p. 74, "W.W.R." gives us something of interest.

"Da mushie wi' da rotter kop" is obviously the girl (MEISJE), with the red head.

It would be interesting to have the tune, and to know from what part of Shetland the lines come.—R. STUART BRUCE.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY, designed partly on Regional lines and partly on Historical principles, and containing all the Scottish words known to be in use or to have been in use since c. 1700. Edited by William Grant, M.A., LL.D. Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association. Vol. I., Part II.

This monumental work is making headway, and the favourable impression formed in perusing the first part is increased in reading this one. A perusal of a work like this produces certain effects on the mind of the reader, such as a sense of admiration for the immense labour involved and the skill in marshalling the material collected from all quarters—some of the quotations are from local papers as late as 1931. It has also the effect of showing how little one knows of "braid Scots." The proof-reading is done with the greatest care—there may be some slips but we have not seen them. The typography is in keeping with the high standard of the work and is a credit to the press from which it is issued. The quotation from Dr. Neil Munro's *John Splendid* where he uses *air-goat* for snipe, is a literal translation from the Gaelic (*gobhar-athair*, literally *goat of the air* or *sky*, so called because of the similarity of its cry to that of a goat), but whether this is in common use is questionable, though we have heard Gaelic-speakers whose English was not flawless refer to the snipe as *sky-goat*. It looks like that Dr. Munro made use of a fancy word to adorn his tale, translating directly from

the Gaelic. The note *sub voce* Anti-Burgher needs a qualification. The two sections that were united in 1820 were the New Light Antiburghers and the New Light Burghers.—D.B.

ARTHUR ANDERSON, a Founder of the P. & O. Company, by John Nicolson. T. & J. Manson, Lerwick. 3s. 6d.

‘ Apparent misfortunes sometimes prove blessings in disguise.’ The misfortunes that befel the production of the first issue of this biography bear out the saying, for they have led to the production of the present volume revised and improved by the introduction of additional matter of interest relating to the life of one of Shetland’s great sons.

In this small book within the compass of 110 pages there is given in outline the life story of a Shetland boy who with no worldly advantages to start him in life, began as a beach boy, and by dint of hard work and perseverance became a founder of the great P. & O. Company, M.P. for the county, and a benefactor of his people.

The story is an entrancing one of ready wit, resource, wise action, and above all of that spirit of perseverance, which old Thomas Bolt so encouraged in the heart of the young beach boy whom he took into his Bressay office, and later helped to start upon a wider stage.

Though the life story has been called an outline, the lines have been drawn with a sure hand and no salient feature has been omitted, the result being a pleasing and well-balanced picture. The publication by Anderson of the “ Shetland Journal ” in London throws an interesting side-light on Arthur Anderson’s many activities and his unceasing interest in the place of his birth, an interest which was later so magnificently shown in the foundation of the Anderson Institute. I wonder how many copies of the “ Shetland Journal ” are now in existence !

The book is well turned out, as is every publication that comes from the Press of T. & J. Manson, and thanks are due to Mr. Nicolson for having given to the world this story of a life of which Shetlanders are proud, and which should encourage every Shetland boy to 'do weel and persevere.'—H.

"SHETLAND TRADITIONAL LORE," by Jessie M. E. Saxby. Grant & Murray, Edinburgh. 6s. net.

This is a book which should appeal to all persons interested in folk lore and to Shetlanders in particular. The authoress, gifted with an enquiring mind, a retentive memory, and an intense love of her native isles and their people, has collected and set down much of interest relating to their ways of life, and speech, their traditions, and their fairy tales that makes most attractive reading.

'Old Bields,' 'Veesiks,' and 'Trows' all find a place in her collection, and if the scientific enquirer on going through it should disagree with some of her explanations and derivations of legend or of word, he should still be thankful for the preservation of tale, and phrase, and name that might otherwise have passed into the limbo of forgotten things.

The authoress herself in her 'Foreword' says:—

"I am not a scholarly person to sift and clear up fragments of our lore until all the mystical charm of the subject has blown away."

And it is this very 'mystical charm' with which she has surrounded her subject that lends it its chief attraction for the ordinary reader. But in addition to historic lore and fairy fantasy there are given many names in local use to-day of birds and fish and animals, some of which are passing out of use. Foods and drinks also of langsyne are not forgotten, and 'Whip-coll,' of which the recipe is given, is certainly a drink for heroes that deserves to be 'presented in a golden cup.'

Some excellent reproductions of photographs of Shet-

land scenery by J. D. Rattar are a pleasing addition to a book which every Shetlander, whether at home or abroad, will be glad to have upon his shelves.—H.

AN ORKNEY WEDDING IN 1847.—The following account of an Orkney wedding is taken from a letter dated 12th February, 1847, written from Swanbister, Orphir.

We went to Acres about 12 o'clock and found the greater part of the company assembled. Mr. and Mrs. Sands were there and Dr. Still came after. On first entering the house we were taken into the ben-end and got a glass of wine and a bit of shortbread; then we were seated with the rest of the guests and there was bread and cheese of various kinds and beer, wine and spirits put down. The uncle of the bride asked a blessing. After everyone had partaken as much as they chose, the same man returned thanks, and the fragments were removed. About half-past one o'clock we set out. It is the Orkney custom that the marriage procession should follow the course of the sun, and return home by a different road from the one they went by. There was a good deal of snow on the ground, and it was decided that we should go below the house of Swanbister and cross the burn and go up the bank to Evie and so round to the Free Church Manse. A. led with the bride and I went with the bridegroom. There was a scramble amongst the young men to get the prettiest and nicest girls. Kemp had a sister of the bride, John Clark was too slow and had to be content with little Jessy Johnston, the blacksmith's daughter, while Dr. Still very good-naturedly took little Robina. I looked back when we got to the height, and it was really very pretty to see the long procession, of at least eighty, two and two, winding along. The bride looked extremely pretty and modest, and was so neatly and plainly dressed. Mr. Duncan [the minister] seemed quite nervous, and when

they were married, young Soulis took his bride and A. and I followed and returned to Acres by a much shorter way past Gairay, the carpenter's.

On reaching Acres the brides cake was given to A. to be [broken and] scattered over the bride's head, and such a scramble, as there was, in the snow, for the fragments. Then I was requested, as bridesmaid, to give a bit of cheese and a biscuit to every one present, this is called "the hansel," and they are intended to carry it home. The bride and bridegroom get a very large lump of cheese. They were seated at the head of the table and the brides cog was brought, it is hot ale and spirits very richly spiced and sugared. After this there was another regular course of bread and cheese and beer, with a blessing asked as before. When this meal was removed, about four o'clock came dinner, excellent broth and quantities of boiled beef and mutton, cold hung cheese, roasted mutton and superlative stewed fowls with beer, wine and spirits à *discretion*.

After dinner Mr. and Mrs. Sands, Dr. Still, A. and I were conducted into the inner room, where there was a good fire and a most comfortable tea. When we returned to the outer apartment some of the wives went in to get a cup of tea, and the bride and bridegroom slipped away, nominally to see his mother, who was ill and confined to bed.

Dr. Still showed off some very clever sleight-of-hand tricks, greatly to the amusement and astonishment of the company. A fiddle was brought and Mr. Sands played one or two tunes, but the senseless people, the bride's parents, stopped him. The cog had been circulating steadily while we were at tea, and there were sundry more courses of bread and cheese and beer and toddy, all which was beginning to tell. A song was proposed, and we had "Auld lang syne," sung in most lugubrious tones, four or five times over. At the bottom of the room other songs were sung. Just where we were

there was a knot of men, old Evie (the bride's uncle), a brother of his, old Garrowin and my friend the blacksmith, all extremely happy, and quite unconscious of it. The smith tried to sing "There was a wee bit wificky," but he could only get out the notes of "Auld lang syne," and I think began to suspect what ailed him, for he said: "Now if I saw Mr. Paterson, I would argue with him, I would tell him that there was no harm in a dance, we have all had as much drink as if we had had an inclination for it, and I say there is no more harm in a fiddle than in these carnal songs, though to be sure they might be Gaelic for anything we can hear of them." Garowin repeated fifty times that Mr. Johnston was a good neighbour and a kind master, and Evie began to talk of his farm, but whether the new line was to the south or to the north of the old one was more than he could make out.

I got dreadfully tired, and on the plea of A. not being very well we got away a little past nine o'clock, but "if we would only stay a little longer supper would be immediately and another bridescog." But we pled the cold night. Dr. Still came away with us. Our two servants were there, and one of them said she had been at many a wedding, but never before at one where there was so much senseless noise, she had always seen music and dancing and that kept everything all right.

ORKNEY BIBLIOGRAPHY.—In a German weekly paper called "Illustrated Paper" (16 pp., No. 454 of Vol. 18), published in Leipzig, dated 13th March, 1852, there is an article entitled "Pictures from Scotland," by Alexander Zeigler. It describes a tour in the summer of 1857. He visited Kingcausie, and then gives an account of his visit to Orkney, where he stayed with Mr. Balfour. There is a small picture showing two of the Standing Stones of Stenness. The article, of course, is in German, but is quite interesting.

Orkney Monthly Visitor, July, 1845. "Exhort one another daily." A tract, 4 pp. R. Marshall, printer, East Rose Street, Edinburgh. It is announced that subscriptions for the "Society" will be received by the distributors of the tracts.

"Pastoral Bull by His Holiness the Pope, anent the grievous gambols of the sheep of Shapinsay." 1 page of 6 verses. "The Pope" appears to have been applied to Mr. Paterson, U.P. minister of Kirkwall, referred to by the blacksmith in the foregoing account of an Orkney wedding, with an echo of the last verse:—

Falsehood, thieving, and smuggling, are holier far
Than the "*wee* sinfu' fiddle" or carnal guitar;
Get drunk, or get bastards (King David's mischance),
Cut throats—but *not capers*—you're d—d if you dance!

Possibly it was the same minister who, in referring to a fancy dress ball held in Kirkwall, remarked that he had heard that one of the revellers was going as Mephistopheles, which he thought was superfluous, as Old Nick would be there himself.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

SHETLAND MUSIC.—Airs from the Far North, collected and arranged for violin and piano, by M. C. S. Holbourn. Edinburgh. Ernest Köhler and Son, 1931. 2s. net.

This nine-page publication is a welcome sign of a long-overdue interest in the cultural side of Old Shetland life and so one that is sure, whatever its demerits, of a grateful reception from all Shetlanders and all interested in the traditions of the Viking Isles. Messrs. Köhler and Son are to be congratulated on their enterprise, and the hope may be expressed that this is merely the first sign of many forthcoming developments in this direction. A shift of interest from the Hebrides to the Shetlands is highly desirable, if only to correct the quite disproportionate attention that has been given to the former in comparison with the latter. But there is, of course, more in it than that. We are dealing here

with an entirely different culture, and the question of its relative values is one that demands careful consideration.

A considerable amount of poetry, song, music and miscellaneous cultural matter handed down traditionally is still available for collection in the Shetland Islands, and in all probability a good deal more would have been done in this connection in recent years but for the increasing difficulties of finding publishers and meeting the cost of production. It is all the more regrettable then, when it is found possible to make any tentative steps in this direction, that full advantage should not be taken of the experience of gleaners in other fields, and proper scientific methods scrupulously followed. While the present writer is the last to wish to be at all captious or discouraging in regard to any effort on behalf of Shetland culture, he cannot but express regret that the principles applied by such folk-music experts in other countries as Kodaly, Bela Bartok, or the late Cecil Sharp have not been followed in the present case, as that would have enhanced the value of the work very much. The Hebridean Songs of the late Mrs. Kennedy Fraser are encountering increasing criticism, involving the most vital questions of authenticity alike in words, settings, and essential spirit; and this is largely due to the absence in her work of adequate details of origins, explanation of methods followed, and justification in the light of the originals and of Gaelic traditions generally for the musical idioms applied to the actual fugitive gleanings upon which her work is founded. Variant traditions are not adequately weighed against each other and chronological particularisation is sadly to seek. The difficulty is greatly increased by the questions raised of the wedding of these ancient airs to English words, on the one hand, and to modern musical technique on the other; and one school of critics roundly declares

that the originals were infinitely preferable to these art-songs into which they have been worked up, and that all Mrs. Kennedy Fraser has done is to botch them by translating them into an alien and inappropriate language and superimposing upon them cosmopolitan musical modes at complete variance with the genius of the originals.

It has been necessary to indicate briefly such issues because the lack of vital detail renders these "Airs from the Far North" liable to like strictures. The publication purports to be a "collection of airs which linger in the Isle of Foula." We are told that: "The 'Foula Reel' and 'Foula Shaalds' are not included in this collection, because they have been published elsewhere, but, like them, 'The Fields of Foula' has its origin in the island. The same probably applies to 'Maggie o' Ham.' 'Atween the Kitchen and the Ha' resembles an English air, but the idea of turning a dance tune into an effective pipe lament is certainly not English. 'The New Year Song' is a survival of the ancient Horse Festival. A border ballad, 'The Dowey Dens o' Yarrow,' has been included because, although remembered in the Lowlands, it seems to have dropped out of popular collections."

On the basis of this introductory paragraph, a whole crop of important points immediately arise. Is Horse Festival a misprint for Norse Festival? Carelessness in such a matter in passing proofs is not a good augury for care in more difficult and debatable issues. If the Foula Reel, Foula Shaalds, and the Fields of Foula published here ostensibly for the first time, originated in that island, particulars of how that fact has been established and of the date of origin would have been very valuable. If the idea of turning a dance-tune into a pipe lament is not English is it any more likely to be Shetlandic—especially in view of the undoubted English source of the air? All this suggests careless

methods, but this suspicion is more than confirmed by the unwarrantable incorporation in such a context of a famous border ballad, while the author's competence is gravely prejudiced by her statement that this is still "remembered in the Lowlands," which suggests a mere vague lingering recollection, whereas of course the piece in question is a very famous one and known to all who have any real knowledge of or interest in Scottish song. Even if this piece were little known instead of famous, however, and had completely lapsed from popular collections, that would be no excuse for intruding it into the present collection. If Shetland song is to be collected the task calls for the most careful discrimination between what is really Shetlandic in source and spirit, what may be shown to have been genuine importations effectively naturalised in the islands, and what were mere borrowings from foreign sources without any real relationship to Shetland culture. No such discrimination is made here and the publication is so much the less in value. What the present writer knows of old Shetlandic practice in tone and technique throws doubt on the authenticity of some of these airs, which seem to have more affiliation to Southern values than Scandinavian. The issues lightly raised in the above remarks call for thorough consideration, and it may be hoped that the present publication heralds the beginning of a phase of systematic exploration of the surviving elements of our old folk-tunes. It is surely not too late in the day to plead for the formation of a small Shetland Culture Society which would undertake the systematic study of these matters and facilitate the publication of duly authenticated material in proper form. Confidence may be expressed that were this done Shetland would be put in effective possession of substantial relics of an old-time distinctive culture in music.

J. C. SMITH.

“**SHETLAND: THE ISLES OF NIGHTLESS SUMMER.**”
By William Moffatt, F.Z.S. Heath Cranston, Ltd.,
London. 7s. 6d.

As the author states in his preface, this book is not written for Shetlanders but for those ‘who know little of Shetland.’ ‘It is an attempt to visualise Shetland for the reader’ and to give ‘cameos’ of Shetland life. It is written by one who loves his native land, and the pen pictures of Shetland life and scenery are drawn in an attractive style that make easy and pleasant reading. The earlier chapters dealing with such subjects as an agricultural show in Shetland, wild ideas about Shetland, Shetland for holidays, a day’s motoring, Shetland weather, Shetland hosiery, the Saga of the Peat, are admirably suited to interest strangers and attract them to come and see for themselves what Shetland is really like. It is hard to believe but it is a fact that to-day big travel agencies in London cannot tell people how to get to Shetland, and advise enquirers to go to the Hebrides!

In speaking of the attractions of sport, the author says there are no hares, and omits to mention among birds snipe and woodcock. Hares, it is true, are few in number, but snipe afford as good sport as can be found anywhere in Britain. If here and there criticism may be directed to mis-statements such as that there is no bowling green in Lerwick, or that Scalloway is the only place where Shetland tweeds are manufactured as a recognised business, these are but small errors which do not seriously detract from the general picture. But the suggestions that the word ‘peerie’ may be related to the French ‘petit,’ or that no sound accompanies a display of the ‘aurora borealis’ will not be universally accepted; and in the description of the customary division of the spoils of a successful whale hunt it is a pity that no reference is made to the famous

'Hoswick whale case' which decided the rights of the captors versus the lairds.

In speaking of Shetland's connection with Norway, the author claims that 76 per cent. of the population are fair-haired and blue-eyed, a statement that would be difficult to substantiate to-day, and incidentally Sir Robert Stout, mentioned as one of Shetland's famous sons, was for many years 'Chief Justice,' not 'Prime Minister' of New Zealand.

The general description of Shetland is confined to the mainland, and though the book is not intended as a guide book, some reference to the other islands would have made the picture more complete.

In the later chapters the author dips into past history, literature, myth, and legend, ending up with pure fantasy, and I would venture that this portion has not contributed least to the evident pleasure that he has experienced in writing of the land that he loves. This pleasure will undoubtedly be shared by the public for whom he writes.

The book is well illustrated by a number of reproductions of Mr. J. D. Rattar's excellent photographs, is printed in good type, and has a useful bibliography compiled by Mr. E. S. Reid Tait, the whole being presented in a book-jacket of attractive design.—H.

AN ETYMOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE NORN LANGUAGE IN SHETLAND. By Jakob Jakobsen. Vol. II. L-Ø, pp. 489-1076. London: David Nutt (A. G. Berry). 1932. (Translation by Mrs. Anna Horsbøl).

To have undertaken the translation of her brother's great work at all was an heroic venture; to have brought it successfully to completion—a magnificent achievement. It was a cherished hope of the distinguished author that this work should one day be accessible in English, and no finer memorial to his memory could have been devised.

But Dr. Jakobsen's work is not only a monument to his own memory, it is equally a monument to the Shetland Norn and Shetland itself. To Shetlanders it must ever be a matter for regret that this final and definitive treatise on their native dialect should not have been compiled by one of themselves, and it ought to be an honourable duty incumbent on each native, who can possibly afford it at all, to acquire the work for himself and his children, and so do what is possible to recompense in some slight measure—not alas the author—but his sister who has devoted so much of her money and her very self to its translation. Would it be too much for some patriotic Shetlander to take steps to have a copy of the work placed in every one of the island school libraries for consultation and ready reference by the common folk themselves from whom, or from whose parents, the matter was laboriously gleaned?

The work has been so often reviewed both in its Danish and English dress that it is superfluous now to write in commendation thereof. Any criticism one might offer would be but another tribute to its completeness—namely, that it is perhaps over-elaborate, that some of the shades of variation in pronunciation indicated are not so much characteristic of different localities as of different speakers merely.

But on turning over the leaves of this volume once more, one cannot but be struck by two outstanding features—one, the profound philological scholarship that is manifest on every page, the other—the comprehensive all-embracing nature of the work. An inspection of such record terms as *leanger* or *watl*, etc., will show what pains the author took to learn all that could be gleaned from books. For his meticulous care in setting forth the various usages of a common term one may consult, for example, the word *set* which runs to three and a half columns. A word such as *seter* again

reveals the extent of the author's familiarity with Shetland place-names.

To anyone who has not already dipped into its pages this work will prove something of a revelation. But very few have any realisation of the devoted labour that has gone to its production. It would be only a fitting and graceful act if Shetland in its corporate capacity were to offer the noble-hearted lady through whose sacrifice and toil this translation has been made and published, some tangible token of appreciation and respect.—M.

THE COLUMBAN CHURCH. By John A. Duke, B.D. (Glas.), D.Litt. (Edinb.). Oxford University Press. Price 10s. net. Pages xii. + 200.

This is the thesis presented by Dr. Duke for his Doctorate in Letters. It is a scholarly book, shows wide reading, and a mastery of the literature bearing on the subject. As a summary of the main facts of the Columban Church it will be most useful to students. While this tribute is ungrudgingly paid to Dr. Duke's work, it is not to be understood that it implies approval of all Dr. Duke's contentions. The Columban Church has always provided material for controversialists and the more intensive study of recent years has only brought new questions to the fore around which new controversies rage. The book contains nine chapters of narrative with nine appendices. Dr. Duke has no hesitation in rejecting the view that has been advocated by Dr. A. Black Scott, Helmsdale; Dr. Douglas Simpson, University Librarian, Aberdeen; and still more recently by Dr. Knight, Glasgow, of the evangelisation of Scotland before Columba had ever reached Iona. "No more revolutionary view of the mission of St. Columba," says Dr. Duke, "has ever been placed before the public; and, if it can be substantiated by the necessary historical evidence, the first chapter of the

history of the Church in Scotland will require considerable revision." Whether the above writers have been able to sustain all their contentions may be open to question, but Dr. Duke's criticism of them has certainly not overthrown them. His statement that "no Pictish Church ever existed anywhere in North Britain before the days of St. Columba," to say the least of it, is too sweeping.

As to the question of the introduction of Christianity into Britain, Dr. Duke hazards what he calls a likely guess in attributing its introduction to Gaulish traders. From a footnote, it is evident Dr. Duke is aware of Warren's view of the Eastern origin of the British Church though rejected by Haddan and Stubbs and described by Gougaud as the '*mirage oriental*' (*Les Chrétientés celtiques*, p. 70). The question seems to be so far settled, however, by Karl Holl in his essay—"The Origin of the Four Fast Periods in the Greek Church," in which the Eastern origin of the Celtic Church is made clear.

Dr. Duke, in dealing with the Culdees around whose name and status so many fantastic theories have been woven, follows Dr. Reeves. "It is clear," he says, "that the Céli-Dé of Scotland, then, were not—as they have commonly been regarded—the degenerate descendants of the Columban Church. They never had any connexion with the Columban Church. They never appeared in Scotland until after the Columban Church had passed away" (p. 169). The following mis-prints have been noticed: "suprass" for "surpass" (p. 52); "Herford" for "Hertford" (p. 105); "Bude" for "Brude" (p. 131); "Durm Alban" for "Druim Albann" (p. 157); and "Dorstan" for "Drostan" (p. 161).—D. B.

A PECULIAR PEOPLE AND OTHER ORKNEY TALES. By J. T. Smith Leask. Kirkwall: W. R. Mackintosh,

The Orcadian Office, 1931. 280 pp., 6 × 9. 3s. 6d. net.

This delightful book of Orkney stories—many of which are in the dialect—consists of a series of papers read before the Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Literary and Scientific Society.

'A peculiar people' is descriptive of the inhabitants of Harray, the only inland parish in the Mainland of Orkney, who are proverbially ignorant of the sea and its crustacean denizens. 'A cute people' refers to the Orphir folk, whose characteristic is "cautiousness, canniness or cuteness, while their load-star is the advancement of Number One or his kith and kin." The 'merry dancers' is a nickname for the inhabitants of Stenness, in which is Maeshowe with its fairy 'hug-boy' O.N. haug-búi, howe-dweller. The old custom of Sunday football and drinking after church continued in that parish well into Protestant times. 'Old Orcadian beliefs and remedies' describes folk-medicine, etc. 'In matches and match-making' we are told that the love-sick swain produced a bottle of whisky for the benefit of his girl's father, as an intimation that he wished to get his consent. Mermaid stories are told in 'watery yarns.' In the days of the press-gang a favourite hiding-place was The Holes o' Cupsermung, or Cupstarmum, as it is called in Orphir. It is a flat, or terrace, of heather-grown deep peat-moss, on the northern slope of the Ward Hill of Orphir, in which are a number of cup-shaped hollows, from which subterranean tunnels run downhill, apparently formed by water. There is also a dangerous morass with a spring of water. O.N. *koppa-staðar-mó-num, locative case of *koppa-staðar-mórin, the flat, or moor, of the cup-place, is descriptive, literally, 'the cups'-stead-flat.' The chapter on 'confiscation of land' includes a story about the alleged forcible acquisition of Clecking, in Stenness, the legal and regular pur-

chase of which, at a high price, has already been dealt with in Vol. VIII., p. 45. The summons and pistol incident (p. 148) probably harks back to 1619, when Patrick Stewart, a younger son of Gramsay, and Robert Halcro of Cava and Houton, had bought the Ireland estate between them, and came to blows. In the absence of Robert Halcro from his house, the Hall of Ireland, Patrick, accompanied by twelve others, "all armed with muskets, hagbuts, pistollets, etc.," went to the House of Ireland, where Mrs. Halcro was "lyand in chyldbdlair," and "schote his threttene young hairmles bairnis to the dure without respect, pitie, or compassion of thair young yeiris," etc. The result was the imprisonment of Stewart, and the ultimate settlement of the dispute by Halcro buying Stewart's part of the estate.¹ The confusion in the various branches of the Halcro family, and the numerous contemporary 'Williams,' may be unravelled by the genealogical tree which is appended to this notice.²

The naughty Stewart earls come in for their usual share of abuse. Their increase of the weight, by which the taxes were paid, has been fully dealt with in this number (see p. 241), in which it is shown that they merely did what others had done before and after them. More than one-half of the taxes were paid in Scotch money, representing an original charge of 33 lispunds of butter, which, by the gradual depreciation of Scotch coinage, ultimately reached the negligible amount of 1s. 7½d. in 1601 and after. The increase of the weights before, during and after the Stewart rule merely maintained the total tax at its original amount.

With regard to the division of the common of Stenness, it was carried out in 1815 (in the same way as in

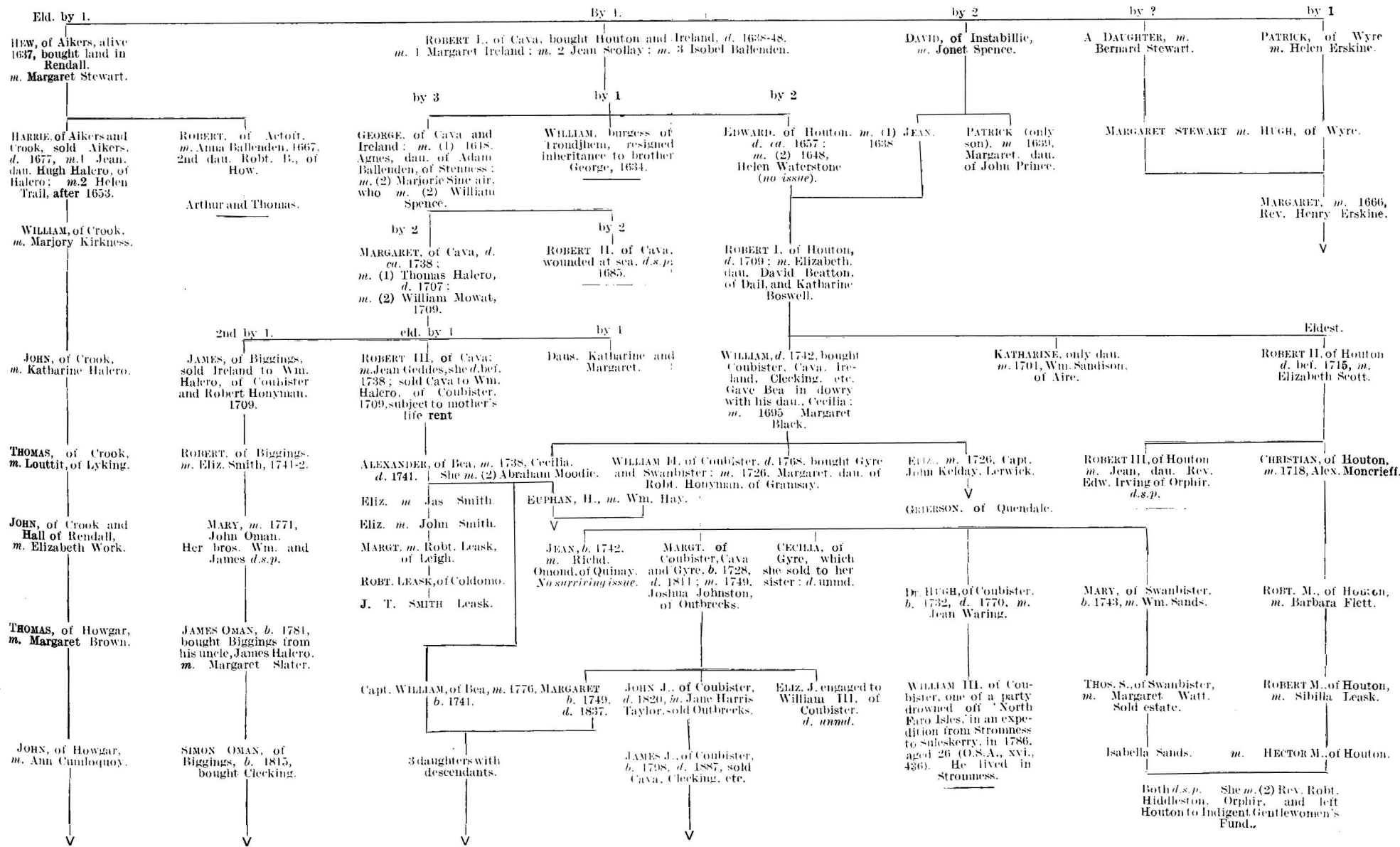
¹ Reg. P.C. xi. 535.

² Besides these there were also: William, natural son of Robert III. of Cava, b. 1738, and William, natural son of William II. of Coubister, b. 1719.

HALCRO, OF AIKERS AND CAVA.

JOHN (OF AIKERS AND CAVA), *d. bef. 1511.*

WILLIAM, OF AIKERS AND CAVA, *d. 1595-7.*
m. (1) bef. 1556, Margaret Craigie, of Brugh.
m. (2) Margaret Bruce.



other parishes), by a government surveyor. The whole common was divided proportionally among all the land-owners in accordance with the relative areas of their estates. From the plan (before the writer) the division was carefully and fairly done. It stands to reason that, in this case, where there were numerous owners of small holdings, they had to get larger shares than they were entitled to, at the expense of the large estates, as otherwise their shares would have been infinitesimal. By a comparison, on the basis of the Old Valuation, which is still in use, Honyman (not Balfour) got over 200 acres less than his proportional share, and Lord Dundas (owner of the earldom estate) got the smallest proportional share of the lot.

The plan gives the exact acreage of each allotment, which was marked off by march-stones. The deliberate shifting of these march-stones, thereafter, in other parishes, is notorious, but it was easily rectified when checked with the plan. The shares of Halcro of Bea, and Honyman of Gramsay were exactly in proportion to their relative valuation.

The concluding chapters deal with Sunday observance, witchcraft, smugglers, and the origin of mythology, in which latter the author shows a preference for the Norse gods, and suggests that we now "reap the fruits of a belief in Odin and the other grand heroes of the Norse mythology."

The book is well printed, and the publishers deserve every praise for their patriotic work in publishing such a number of books dealing with Orcadian subjects of historical interest.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

UPHELLIA, UP-HELLY-AU.—Yule festival customs are, of course, common to Norway and Scotland. The Shetland 'greuliks' mentioned by Mrs. Saxby (Vol. VIII. 30) are Old Norse in name and character. The name of the festival is, however, not Norse but Scotch, as is

also the custom of burning torches or tar barrels. In Scotch forensic terminology 'uphalli day' means the day after the termination of the Christmas vacation; during which time, from 7 days before Yule until Up-halliday, called *girth* or *halie*, criminals were exempt from prosecution. The name occurs so early as 1495 in Scotch records. The form 'up-helli' definitely points to its having been borrowed from Scotland, and not a local corruption of ON Jóla-helgi; and the mummers are called by the purely Scotch designation *guizards*, and *scuddler* is also found in Scotch. And, moreover, the burning of torches and tar barrels is not a Norse custom, but a distinctive Scotch one associated with Yule, in the case of 'the burning of the clavier,' in which a blazing tar barrel is carried in procession (in one place on Hogmaney), "with the view of securing a good season's fishing." Only so late as the year 1889 was the present galley substituted for the tar barrel in Lerwick (Vol. IV. 66), and the processionists clad in quasi viking attire, including modern pantomimic feathered bonnets, which are enough to raise the dead of Valhalla, who never affected such buffoonery.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY, designed partly on Regional Lines and partly on Historical Principles, and containing all the Scottish words known to be in use or to have been in use since c. 1700. Edited by William Grant, M.A., LL.D. Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association, Limited. Vol. I., Part III.

This splendid work is gradually getting over the ground, and if its progress is not as quick as some would like it to be we would recommend them to sit down and carefully read these parts from cover to cover as they are issued, and if they will not be greatly impressed with the vast labour involved in such a work we will be greatly surprised. Were it nothing else but the

verification of the references and the proof-reading, there is sufficient to indicate what laborious days must have been passed by Dr. Grant and his associates ere the finished product of their combined labours reached the public. The whole get-up of this Dictionary, its paper and excellent printing, with its princely size of page, all help to add to the feeling of satisfaction produced by the fine scholarship and careful editing that shews itself stamped on every page. In addition to the corrections made in the circular letter issued on 3rd January (p. 44, col. 3, for *berfoett* read *berføettr*, and p. 53, under Bash, read *ébahir* for *ébair*), at p. 3, col. 3, line 7 from top, for *buacher* read *buachar*.—D. B.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL LIGHT ON THE EARLY CHRISTIANIZING OF SCOTLAND. By G. A. Frank Knight, M.A., D.D., F.R.S.E., F.S.A. Scot. London: James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 9, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.2. Two Vols.—Vol. I. pp. 446; Vol. II. pp. 434. Copiously illustrated. 5 maps. Price 24s.

Whatever may be one's opinion about the revolutionary view of early church history in Scotland advanced in these volumes, one must pay ungrudging tribute to the vast mass of material gathered from every available source and placed at the students' hands within the compass of two goodly volumes. The notes themselves at the end of each chapter are a mine of information and the finely executed photographs of historic sites and places are a fine feature of the work. Then we have a list of authorities which, while not exhaustive, is exceptionally full and will be most helpful to all students interested in this period of the Church's history in Scotland. Dr. Knight has cast his net wide and gathered from books, transactions of historical and antiquarian societies, material which throws light on the period embraced within the compass of the two volumes. He has consulted no less

than 1,500 volumes he tells us in his preface. In dealing with the evangelization of Scotland Dr. Knight maintains that the gospel reached it before the time of Ninian. He joins issue with the advocates of the Columba-School in asserting that the greater part of what is now known as Scotland was evangelized by Ninian. This is not altogether a new view. It has been before the learned public interested in such matters for many years through the writings of Dr. A. Black Scott, Helmsdale. He has been followed by Dr. Douglas Simpson, librarian of Aberdeen University, and along the same lines Dr. Knight moves. The issues between the two schools, which for want of a better designation may be termed the Ninian and Columban schools, have been fought out with considerable keenness.

The Ninian School lay considerable stress on the evidence from antiquities. Their opponents are apt to overlook this line and to lay greater stress on literary sources. In his work Dr. Knight combines both and presents the case for Ninian in a way that will not be easy to set aside. In a work covering such a long period it is not to be wondered at that the author should make statements that cannot be accepted, and that he will fall into slips and mistakes that are well nigh unavoidable, however careful the writer may be. Dr. Knight's treatment of the hagiology of the Celtic Church is perhaps the most defective part of his book. It is not meant that Dr. Knight was credulous enough to believe the stories of the hagiologists, for he makes it plain by exclamation marks that he was not, but one has the feeling that the biographies of many of the saints might have been more rigidly pruned without any loss to historical truth.

Though Dr. Knight vindicates the claims of Ninian this does not mean that Columba is neglected, for considerable space is given to him and the Columban

Church. Chapters are devoted to the early and later Viking invasions, and Dr. Knight has not a kindly word to say in favour of the invaders. Iona suffered severely, but in the course of time Christianity conquered the paganism of the new-comers. A chapter is devoted to the much misunderstood ecclesiastics—the Culdees. Dr. Knight accepts Dr. Reeves' derivation of *Celi-dé*, as meaning servant of God, but perhaps Stokes is nearer the point when he gives the meaning as "belonging to God." The final chapter deals with the passing of the Celtic Church and the triumph of the Church of Rome. The important subject of the influence of the East on Celtic Christianity comes under review in an Appendix. Dr. Knight's view that Christianity came to Britain by way of Rome through Gaul is questionable. Recent researches appear to conclusively prove that it came from the East. The Pictish Symbol Stones have another appendix devoted to them.

It may be bold to tackle Dr. Knight on a point of antiquarian interest, but the Serpent Mound at Loch Nell, near Oban, we are convinced is purely geological and is not a remnant of serpent worship. Some of the place-names relied on as evidence of Ninian's northern ministry are not to be depended on. Rinansey, even, may have nothing to do with Ninian, though generally accepted to contain a form of his name. This is also true of Rinsary (Caithness). Berriedale has nothing to do with Barr; it is good Norse for *Berg-dalr*, rock dale. In the same way Feochan (Loch) has nothing to do with Fechin; *feochan* is the anglicised form of a good Gaelic word, *faochan*, still in use in certain parts of the Highlands. Nodha in Appin may be *nodha*, new. Clyne in Sutherland has no connection with Callen; in Gaelic it is *Clìn*, a slope. Prof. Brøgger's derivation of Thurso from *Thjórsá*, ox river, instead of from *Thorsá*, Thor's river, is in keeping with the folk-pronunciation heard to this day—*Thirsa*.

A considerable number of mis-prints have been noted, but in a work so full of references this is naturally to be expected, and any reviewer who has done anything in book production will not judge Dr. Knight too hardly for this. Attention, however, may be called to Vol. II., p. 418, where *Skald Poetry* should read *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, etc. As already stated, the list of authorities is exceptionally full, and it must be borne in mind Dr. Knight is giving only the more important books, etc., he consulted, but one or two omissions may be noted: *Caithness and Sutherland Records*, Vol. I. (1928); Dinan's *Monumenta Historica Celtica*; Gougaud's *Les Chrétientés celtiques*; Karl Holl's essay on the Fasti of the Celtic Church; Prof. Maclean's article—"Light on Ancient Scotland"—in the *Evangelical Review*, III., 68. To this list for future reference may be added Prof. Watson's paper on Ninian in the same Review Vol. VI., p. 25, though it did not see the light until Dr. Knight's work was published. With Dr. Duke's bibliography on the *Columban Church* and Dr. Knight's, no student of the Celtic Church need complain of abundant material.

D. B.

QUERY.

NORSE DESCENT.—With the exception of those descended from the Sinclair earls through Bishop Graham, etc., are there any families in Orkney or Shetland who can trace their unbroken genealogy back to 1468, when the islands came under Scotch rule. Since then the population has been recruited from Scotland, and the bishops and clergy have been Scotch, and have, in many cases, dug themselves into the islands—practically the whole landownership is Scotch. It must be remembered that the earls, from the 12th to the 14th

centuries were Gaelic in the male line, so that the Scotch colonisation began in the 12th century. Take the most northern island of Unst; in 1716 the population included the following Scotch names: Farquhar, Sinclair, Smith (galore), Scot, Mouat, Ross, Coutts, Fordyce, Wishart, Brown, Nisbet, Gray, Spens, Frazer, Catanach, Dugall, Sutherland, Sharp, More, Forbiss, etc., etc.

Under the circumstances it would be extraordinary if there is one Norse family in the male line in existence. In many cases Scotch settlers assumed patronymics, so that the -son names do not necessarily point to old Shetland descent.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

CANDLEMAS.

SOME TRADITIONS AND INCIDENTS OF A CAITHNESS FAIR.

BY JOHN MOWAT.

CANDLEMAS was a prominent landmark in the old Scottish Calendar. The Second of February marked a day of feasting which had its roots deep down into Christian history. It was a popular Church festival, devoted to the Purification of the Virgin, and candles played a prominent part in the celebrations, and the name was given by the Church of Rome in connection with the blessing of the Candles. But it is even suggested that the festival may have been engrafted on an older heathen one. In England there were customs and practices associated with the season unknown in Scotland, at least in the North. Most of these died out at the Reformation. Chambers relates a curious custom in the south in which the school children brought gifts of money to their teachers on Candlemas day, and also another old popular custom in the Border Counties of holding a football gathering, called

the "Candlemas Ba," in which the east and west parts of the town or village played against each other. Martin, in his "Description of the Western Islands," 1685, tells of a curious practice in the Hebrides which points back to pagan times. "The Mistress and servants of each family take a sheaf of oats and dress it up in woman's apparel, put it in a large basket and lay a wooden club by it, and this they call Brüd's bed: and then the mistress and servants cry three times, 'Brüd is come. Brüd is welcome!' This they do just before going to bed, and when they rise in the morning they look among the ashes, expecting to see the impression of Brüd's Club there: which, if they do, they reckon it a true presage of a good crop and a prosperous year, and contrary they take as an ill-omen." None of these customs have come down in Caithness tradition. While candles were most likely used as the only light in early Caithness Churches, there is no tradition as to any special use of candles in connection with the festival.

At the beginning of the 19th century there were at least twenty statutory fairs in the County of Caithness. Half of these bore names indicating their associations with Popish or Pre-Reformation days. Candlemas was the most outstanding. Others were Petersmas, Marymas, Roodsmas, Lukesmas, Trothersmas, Magnasmas and Fergusmas. With the exception of perhaps the Dunnet Marymas, the names and dates and sites of these old fairs are scarcely remembered. The Candlemas Gathering took place in the east of Caithness on the first week of February, ultimately the first Tuesday. The gathering was held on the outskirts of the township of Freswick, and the situation, although often changed in the course of years, lay alongside the old road track from the Orkney ferries of Duncansbay, Huna and Scarfskerry, wending towards the South. It was known locally as "The Caanel-

mas.” It happened at a season when there was considerable relaxation from outside labour, and merging from the rigours of a dreary winter the people entered into the opportunities of pleasure with zest. Large concourses of people, many coming from Orkney and Sutherland, met to drink the home brewed ale. In those days every man was his own brewer and considerable business was done in the preparation of the home-brewed ale. Even in its halycon days, the fair was not a cattle market to the same extent as some of the other northern trysts. It was a mingling of pleasure and business, and the festive element, coming down from more ancient times, still held good. There was a gaiety in dress and decoration, although the season did not permit of summer wear. The male population sported the broad Kilmarnock bonnet with distinctive top and checked band, even districts and families having their own particular pattern to which they rigidly adhered. The fashionable dress of the married ladies consisted of a blue or black hooded cloak with nutch and bords of spotless white. Under the expansive folds of this nun-like robe the matron carried her husband’s weapon of defence—a stout seasoned rung—always in reserve, but which the good lady would not hesitate to use in times of emergency.

The fair proper was held on Tuesday, but, in its palmy days, it lasted three days, and often included most of the week. There was always the preliminary work of brewing and preparing food for man and beast and strangers from a distance. Servants were exempt from ordinary work during the height of the fair. The days that followed would be necessary from excesses and excitement. The scailing of the fair brought with it the usual trail of accidents. Then there was no doctor in the Parish, but every district had its “skilly man,” who took the place of a doctor, and his hands were usually full. Broken shins, bruised heads and

blackened eyes required attention. Leeches were put to use to draw bruised blood. On such occasions rival factions in the parish or district were frequently in conflict. The lairds were more or less armed and were generally attended by a number of retainers. This state of matters is very well illustrated in the evidence led before the Sheriff-depute of Caithness in connection with the riots which took place at the Marymas on 19th August, 1740, and at the Craig of Dunnet four days later. Murray of Claredon seems to have been the aggressor, and the row originated through his disputing the claims of Sinclair of Freswick to collect custom tax on the market. Evidence was led to the use of drawn broad swords, rapiers and pistols. Through the personal efforts of Freswick to quiet the scuffle, the matter came to an end with very little bloodshed. But on the following Saturday, Claredon resumed the battle by marching on the preserves of Freswick at Dunnet Head with some 60 men armed with corn hooks and scythes. Such was the sequel to a memorable market day. Scuffles more frequently arose over some lass who had more than one ardent aspirant. This is aptly described by Jas. T. Calder in "St. Mary's Fair":—

"But hark! there has occurred a desperate row,
 A thing that often happens here, I wot;
 The fair is all one perfect hubbub now,
 And old and young are running to the spot.
 Two rival lads, called Mucklejohn and Gow,
 Have quarrelled 'bout a lassie, Peggy Groat,
 And fired with love and drink together, they
 Must try the hardness of their skulls to-day."

"Friends and acquaintances the parties aid,
 And now the affair becomes a general fight,
 Some scores of cudgels rattle, blood is shed,
 And here and there some poor unlucky wight
 Stretched at his length upon the sward is laid,
 Nigh felled to death—a truly piteous sight."

The booths or tents for the sale of refreshments formed the principal shelters, and they were well

patronised. The merchandise stalls consisted of farm produce, home-made linen goods, rugs, plaids, brogues, wooden bickers, horn spoons and nic-nacks of personal adornment. Cattle was not a feature of the market, but at the beginning of the 19th century there was a considerable trade between Caithness and Orkney in horses. Several hundred of Orkney horses were brought across the Pentland Firth annually, charged for on the ferry at one shilling to one shilling and sixpence each according to size. Doubtless many of these would find a purchaser on the Candlemas to be in readiness for the downlay. They were replaced by young staigs imported from the West Highlands, and so the traffic went on. The cattle reared in Orkney and Caithness were collected by dealers from the south and taken over the Ord in droves. Before they reached the more favoured pastures of the lowlands they had become starved and lean, and at Falkirk tryst were known as the "Caithness runts."

There was a social side to the business of bargaining which became a fine art on market day. The dealer who wanted to buy would always offer a good sum less than he was prepared to give. The seller knowing this too well began by asking much more than he was prepared to take. So would begin a test of wit and words. After considerable beating up and beating down, a bargain would be struck and an adjournment would be made to the tent to drink the "feet ales." A bargain was never considered fully ratified until "feet ales" were pledged and drunk in ale or whisky by both seller and buyer. Many a story of the play of sharp wit is linked to this old custom.

The old custom of "Handfasting" practised to some extent in several parts of Scotland was said to be observed in a measure on the Candlemas fair. It was customary for a young man and woman to meet on the fair day and pledge their troth to each other for the

term of one year. If, on the expiry of this probationary period, they were still satisfied, the bond was completed by the marriage ceremony. On the other hand, if they agreed to differ, they were released from their vow and were free to choose again. Although much may not have been made of this, doubtless many simple romances began on the fair day.

Times and fashions change. Gone is the Kilmar-nock bonnet and the hooded cloak, and so is the old fair. In the vicissitudes of the last century its site was changed several times. For many years, though shorn of its former glory, it eked out a meagre existence on the bare hillside overlooking Buchollie Castle, that other relic of the past. It is now no more and much of the legends and much of the lore associated with Candlemas has passed into oblivion. But the Caithness crofter holds on the even tenor of his way in an ever changing climate. The name will still hold in the weather observation :—

“If Candlemas day be dry and fair,
The half o' winter's to come and mair.
If Candlemas day be wet and foul,
The half o' winter's gone at yule.”

And this old reckoning of time :—

“First come Caanlemas, then a new meen
First Tuesday aifter 'ats fair Fosterneen.”

A CAITHNESS SHOP IN 1806.

BY JOHN MOWAT.

BEFORE me lie the faded pages of an “Inventory of goods in the shop belonging to the late M. Campbell taken by David McBeath and A. Aitken, 8th August, 1806.” The shop of Murdoch Campbell was situated in the uplands of Freswick, where the bridge-

less track that wimpled through the moor from the Orkney-Huna ferry southward to Wick converged on the ford of Freswick Burn. The new "Kings road" constructed from Parliamentary grants, about 1819, had not yet been made and the old track, unsuitable and seldom used for vehicular traffic, found the most convenient crossing.

The store itself was probably a part of the old-fashioned thatch-roofed house of turf and stone with skylights and perhaps only one small front window two feet square. The cause and occasion of the inventory was evidently the death of the merchant. David McBeath, elsewhere styled "Lieutenant," was himself a shopkeeper and kept the post office at Huna. Arthur Aitken was the manager to Capt. Robert Sinclair, Scotsclader and Dounreay, who at that time was tacksman of the lands of Freswick and probably interested financially.

The document of 12 foolscap pages details 167 items of a total value of £94 1s. 9½d. It would be of little interest except that it mentions certain articles which shed some sidelights on social life in Caithness at the beginning of last century. The various articles, which we take were valued at current prices of the period, consisted of drapery, hosiery, ironmongery, earthenware, drugs and an assortment of fishing materials. The absence of anything of importance in groceries would indicate that the frugal housewife with meal and milk of her own required little else.

To begin with there were seven varieties of prints varying in prices from 2/- to 3/- per yard. Next we find quantities of old-fashioned and less familiar materials such as "check at 1/6 per yard," corduroy at 3/- per yard, durant at 1/3 per yard, mankey at 1/- per yard, shaloon at 1/6 per yard, duffle at 3/- and 8/- per yard, demitty at 2/- per yard, drugget at 2/- per yard, lawn at 3/- per yard, and red flannel at 3/- per yard. Two

“red plaids” are priced at 15/- each, and 63 coarse napkins at 3/- each, while two napkins are listed at 9/- each.

There appears to have been a considerable stock and variety of thread and buttons—some sixty shillings worth of the former and thirty shillings worth of the latter—indicating that all garments were home-made. One item listed is 66 pairs of sleeve buttons at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pair.

Among the earthenware items we find white plates at 2d. each, blue edged ashets at 6d. each, white bowls at 3d. each, eggcups one penny, and several dozen cups and “flatts” one penny each. Breadbaskets, 1/- each, used to be a common table article.

In ironmongery there were several dozens of various grades of coffin handles valued at 4/- per dozen. Coffin tacks, double nails and single nails, screw nails follow in assortments with shoemakers’ knives, awls and files.

There is an intriguing entry of 71 pamphlets priced at one penny each on which one would wish to speculate. This item is supported by an item of 5 Bibles at 2/6 each, and notepaper even with gold edges, pen cases at one penny and inkholders also a penny each.

Twelve pairs of spectacles are valued at the modest price of 3d. each and cases for same one penny.

Included in the assortment is salts, essence of shina, flower of brimstone, molasses, indigo, logwood, British oil, madder and copperas. The quantity of above ingredients indicate a considerable trade in home dyeing. The old “lüt-pot” and the navy-blue scourin petticoats were then the fashion. Candle-wick in quantity also suggest the home-made tallow candle. Black sugar, ginger, pepper, tobacco and snuff (20 lbs.) are all priced at 3/- per lb.

A cask of beer is valued at twenty-four shillings. A parcel of coffee at £3, a bundle of leather at £1 4s. od. Metal pots are priced at 3/- each. Wool cards and

weaving reeds both 2/6 each. Pewter plates cost 3/- and pewter teaspoons 1½d. each. There is a quantity of shot at 6d. per lb. and also a quantity of steel. Hand lines, fish hooks, hemp and tarry ropes, with mouse traps, added to the wonderful assortment.

Following the inventory there is an abstract of ledger accounts, some marked paid, numbering 175, and amounting in total to £173 17s. 0½d. From this list it is evident the obscure shopkeeper had a fairly wide clientele. We find the names of the Right Hon. the Countess of Caithness, Captain Campbell, Barrogill Castle, Captain Sutherland of Brabster, Lieut. Magnus Hogston, Brabster, Lieut. Andrew Geddes, Lieut. David McBeath, Huna; John Mowat, ferryman, Huna, James Dunnet, post, Duncansbay, James Manson, heckler, Lyth, William Lumsden, Castletown, Donald Denson and Peter Abrach, Thurso, and several from Burray, Orkney. The majority, however, were accounts from the parish of Canisbay, including Mey, Duncansbay, Freswick and Auckengill, and the predominating names Laird, Mowat, Dunnet, Manson, Bain, Bremner, Kennedy and Groat.

Another interesting item in the affairs of Murdoch Campbell is the abstract taken from his "Spinning Book." It would appear he managed an agency and distributed lint to some 80 or 90 women spinners in the district, collecting the finished yarn for weaving factories in the south. At this time there was a movement to develop the linen industry in the Northern Counties.

NOTES ON THE FISCAL ANTIQUITIES OF ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

(See pp. 53, 133 *ante*.)

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.¹

BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

THE Orkney and Shetland *s p a n n*, originally a measure of capacity, was converted before 1300, into a fixed weight of 63 Norse-Cologne pounds of 467.7 grammes each = 64.9597 lb. avoirdupois = 59.76 lb. Scotch troy. In 1328,² $3\frac{1}{2}$ Norwegian spanns of 18 lb. Coln. were equal to 1 Shetland spann and to 1 Orkney spann of $5\frac{1}{4}$ lispunds of 12 lb. Coln. each. On the basis of the Scotch standard weight of butter (grease or oil) this spann would have been a measure of the capacity of about 7.2 imperial gallons, or exactly one-half of a Scotch boll of the years 1124-1426. It was not a multiple of the skippund of 288 lb. Coln. of butter, which contained $4\frac{4}{7}$ spanns. There was no similarity, except in name, between the weights and measures of Norway and those of Orkney and Shetland.

During the Hanseatic monopoly of trade the Norwegian, Orkney and Shetland weights were converted into Cologne weight.

The Scotch standard weight of bacon, beef, butter (grease or oil?), honey, soap ashes, etc., was the barrel of 24 imperial gallons of 200 lb. Sc. at $8\frac{1}{3}$ lb. Sc. per gallon = 9 lb. avoirdupois, the English weight of a gallon of oil; whereas the English standard weight of

¹ Abbreviations: ON, old Norse; OO, old Orkney and Shetland; Sc., Scotch; Coln., Norse-Cologne weight of the Hanseatic period; avdp., avoirdupois.

² See p. 70 *ante*. In the reprint of Mackenzie's *Grievances*, 1836, p. XXV. "for 22 cwt. of wool, less than 16 pounds" read, "7 skippunds of wool with one lispund to the good." [It was the skippund of 18 spanns of 18 lb. = 324 lb. Coln]

butter is the firkin of 7 gallons,¹ weighing 56 lb. avdp. at $6\frac{2}{9}$ lb. avdp. per gallon.

The ON *skip pund* of 346 lb. ON, of 431.6 grammes each, was made up of 24 *vættir*, of $28\frac{5}{6}$ marks² or $14\frac{5}{12}$ lb. each, = 20 lispunds of $17\frac{3}{10}$ lb. = $28\frac{5}{6}$ bismara-punds of 12 lbs., and 2 *sáld* or 12 *mælar* were reckoned as a skipbund. This skipbund was converted into the new Norse skipbund of 320 lb. Coln. = 20 lispunds of 16 lb. In order to obtain 20 lispunds of 16 whole pounds the new skipbund exceeded the old by the negligible amount of about $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. A skipbund of Norwegian spansns was 18 spansns of 18 lb. Coln. = 324 lb., which also gave a whole number of 27 bismara-punds of 12 lb. each.

It has already been shown³ that the OO mark, or half pound, of 8 aurar of 18 penningar, was exactly $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of the ON mark of 215.8 grammes, of which latter the *eyrir* was the old Icelandic-Norse ounce of 20d., of which the 'law-ounce' (half alloy) was worth 10d., as stated in *Grágás*. This 20d. ounce was also used in the Hebridean *tirunga*, or ounce-land, and not the 18d. ounce as stated by Captain Thomas.⁴

In the 11th century the Norse ounce was, for the first time, coined into 30d., in 1050, and then into 60d., in 1052, but the penny-weight always

¹ Cf. Buchanan's *Tables*, 1838, p. 98; and p. 37, where he erroneously, on the basis of wine, instead of ale measure, states "1 firkin of 9 gallons = $7\frac{1}{2}$ imperial gallons," a mistake which has been copied by others.

² Taranger in *Udsigt over den Norske Rets Historie*, 1904, II, 1. p. 125, erroneously translated: "halfa níundu mork ok tuttugu ok átta ertogar," as " $8\frac{1}{2}$ mork og 28 ørtuger eller $8\frac{5}{6}$ mork" instead of literally, $8\frac{1}{2}$ mork og 20 (*i.e.*, $28\frac{1}{2}$ mork) og 8 ørtuger eller $28\frac{5}{6}$ mork." Even his total " $8\frac{5}{6}$ mork," of his erroneous reading is also wrong, as it should have been " $9\frac{3}{4}$." If the draughtsman of the ON law had intended such an absurdity as " $8\frac{1}{2}$ mork and 28 ertogar" (*i.e.*, $8\frac{1}{2}$ mork and 1 mark and 4 ertogar) he would have rendered it "halfa níundu mork ok átta ertogar ok tuttugu." Taranger acknowledged this and other similar mistakes.

³ p. 60 *ante*.

⁴ *Faclair Gaidhlig*, 1902, s.v. *peighinn*, and in such records as have been examined. The Hebridean valuation was probably made at a later date than that of Orkney, and hence the use of the standard 20d. ounce as found in Iceland, Scotland and England.

remained at 30 to the ounce; so that 18d. OO were equal to 27 ON penny-weights, or $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of the ON ounce. Taranger suggested that the 30d. ounce was intended to make the mark of 240d. correspond with the English pound of 240d.; but why was it not left at 160d., corresponding exactly with its namesake the English mark. As there were 8 aurar of 3 ertogar in the mark the 20d. ounce gave an awkward ertog of $6\frac{2}{3}$ d., whereas 30d. gave an even number of 10d. to each ertog, in the same way as the OO eyrir of 18d. gave 3 ertogar of 6d.

The relative values of gold and silver were, in Norway 8 : 1, and in England 12 : 1. The Norse mark was 215.8 grammes and the English mark 233.276 grammes, Tower weight, or nearly $\frac{1}{12}$ th heavier. A Norse gold mark was worth 8 Norse silver marks of 240d. in Norway, and an English gold mark was worth 12 English silver marks of 160d., or 8 English pounds of 240d. in England. The numerical correspondence between the Norse value of gold in silver *marks* and pence and the English value in silver *pounds* and pence may have suggested the Norse mark of 240d.; but it was the most convenient amount for division into 24 ertogar of 10d.

A lucrative trade in exchange was possible, *e.g.*, a Norse gold mark exchanged in England for 12 times its weight in silver exchanged for $1\frac{1}{2}$ gold marks in Norway, and so on with 50% profit.

As the Orkney mark was $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of the ON mark ($\frac{194.22}{215.80}$ grammes), the Orkney skippund would have been numerically, in marks and pounds, the same as the ON skippund of 346 lb., but actually $\frac{1}{10}$ th lighter, viz., 346 lb. OO = 311.4 lb. ON. Consequently 346 lb. OO would have been 288 lb. Coln., or $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of the Norse-Cologne skippund of 320 lb., and its 24 vættir would have been exactly 12 lb. each, corresponding with the Orkney lispund of 12 lb. Such a skippund of 24 lispunds of 12 lb. = 288 lb. is mentioned by Hauk

Erlendsson, *circa*. 1300.¹ Whereas 2 sáld, or 12 mælar, were reckoned to the Norse skippund, the Orkney skip-pund consisted of 2 mælar, or 12 séttungar—the Orkney lest of corn, or malt, was 24 mælar, the twelfth part, or skippund, of which was 2 mælar or 12 séttungar. In Orkney and Shetland the mælir or ‘meil’ of malt and meal was appraised at 6d. ON, and of barley at 4d. ON. The rent of a mark of land in Papey in Shetland in 1299² is given as 1½ mælir; which was of the appraised value of 9d. ON, ‘a nine-penny’ mark, as compared with the standard rent of 10d., or $\frac{1}{24}$ th of the land-purchase price of one mark of 240d.

The Orkney, Shetland, Hebridean and Fifeshire mælir, meil, meli, as a measure of capacity (before it was converted in a weight of 72 lb. Coln.) may have been founded on the Scotch boll, which was 14.4 imperial gallons in 1124, increased to 19.05 in 1426, to 20.175 in 1457, to 28.529 in 1587, and finally, in 1618, to the wheat boll of 31.875 imperial gallons and the barley and malt boll of 46.5 gallons inclusive of heaped measure,³ usually treated as 4 and 6 bushels respectively.

With regard to Scotch influence, it should be remembered that the eyrisland⁴ (or plógsland, ploughland, of the Orkneyinga Saga in 1136), and the Hebridean tírunga were founded on the Scotch ploughland, the old rent value of which was 40 shillings, or three marks, corresponding exactly with the normal eyrisland in Orkney of 3 marks of rent (*i.e.*, 72 marks of land at 10d.), a valuation probably of the time of earl Rogn-

¹ This was the old Gulathing skippund of 4 vættir of 72 lb. Coln. Hauk had been Lawman, successively, of Gulathing, Oslo and Iceland. Orkney and Shetland were under Gulathing Law. The $\frac{2}{10}$ th skippund of Gulathing is suggestive of Orkney having got its $\frac{2}{10}$ th eyrir of $\frac{1}{10}$ ON eyrir from Gulathing.

² *O. & S. Records* I. 38 and erratum p. 285.

³ Swinton.

⁴ The term “eyrisland” is first mentioned in Hákonar Saga, in 1263, when King Hákon quartered his men on the eyrislond in Orkney; the earliest reference being the plógsland in the Orkneyinga-Saga in 1136.

vald, when tithes were first introduced into Norway (Orkney) and Scotland. Earl Rognvald held the earldom of Caithness under the Scotch crown, and would naturally be familiar with Scotch customs and introduce them into Orkney.

The *pondus Cathaniæ* of this period may have been the ON pound of 431.6 grammes, as compared with the Tower pound of 16 ounces of 466.552 grammes, or more probably the OO mælir of 72 lb. Coln.=74.239 lb. avoirdupois, which found its way as a *meli* for cheese and corn as far south as Fifeshire, in connexion with the lands of Dolgfinn, son of Thorfinn, and others, in the 11th century.¹

The old Orkney lispund of $14\frac{5}{12}$ lb. OO, which corresponded numerically with ON vætt of $14\frac{5}{12}$ lb. ON, was converted into the lispund of 12 lb. Norse-Cologne=12.373 lb. avdp.=11.383 lb. Sc. The skipund, consisted of 24 lispunds and was 288 lb. (exactly $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of the Norse skippund of 320 lb. Coln. =296.958 lb. avdps.=270/3 lb. Sc., corresponding numerically with the later Orkney and Shetland barrel of 270 lb. Sc., of 27 imperial gallons,² which could only hold $154\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Sc. of real butter at 5.7 lb. Sc.= $6\frac{2}{9}$ lb. avdp. per gallon, or 225 lb. Sc. of greasy butter or oil at $8\frac{1}{3}$ lb. Sc.=9 lb. avdp. per gallon³; the surplus of $\frac{1}{5}$ th (225-270) being occasioned by the imperfection of the pundari, or steel-yard, which registered a fifth more than it actually weighed. (See below).

The Orkney and Shetland lispund gradually increased in weight from 12 lb. Coln., say $11\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Sc., to 30 lb. Sc. in the 18th century. Eight-nineteenths of the skatt in Orkney was paid in kind weighed by the lispund

¹ Lawrie's *Early Scottish Charters*, and *Saga-Book*, IX. 405 *et seq.*

² See Postscript for a more probable explanation.

³ In the Scotch "Treasurer's Accounts" for 1526 and 1528 there is a charge for "Orkney butter to creische the quhelis and extreis" of artillery, including "Mons." It was apparently rancid grease unfit for food.

TABLE OF THE VARIATION IN VALUE OF THE NORMAL SKATT OF AN EYRISLAND OF 120 ACRES IN ORKNEY SINCE 1426.

THE EYRIR WAS OF GOLD=8 AURAR OR 1 MARK OF SILVER= $\frac{8}{10}$ ON MARK=216d. ON + 12d. FARAR-KAUP=228d. ON IN ALL.

Periods of depreciation of Scotch coinage.	Scotch pennies.		Skatt of an Orkney eyrisland.						Weight of lispund and settungr lb. Scotch.	Orkney and Shetland ¹ barrel of 27 imp. gallons, holding 225 lbs. Sc. net at 8½ lb. Sc. per imp. gallon.	
	No. of Sc. pennies coined out of a troy mark, orig. 160d. (=276 ⁷ 32d. ON)	No. of Scotch pennies =1d ON.	Money 132d ON.		Kind=96d. ON. Value given in ON pennies.	Total 228d. ON.				No. Lispunds	lb. Scotch.
			Paid in Sc. pennies.	Value in ON pennies.		Total in ON pennies.	Excess in ON d.	Deficit in ON d.			
1426-1451	300	1'08	132	132'00	96'00	228'00	—	—	11'25	24/20'000	270/225
1451-1456	512	1'80	132	73'33	96'00	169'33	—	58'7	11'25	24/20'000	270/225
1456-1475	768	2'70	132	48'80	96'00	144'80	—	83'2	11'25	24/20'000	270'225
1475-1484	1,152	4'10	132	32'00	96'00	128'00	—	100'0	11'25	24/20'000	270/225
1484-1529	1,120	4'00	132	33'00	115'20	148'20	—	79'8	13'50	20/16'600	270/225
1529-1556	1,536	5'50	234 ⁸	42'50	128'00	170'59	—	57'5	15'00 ²	18 ² /15'000	270/225
1556-1565	2,080	7'50	234	31'20	153'60	184'80	—	43'2	18'00	15/12'500	270/225
1565-1571	2,880	10'40	234	22'50	204'80	227'30	—	0'7	24'00 ⁴	12/9'375	288/225
1571-1579	2,672	9'60	234	24'37	204'80	229'17	1'17	—	24'00	12/9'375	288/225
1579-1581	3,520	12'70	234	18'42	204'80	223'22	—	4'78	24'00	12/9'375	288/225
1581-1597	3,840	13'80	234	16'95	204'80	221'75	—	6'25	24'00	12/9'375	288/225
1597-1601	4,800	17'00	234	13'75	204'80	218'56	—	9'44	24'00	12/9'375	288/225
1601 & after	5,760	20'80	234	11'25	230'40	241'65	13'65	—	27'00	10/8'333	270/225
1600-17 { 12 39	in earldom and bishopric		234	11'25	238'93	250'18	22'18	—	28'00 ⁵	10/8'000	280/225
17 { 12 39	in earldom and bishopric		234	11'25	256'00	267'25	39'25	—	30'00	8/6'666	240/200 ¹
1826 & after	in Orkney		234	11'25	232'96	244'21	16'21 ⁶	—	27'30	7'326	200 ⁷
1826 & after	in Shetland, cloth and butter		—	—	171'00	171'00	—	57'0 ⁶	30'00 ⁹	—	—

¹ Scotch barrel of 24 imp. gallons introduced 1712-39, of 200 lbs. butter at $8\frac{1}{3}$ lb. Sc. per gallon, and converted into a fixed weight of 200 lbs. Sc. in 1826. In the 1st col. the number of lispunds nominally and actually in the barrel are stated, e.g., 24/20, and the nominal and actual weight of the barrel in Scotch weight are given thus: 270/225. For alternative barrel of 28'8 gal. see

² In use in Shetland; but it may have been the Scotch stone of 16 lbs. [Postscript.

³ 132d. made up of 102d. butter-skatt and 30d. farar-kaup, of which 102d. butter-skatt was doubled in amount in the beginning of the 16th cent.

⁴ Malt, meal and butter weight only; barley weight remaining at 18lbs., so that there was no increase in barley-skatt which was paid instead of malt in the North Isles. The lispund of 24lb. was the Scotch tron stone.

⁵ The spruce stone of 28lb. Sc. ⁶ Fixed at 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. avdp. ⁷ Fixed at 217'4lb. avdp.

⁸ A total increase of $\frac{1}{4}$ in Orkney and a total decrease of $\frac{1}{4}$ in Shetland, or a net decrease of $\frac{1}{8}$ of the whole skatt in Orkney and Shetland. For

and séttungr of 12 lb. Coln. each. Along with this gradual increase in the weights there was also a corresponding gradual decrease or depreciation in the Scotch coinage in which the remaining eleven-nineteenths of the skatt was paid in money. Generally, and in England and Scotland, weights and measures gradually increased, whereas an all-round depreciation of the coinage took place. In Scotland the pound was ultimately coined into 36 pounds, while in England it is now coined into 3 pounds, so that 1 pound Scotch is equal to 1s. 8d. sterling. The depreciation of the foreign mark, originally 8 ounces, should also be noted.

In the above table the value of the normal skatt of an eyrisland in Orkney at various periods is given in its value in ON penny-weights, along with the increase in the weights of the lispund and setting and the depreciation of the Scotch coinage, etc., all expressed in their value in ON penny-weights for comparison. The increase in 'kind' corresponds to the increase in the lispund.

It is assumed that ON money-skatt began to be paid in Scotch money when the value of the depreciated Scotch penny was of the same value as the ON penny-weight, as it was in 1424-1451, during the rule of the Scotch Sinclair earls, and shortly before 1468, when the islands came under Scotch rule.

In the above table the increase of the weights corresponding with the depreciation of the money should be noted, and how one balanced the other. The 132d. ON (representing 33 lispund of butter) which were paid in Scotch money, became in 1601, and are now, only = 1s. 7½d. stg., and is balanced by the increase in the weights; so that there is now an excess of about $\frac{1}{14}$ th of the whole in Orkney and a decrease of $\frac{1}{4}$ in Shetland, or a net decrease of $\frac{5}{28}$ in Orkney and Shetland together. The increase in the weights by which

rents were paid in kind was easily adjusted by a corresponding reduction of the rents. During the period 1500-1600 the weights were doubled and the rents were halved. Lord Robert Stewart (afterwards earl of Orkney) is stated to have been the first to increase the weights after his first grant of Orkney in 1564; but in the previous year, 1563, the lispund had already been increased from 18 to 24 lb., or the Tron stone, in the bishopric estate¹; so that Lord Robert merely brought the earldom weights into line with those already existing in the bishopric—and, moreover, the lispund had already been increased from $11\frac{1}{4}$ to 18 lb.; and after Earl Patrick's increase of the lispund from 24 to 27 lb., it was, thereafter, further increased to 30 lb. by the Earl of Morton. Besides the reduction in rents there was also a reduction in tithes. The object of the increase was obviously solely to make good the devastating effect of the depreciation of the Scotch coinage, which practically wiped out $\frac{1}{19}$ ths of the skatt. It is significant that the *complaint* of 1572 which dealt with one side of the question only, viz., the increase in the weights and measures, received no satisfaction at the hands of the Scotch government, by whom, doubtless, the facts noted above were taken into account—the bishopric and the earldom were both equally involved in the question. So far as barley-skatt and barley-tithe were concerned there was no increase in the weights in 1563, the setting remaining at 18 lb., which was thereafter called bere-pundar weight, and the increased setting of 24 lb. for malt and meal was called malt-pundar weight. This increase also served a practical purpose. Hitherto, when the weights were uniform, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lasts, or 36 meils of barley were equal in value to 1 last, or 24 meils of malt or meal, and each of these was called by

¹ O. and S. Records, I., 143. A 12-lispund barrel in a feu charter. In 1568 Mackenzie cites a 15-lispund barrel in a Scotch record; and his first instance of a 12-lispund barrel is in 1584 also in a feu charter of the bishopric.

the Scotch term, a chalder, and measured from 16 to 18 Scotch bolls, according to the quality of the grain, and not 16 bolls as in Scotland.¹ Consequently, when malt or meal was paid instead of barley, 1 of either was accepted as equivalent in value to $1\frac{1}{2}$ of barley. After 1563 the relative value of malt to barley and meal was altered to $1\frac{1}{2}$ barley = $1\frac{1}{8}$ malt = 1 meal. By the increase of the malt and meal weight by $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, the result was that 2 of barley on the bere-pundar was then equal in value to 1 of meal on the malt-pundar, an easier calculation—2 to 1 instead of $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 1. Again, in about 1600, the malt setting was increased by $\frac{1}{8}$ th, from 24 lb. to 27 lb., so that 2 of barley on the bere-pundar were of the same value as 1 of malt on the new malt-pundar; and thereafter the equation was, in the case of the Orkney chalder, $1\frac{1}{2}$ last or 36 meils of barley on the bere-pundar, equal in value to 18 meils of malt, or 16 meils of meal, on the new malt-pundar. Each of these quantities was called a chalder, viz., 36 meils of barley, 18 meils of malt and 16 meils of meal, and they were all of the same value.

In the further increase of the malt-pundar, the bere-pundar setting was calculated as $\frac{1}{3}$ rd lighter than the malt-pundar setting, so that when the malt-setting was increased to 30 lb. Sc. the bere-setting was increased to 20 lb.

The Scotch barrel of 24 imperial gallons, which held 200 lb. of butter, &c., at $8\frac{1}{3}$ lb. Sc. per gallon, replaced the Orkney barrel of 27 imperial gallons early in the 18th century. It held $6\frac{2}{3}$ lispunds of 30 lb. Sc. when these were weighed separately on the bismar, but it registered 8 lispund when these were weighed together on the pundari. The inaccuracy of the pundari, or steelyard, appears to have been caused by a hook C (from which

¹ Mackenzie in his *Grievances* founded his argument on two fallacies viz:—(1) That the Orkney "chalder" was 16 bolls, and (2) that the Scotch barrel of 24 gallons was the Orkney and Shetland barrel, which we now know was 27 imperial gallons; the Scotch barrel of 24 gallons having been introduced into Orkney only, and not into Shetland, in the early 18th century.

the scale was hung) which projected about 1 inch beyond the short arm A, which latter was of the same length from the fulcrum F as was the first notch B which registered 1 setting, when the running weight was hung from that notch.¹ This actually made arm A 1 inch longer than notch B. Hence the weights registered were $\frac{1}{5}$ th more than the actual weight, so that the receiver lost $\frac{1}{6}$ th.

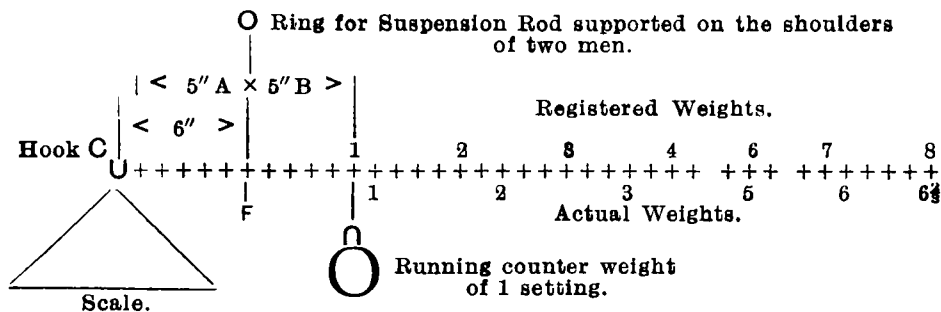


DIAGRAM OF PUNDARI.

The weight of the scale would bring the beam into equilibrium.
In ON law the weights of the various containers were fixed under penalty.

As already pointed out, the barrel of 27 imperial gallons could not possibly have held more than 225 lb. Sc. of greasy butter or oil, at the Scotch standard of $8\frac{1}{3}$ lb. per gallon = the English weight of 9 lb. avdp. per gallon of oil. So that when the lispund was 30 lb. the barrel of 27 gallons only held $7\frac{1}{2}$ when weighed separately on the bismar, and 9 when weighed together on the pundari. This erroneous enumeration goes back to 1500 in both Orkney and Shetland. On the supposition that this error also goes back to the original skippund of 288 lb. Coln. in 1300, then it would also have been a barrel of 27 gallons. Curiously enough, 288 lb. Coln. = 270/3 lb. Sc., the nominal weight of the Orkney and Shetland barrel in the 16th century and after. This barrel would have held 20 lispunds of 12 lb. Coln., or $11\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Sc., when weighed separately, *i.e.*,

¹ Cf. Shirreff's *General view of the Agriculture of Orkney*, 1814, p. 162, where A and B are calculated as 6 inches in length, with the addition to A of the 1 inch hook C, causing the registered weight to be $\frac{1}{6}$ th more than the actual weight so that the receiver lost $\frac{1}{7}$ th.

225 lb. Sc., and 24 lispunds when weighed together = 270 lb. Sc.

It seems doubtful that such a fallacy could have gone back to 1300. And yet, the Orkney and Shetland barrel is consistently enumerated as weighing 270 lb. —15 lispund \times 18 lb., 10 lispund \times 27 lb., and 9 lispund \times 30 lb. It seems incredible that such an error could have been so persistent and uniform. Can it be possible that the original skippund of 270 lb. Sc. actually held 24 lispunds \times 12 lb. Coln. ($= 11\frac{1}{4}$ lb. Sc.) $= 32\frac{2}{5}$ ¹ imperial gallons of $8\frac{1}{3}$ lb. Sc. per gallon, and that, later, the smaller barrel of 27 gallons was introduced, being exactly $\frac{1}{6}$ less in capacity, and that the pundari, or steelyard, continued to be spaced out so that the barrel registered 270 lb. as in the case of the larger one. At any rate the error was to the advantage of the tax-payers, who thereby got a reduction of $\frac{1}{6}$ or 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ %.

The reduction in the capacity of the barrel from $32\frac{2}{5}$ imperial gallons to 27 gallons, and ultimately to 24 gallons, was all to the advantage of those tax-payers who paid by the barrel, as many did. In 1826, the Orkney jury (of tax-payers?) surreptitiously reduced the lispund and setting from 32 lb. avdp. to 29 $\frac{5}{8}$ lb. avdp., whereas in Shetland it was honestly fixed at its then actual weight of 32 lb. avdp., at which it had been legally fixed as a result of the 'pundar process' in 1759.

It is uncertain what method was used in converting the mælir from a measure of capacity into a uniform weight for (1) barley, at say 48 lb. avdp. per bushel, (2) malt, at 36 lb., and (3) oat-meal, at 48 lb.² However the adjustment of the weight to suit the various com-

¹ The English butter barrel of 4 firkins is 36 imperial gallons.

² The standard weight of barley in Orkney is 48 lb. and the fixed weight of malt and meal at the boll of 140 lb. gives 35 lb. per bushel. In accordance with practice malt is $\frac{1}{4}$ less in weight than the barley from which it is made. Consequently when barley and malt measures were converted into weights, the bushel of malt at 36 lb. being the basis, the corresponding measure of barley would be $\frac{36}{48}$ bushel.

modities was quite simple, as each was appraised, viz., a meil of malt or meal at 6d. ON, and of barley at 4d. One would imagine that malt, the principal medium, would have been used in arriving at an approximate weight. The mælir was fixed at 72 lb. Coln.=74.23 lb. avdp.=68.28 lb. Sc. There were 2 mælar in the skippund of $32\frac{2}{5}$ imperial gallons, or 4 bushels, at 37 lb. avdp. per bushel, as compared with the usual estimate of 36 lb. for malt, or practically the same.

It may, therefore, be possible that the original OO skippund was a container of about 32 imperial gallons, or 4 bushels, holding 24 lispunds of 12 lb. = 288 lb. Coln. of butter or oil, and 2 mælar of 72 lb. each, and that the Orkney and Shetland spann was originally a butter or oil measure of about 7 gallons, converted into a butter weight of 63 lb. Coln.

If the original skatt were still paid in kind at its original weight (calculating butter at 6d. per lb. avdp., and malt at its pre-war price, in 1913, of 15s. 8d. per boll of 140 lb. avdp.), it would yield £17 1s. 9d. as compared with the present payment (at the same prices) of £16 8s. 7½d. By this method of comparison the tax-payers are paying about $\frac{1}{7}$ th less, instead of $\frac{1}{4}$ th more, as indicated in the above Table.

SHETLAND SKATT.

(From the MS. rentals of *circa*, 1500, 1627 and 1716.)

The original skatt paid in Shetland was based on 24 ells of vaðmál, or homespun, and half of its value in malt, of which the total amounted, as in Orkney, to 1 OO mark = $\frac{9}{10}$ ths ON mark, or 216d. ON. In accordance with 'Orkney and Shetland Payment,' $\frac{2}{3}$ was paid in butter in Orkney, and in vaðmál in Shetland, and $\frac{1}{3}$ in malt in both Orkney and Shetland, but latterly in butter in Shetland. Two-thirds of an OO mark was $5\frac{1}{3}$ aurar \times 18d.=96d., so that 24 ells made $4\frac{1}{2}$ ells to the eyrir at 4d. OO per ell. The ON equivalent of

this was $\frac{6}{10}$ mark = $4\frac{4}{5}$ aurar \times 3od. = 144d., and there were accordingly 5 ells ($\frac{1}{9}$ more than OO) to the eyrir at 6d. ON per ell. The remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ had to be paid in malt of *half the value* of vaðmál, viz., $\frac{1}{3}$ mark OO = 48d. OO, which was paid in 12 mælar at 4d. = 48d., or $\frac{1}{3}$ OO mark. The ON equivalent of this was 12 mælar OO \times 6d. ON = 72d. or $\frac{3}{10}$ ON mark, making in all, with vaðmál, $\frac{9}{10}$ ON mark. Leiðangr ('farar-kaup' in Orkney, representing an original *leiðangrs-fararkaup), war-tax, the true skatt, was fixed, as in Orkney, at $\frac{1}{12}$ the value of vaðmál (of butter in Orkney), viz., 8d. OO = 12d. ON.

Such was Shetland skatt in the 11th century, after which the cloth currency gradually depreciated until, in the beginning of the 13th century, it was reduced to $\frac{1}{3}$ of its original value, viz., $13\frac{1}{2}$ ells instead of $4\frac{1}{2}$ to the OO eyrir, thereby reducing the total value of cloth from 96d. OO to 32d. OO = 48d. ON. Consequently malt-skatt, which had to be $\frac{1}{2}$ the value of cloth-skatt, was reduced to 4 meils at 4d. OO (= 6d. ON), and leiðangr from 8d. OO (= 12d. ON) to $2\frac{2}{3}$ d. OO = 4d. ON.

THE ORIGINAL SKATT OF AN EYRISLAND IN SHETLAND.

Shetland	d.	Mark	=	Old Norse	d.	Mark	
vaðmál 24 ells × 4d. = 96	=	$\frac{2}{3}$		24 ells × 6d. = 144	=	$\frac{6}{10}$	
malt, 12 mælar × 4d. = 48	=	$\frac{1}{3}$		12 mælar × 6d. = 72	=	$\frac{3}{10}$	
	144	=	1		216	=	$\frac{9}{10}$
leiðangr ($\frac{1}{12}$ of vaðmál) = 8	=	$\frac{1}{18}$		($\frac{1}{12}$ of vaðmál) = 12	=	$\frac{1}{20}$	
Total	152	=	$1\frac{1}{18}$		228	=	$1\frac{9}{20}$

IN THE 13TH CENTURY AND AFTER.

Shetland	d.	Mark	=	Old Norse	d.	Mark	
vaðmál, 24 ells × 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ d. = 32	=	$\frac{2}{9}$		24 ells × 2d. = 48	=	$\frac{1}{3}$	
malt ¹ , 4 mælar × 4d. = 16	=	$\frac{1}{9}$		4 mælar × 6d. = 24	=	$\frac{1}{10}$	
	48	=	$\frac{1}{3}$		72	=	$\frac{3}{10}$
leiðangr ($\frac{1}{12}$ vaðmál) = 2 $\frac{2}{3}$	=	$\frac{1}{54}$		($\frac{1}{12}$ vaðmál) = 4	=	$\frac{1}{60}$	
Total	50 $\frac{2}{3}$	=	$1\frac{9}{54}$		76	=	$1\frac{9}{60}$

¹ Malt at half the value of vaðmál.

Shetland skatt had thus depreciated to $\frac{1}{3}$ its original value, from 228d. ON to 76d. ON. Lord Robert Stewart partly corrected this by increasing the ON ell of 18 inches, by $\frac{1}{3}$, to the Danish ell of 24 inches, and by increasing the capacity of the oil can, and the weight of the lispund, by $\frac{1}{3}$. Latterly, malt-skatt was paid in butter, of which 1 lispund at 4d. was accepted as the equivalent value of 1 meil of malt at 6d., and hence the value of the lispund (which continued nominally as a 'meil') was increased from 4d. to 6d., to the advantage of the tax-payer. Lord Robert's alterations increased the value of skatt from 76d. to 132.8613d. ON, still leaving a deficit of 95.1387d., or about $\frac{5}{12}$ of the original 228d.

Finally, in 1627, and after, Shetland skatt was converted into money at the then current market price of cloth and butter, as follows :—

Present skatt of an eyrisland in Shetland.

CONVERSION VALUE.

	£	s.	d.
24 ells of cloth at 4s. Sc. = 96s. Sc. =	0	8	0 stg.
leanger, 2 ells at 4s. Sc. = 8s. Sc. =	0	0	8
butter, 4 lispund ¹ at 48s. Sc. = 192s. Sc. =	0	16	0
Total	£1	4	8

This was of the value of 170.767d. ON, or a deficit of 57.233d., or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the original 228d. ON.

If this conversion had not taken place in 1627, the present value of the above items would be as follows : 26 ells \times 2 feet = 52 ft. = $17\frac{1}{3}$ yards, at, say, 5s. stg. a yard = £4 . 6 . 8, and 4 lispund \times 32 lb. avdp. = 128 lb. of butter at, say, 6d. a pound = £3 . 4 . 0, or a total of at least £7 . 10 . 8d. = 1094.4d. ON, or nearly five times more than the original skatt of 228d. ON.

The Shetland barrel of 27 gallons held 48 cans in the 16th century, the can measuring $4\frac{1}{2}$ imperial pints. Lord Robert Stewart increased the can by $\frac{1}{3}$, from $4\frac{1}{2}$

¹ The lispund at this time was still 24 lb., the tron stone, and remained so till the end of the century when the 28lb. lispund, the Spruce stone, was introduced, a hundred years after it was used in Orkney.

to 6 pints, or 1 Scotch quart, so that the barrel then held only 36 cans. There was an allowance of $\frac{1}{2}$ and then of 1 mutchkin, for the oil sticking to the can, thereby increasing the barrel to 30 gallons, at which it was fixed in 1826, when the can was fixed at 1 English wine gallon, 36 of which = 30 imperial gallons.

SKATT OF AN EYRISLAND IN SHETLAND AT VARIOUS PERIODS.

11th century: 228d. ON	=	£1 12 10s 1g.
of the value of $3\frac{1}{2}$ cows at 4		
to the mark of 240d.		
13th century: 76d. ON	=	£0 10 11½
1627 and after: converted into		£1 4 8
Present value if conversion had		
not taken place		£7 10 8

SHETLAND TITHE.

For the assessment of tithe, tíund, the cultivated land in Shetland was divided into areas of 72 marks each, called 'a piece of corn teind,' each of which was further sub-divided into 4 'lasts of land' of 18 marks each. The block of 72 marks corresponded with the normal eyrisland of 18 pennylands of the normal purchase value of 4 marks of 240d. per pennyland. The standard rent of a mark was $\frac{1}{24}$ of its value, viz., 10d. ($\frac{24}{24}$ 0d.). Rent was calculated as $\frac{1}{2}$ the produce, so that $\frac{1}{5}$ of the rent = $\frac{1}{10}$ of the produce, and consequently the uniform tithe of a mark of land was 2d. ON. In Scots law $\frac{1}{5}$ of the rent = $\frac{1}{10}$ the produce, and included both parsonage and vicarage tithe, whereas in Shetland it was latterly restricted to, and called 'corn-teind,' and vicarage tithe charged as well. Old Norse and Icelandic land values are usually expressed in their value in cloth, and a last of 18 marks was the value of a iast of 12 packs, pakkar, of 60, or a half-hundred ells each, = 720 ells \times 6d. ON = 4320d. = 18 marks of 240d., the original price of a last, or 12 packs of vaðmál in Shetland in the 11th century. In OO value it would have been 20 marks, which proves that the mark valuation was in ON and not OO marks, and that this valuation was in existence

at the time when tithe was introduced into Norway (and Orkney and Shetland), about 1100.

Postscript. Possibly the previous suggestion that the mælir is founded on the Scotch boll of 1124 is correct. The original Orkney skippund would therefore be 28.8 imperial gallons, or two Scotch bolls of 14.4 gallons or 1.8 bushels, of the weight of 24 Orkney lispunds of 10.5 lb. Coln., or 252 lb. Coln. of butter, which works out at 9 lb. avdp. per gallon—for comparison and simplicity the equations are given in later Cologne weight. The 2 mælar, of 6 settings each, would thus be 63 lb. Coln. each, having been converted into a weight on the basis of 35 lb. (= 36 lb. advp.) per bushel, the Orkney standard weight of malt.¹ The spann of 63 lb. would then be exactly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the skip-pund and weigh 6 lispunds of $10\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. Coln., which at the appraised value of 4d. per lispund would give 24d. This skippund of 252 lb. (= 239 lb. Sc.) was exactly $\frac{7}{8}$ of the Gulathing one of 288 lb. (= 272 lb. Sc.). The spann was still a measure of capacity, as compared with the mælir which had been converted into a fixed weight. After this, on the conversion of the OO 24-lispund skippund into a Cologne 21-lispund skip-pund of 252 lb., the lispund was increased by $\frac{1}{7}$ in weight, from $10\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 lb. Coln., so that the spann could then only hold $5\frac{1}{4}$ lispunds \times 12 lb., instead of $6 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$, of the skatt value of 21d., instead of 24d., with the result that the overflow of $\frac{3}{4}$ lispund, or 3d., was charged in addition. The Orkney butter-scatt of an eyrisland consisted of 6 spanns of 21d., = 126d., + 3d. per spann = 18d., which was charged extra. By the increase

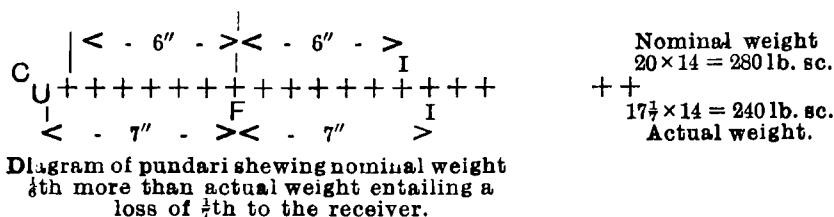
¹ It is unlikely that a bushel of malt, in the 12th century, would have weighed 36 lb. avdp., the present Orkney standard weight; and it is, therefore, more probable that 35 lb. Coln. was the average weight of barley and malt at the ratio of $1\frac{1}{3} : 1$, i.e., 40 lb. barley and meal, and 30 lb. malt. In avoirdupois this would give barley and meal, 41.2 lb. and malt 30.9 lb. per bushel. This seems possible having regard to the lighter grain of primitive agriculture and the imperfect threshing by flail which would not remove all the lighter husks.

of the lispund by $\frac{1}{7}$, the skippund of 252 lb. only held 21 lispunds of 12 lb., so that the mælir of 6 settings, or lispunds, was thereby increased by $\frac{1}{7}$ th in weight. The spann was thereafter converted into a weight of 63 lb. as we find it in 1328. In Old Orkney weight the skippund of 252 lb. Coln. = 302.75 lb. OO, = 272.475 lb. ON = 239 lb. Sc. = 259.84 lb. avdp. The reason for the increase of the lispund by $\frac{1}{7}$ was to increase the bulk of butter- and malt-skatt, and to make it correspond with the Gulathing lispund of 12 lb. Coln. For commercial purposes it seems probable that the Orkney weights were, by the 12th century, converted into their equivalents in Norse weight, viz. the skip-pund of 302.75 lb. would be 272.475 ON = 252 lb. Coln. The original skippund was, therefore, the same as that of 1500 and after, viz. 27, or 27 + 18 mutchkins = 28.6875, and finally + about 36 mutchkins = 30 gallons.

In the beginning of the 15th century the 21-lispund barrel of 252 lb. Coln., or 239 lb. Sc., was probably converted into a barrel of 20 lispund \times 12 lb. Sc. = 240 lb. Sc. By the year 1500 the lispund was increased from 12 to about 14 lb. Sc., so that the barrel only held $17\frac{1}{7}$ th lispunds, but the pundari was adjusted so that the barrel still nominally weighed 20 lispund, or $\frac{1}{6}$ more than the actual weight. This adjustment may have been done to conceal the increase of the lispund and setting by which the bulk of the skatt was paid in small quantities. The method of adjustment adopted was the lengthening of the short arm by $\frac{1}{6}$ th by the addition of a projecting hook C. Thus the existing notches on the long arm would serve for the increased counter-weight of 14 lb. This identical pundari was thereafter applicable and used for all further increases of the lispund— 20×14 , 15×18 , 12×24 , $10 \times 27/28$, etc., discrepancies being adjusted by *e.g.* a 6 lb. heap in the case of the 12×24 lb. barrel. An anomaly caused by this false weight was that the price of the barrel was

that of the nominal number of lispunds which it held, or $\frac{1}{8}$ th more than the price of the actual lispunds it held. When the lispund was 28 lb. in 1653, it was priced at £2, and the barrel of 10 nominal lispunds at £20, although it actually held a little over $8\frac{1}{2}$ lispunds worth £17. However, there may have been an allowance 'to the good,' as mentioned by Mackenzie in the case of the meil and lispund.¹

This pundari corresponds exactly with Shirreff's explanation.



The Orkney chalder of 36 meils of barley (= 24 meils on the malt pundar), 18 meils of malt, and 16 meils of meal, were, in 1600, each equal to the Scotch chalder of 16 bolls and sometimes 18. Barley and malt chalder were each 16 bolls of 6 bushels each, of which barley weighed $40\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per bushel; and malt, in accordance with Scotch practice, which still holds good, was exactly $\frac{1}{4}$ less in weight, viz. $30\frac{3}{8}$ lb. Sc. per bushel; whereas the meal chalder was 16 bolls of 4 bushels at $40\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Sc. per bushel, of the same weight as barley. The present standard weight of barley in Orkney is 48 lb. avdp. (as compared with the Scotch standard of 56 lb.), and of malt 36 lb., $\frac{1}{4}$ less than barley. One hundred bushels of barley produces $100 + 6\%$, i.e. 106 bushels of malt; and as 100 bushels of barley was of the same value as 100 bushels of malt in Orkney skatt, consequently the maltster's profit was 6 of the 106 bushels of malt. In accordance with the above statement, barley and meal both weighed the same, so that the Orkney standard requires the meal to weight 48 lbs. per bushel. Mr.

¹ *Grievances*, pp. 72, 77.

John Mooney has kindly ascertained that at present Orkney oatmeal weighs $46\frac{1}{2}$ lb. avdp. per bushel. The history of the Orkney last or chalder will be dealt with in the next number of this *Miscellany*, showing a close relationship between the increase of the Orkney weights and the Scotch boll.

JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION TO SHETLAND IN JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST, 1834.

BY EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

EDITED BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

III.

(Continued from p. 200 ante, Monday, June 16th).

As we sat gazing upon the scene before us, all rapt in the contemplation of nature in her wildest form, bang went the unromantic Chalmers's gun, and down whirled a magnificent swabie at my very feet. True he fell at my feet, so near as almost to touch them, but these extremities of my frame were hanging at that moment over the precipice, and the poor bird fell over and over in the air till he finally took ground at the bottom of the precipice, almost close to the water's edge. We regretted this mishap, for we wanted a specimen much, and the poor bird's life had been sacrificed to no purpose. In returning from the Holm towards the western and lower extremity of the island, we fell in with the nests of the Arctic gull and procured seven or eight eggs of that rare species. These birds, like the others of their tribe, construct no nests, these appearing merely slight depressions upon the bare heath, and this most probably is caused by the bird sitting upon her eggs.

At this time there were no doubt plenty of young ones, but all our exertions failed to discover them in the long thick herbage. We procured also several eggs of the herring-gulls, who make a large nest of dry roots and grass, using also a considerable quantity of heather twigs and especially the *Juncus squarrosus* for that purpose. In the nests of the parasitic gulls we did not in general find more than two eggs, and three in those of the herring-gull. While searching for the nests of the former species I was several times nearly struck on the head by the parent birds, and I was infinitely amused by watching another peculiarity, in which they resemble the peewits and others of feigning lameness and screaming in a most doleful tone in order to withdraw the attention of the intruder from their nests. This scream is most extraordinary, being something between the mewing of a cat and the shrill note of the kestrel hawk. So bold are these birds that they will attack any bird of twice their size that ventures near their nests, and one unfortunate lesser black-backed gull was driven by the buffets of the "scoutieallin" within range of our guns, and soon was added to the day's list of game killed and carried home. A perfect concord, however, exists between the parasitic and herring-gulls, who build on the same ground and, indeed, in my opinion, the herring-gull is the most cowardly of all the genus *Larus*, as the smallest of them frequently attack, and generally succeed in making it disgorge its prey. During the time we were engaged in pursuing these gulls and in searching for their eggs, Chalmers had left us, and had descended to the bottom of the hill towards the farmhouse, the only building now upon the island, though the remains of several "towns" or clusters of cottages were visible on the southern end of the island. About an hour after he had parted from us we heard shot after shot fired down below us, and I remarked to Proctor that he must be having rare sport down there. How

vain are the imaginations of man ! The shots we had heard turned out to be signals of distress, of real heart-rending distress from want of provisions, and instead of a full game-bag I found my worthy cousin with an empty stomach, and his natural good humour *almost* evaporated under such severe privations. True, upon reflection, I found that I was very hungry myself, but the exciting scenes among the gulls on the hills had made me quite forget that nine hours had elapsed since I had tasted food. We were most hospitably received by Mr. Booth, a Peterhead farmer, who had located himself here, and with great advantage at all events to the agriculture on this productive little island. Every branch of farming here pursued had greatly improved since my last visit, and the rabbits which formerly overran the island are now nearly extirpated. Our mutual good humour was soon restored by the appearance of hot wheaten cakes fresh from the girdle, and such a luxury is not in Shetland of every-day occurrence. Recrossing the Sound of Noss, we shot some snipes in a wet meadow covered with the yellow flowers of the *caltha palustris*. An unfortunate corn-crake ventured to croak forth its harsh note almost beneath our very feet. We were still in great good humour for sport, but a charge and a half of powder was all that we could muster for this "grande chasse." We waited patiently till we ascertained the exact spot from whence the sound proceeded, and then rushing furiously with presented arms into a patch of corn, we forced the poor corn-crake to rise upon the wing to avoid being trodden underfoot. Up he got, clumsily enough, with his long legs dangling in the air, and almost instantly was he laid prostrate by a shot from my half-charged fowling-piece. I was assured by some intelligent native that these birds remain in Shetland throughout the year, and that during the stormy period of winter they secrete themselves in old walls and in the recesses of the cliffs. An

individual of this species was found thus concealed in an old wall, in February or March, 1833. It was in wretched condition, and Mr. Peter Williamson, of Lerwick, to whom it was brought, describes it as consisting of little more than bones and feathers. It is possible the corn-crake in Shetland, like the water-rail in Iceland, should be a constant resident, while both species are migratory in countries farther to the south. We recrossed Bressay Sound about 9 p.m., but it was past midnight ere we could conclude of our laborious task of laying by in safety the birds we had shot this day.

Tuesday, June 17th. This morning was entirely spent in preparing the skins of the birds we had procured at Noss. Proctor excited great admiration among the natives by the rapid manner in which he flayed the specimens and then restored them to the "shape of life" by a little tow, wire and hay. The art of stuffing a bird was evidently regarded as a deep mystery by the Lerwegians, and only one or two were admitted into the arcanum of Proctor's garret while these occult operations were going forward. Whilst hard at work in Peter Williamson's garret a little girl came up with a duck and a very fine chicken, and wished us to purchase. The price was 6d. for the duck and fivepence for the chicken, which we thought was cheap enough, but Peter Williamson thought they were too dear!! Some eggs of the oyster-catcher, golden plover and hooded crow were likewise brought in, which were, of course, most joyfully purchased. The sun was bright and warm, but the wind blew cuttingly from the north. The "George Canning" sloop sailed to-day from Lerwick for Leith, and we availed ourselves of this opportunity to tell our southern friends of our safe arrival in the Ultima Thule.

Wednesday, June 18th. We set off this morning, about seven, for a loch on the hills where the black-

throated diver is said to breed. Passing Sound we left the road to Scalloway on our right, and soon arrived at the small lake, but not a living creature was seen upon its surface. We shot a few golden plovers on the hills around, and then turned to the south towards the Loch of Brinnastir [Brindister]. On a holm in the centre of this large sheet of water the great black-backed gull breeds in apparent security, nesting amidst the ruins of an ancient burgh, which can easily be seen from the shore. Probably, like the burgh near Lerwick, it communicated with the land by means of a causeway of huge stones, but I own this to be entirely an hypothesis of my own, for I am not aware that any traces of it exist. Isolated as these gulls are in appearance from the tyranny of man, they are to a certain extent still tributary to his power. The neighbouring cottagers have constructed a small raft of two or three empty barrels, and a few deals, and on this frail bark they venture across the wide lock, with a fair wind, and landing upon the holm carry away a rich booty of the eggs and young of the swartbak. From the Loch we proceeded to the town of Brinnastir; a town being, as every Scotchman knows, only a farmhouse or homestead. In Shetland it seems also to mean the land lying around a cluster of houses. Entering a small hovel, through a dwelling of the better sort, we were hospitably welcomed to Shetland by the owner, and soon in right ancient Hialtlandic fashion "after gamle skik" he set before us a jug of bland with bannocks, sweet milk, and bursten broonies. Here, I am sure, the reader is brought to a full stop by the mention of all these most unheard of delicacies. Bland is a thin sharp drink prepared by pouring hot water on the buttermilk as soon as the butter is taken out; and it is then set aside until fermentation, to a slight degree, has taken place. In three or four days it is fit for use.

(To be continued.)