



OLD-LORE MISCELLANY  
OF  
ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND  
SUTHERLAND

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# OLD-LORE MISCELLANY

## OF

### ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND

Vol. X (1935-1946)

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VIRDA BRECK, NORTH ROE, NORTHMAVEN.

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

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

BY EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.

EDITED BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

## IV.

(Continued from Vol. IX, p. 256, Wed., June 18th.)

For my part I am extravagantly fond of the beverage, and perhaps not a little on account of its being used, as in time long gone by, as the general drink of the northern nations, and to this day blanda is to be met with in every farmhouse in Iceland. But if this dainty beverage excite not the thirst, of a certainty he will hunger sorely on ruminating over the description of that *summum bonum* the “bursten broonie.” And here will I generously present him with a receipt for the compounding thereof. Take of the coarsest Shetland oatmeal ground in a genuine Shetland water-mill, and not afterwards sifted, two good gowpens, or handfuls. Add of water *quantum suff.* till it sticks well together. Make it then into a round cake, three inches in diameter by two in depth, put it then into the hot turf ashes, till it is thoroughly done on the outside. Then withdraw it, and on breaking the cake there will forthwith rush out a most savoury steam, which you must check *instante* by a large lump of butter, and then eat cautiously, for fear of swallowing too much sand at a mouthful, or unless you break a tooth upon a fragment of the millstone. Such is a bursten broonie.

Cholmely had left us for a few minutes to procure some snipes in a meadow, and we wound our way down to the water's edge, when, seeing a boat, we resolved to return by water to Lerwick. We soon engaged a boatman, a perfect Hercules, six feet two at least, and altogether a most noble specimen of the Shetlander.

We proceeded to the banks of the *voe* to a little cove where his boat was drawn up upon the beach. How often have I thought of the clear deep blue water of this lovely cove where the rocks went sheer down on every side save one, where a sparkling bed of white sand seemed placed there to invite the bather into the crystal water. I was greatly interested by our boatman, who seemed to possess a great fund of good sense, yet he was as unpolished and unsophisticated as an Icelandic. Everything we possessed was to him a matter of novelty, and he was not, like the proud Highlander, ashamed to acknowledge himself ignorant of their use. His long hair hung in elf-locks over his shoulder, escaping in abundance from beneath the red cap which marked him as the father of a family. He said he was happy and contented and did not care much for seeing other climes, for, added he, “*heir haw we ta trui leet o’ ta Gōspell.*” Nothing excited his curiosity more than our percussion double-barreled guns, for till his day he had never seen anything but single-flints. We moved his boat down from the beach on which it lay, and in a few minutes were gliding peacefully out of the little cove towards a flock of *teiste* or *tysties*,<sup>1</sup> which sported at a short distance from the shore. There they lay upon the glassy surface of the *voe*, quietly reposing on the unruffled water, whilst we pulled out stealthily to seaward to cut off their retreat. Thus hemmed in they were forced to fly past us or to dive; they generally endeavoured to escape by the latter means, but long experience had taught us to hope for this as the surest way of getting within shot. If they flew they generally came within range of our guns, and at a little distance above the surface, presenting us with a point-blank mark, and rendering almost certain our success. When they dived we knew they dived to seaward, and

<sup>1</sup> O.N. *peisti*, *columbus grylle*, explained by Edmonston as the black guillemot, and by Vigfusson as the sea-pigeon.

consequently we pulled out a short distance, and watched eagerly for the flashing of the white spot upon their wings as they rose to the surface. It is well known that most of the diving sea-birds use their wings as well as their feet, when progressing beneath the surface of the water. Proctor was delighted to see the teisties, he called them his dear old friends, and then, for love, knocked them down. They had been, he said, his constant companions in Iceland when he had visited that country in the preceding summer. Proctor was evidently a tender-hearted individual, for he used to moralize most piteously over the hard fate of his dear friends, but always prudently abstained from giving utterance to his feelings till the poor bird lay dead upon his knee!!!

Cholmely now appeared on the rocks above us and we soon got him safely on board, and then pulled away for the Ness of Brinnastir. We were busily engaged in admiring the rocks, under whose dark shadow we now rowed, and Proctor, with hawk-like eye, was watching the cormorants as they splashed along in the broad glare of the mid-day sun, when a seal put up its head within two or three yards of the boat. Instantly there arose a mighty commotion on board of the frail craft, each striving to be the first to discharge his gun at the foe, in consequence of which my rifle-ball skipped clear over the poor animal's head and played ducks and drakes far across the voe. Of course, after so rough and uncourteous a reception, the object of our pursuit disappeared in an instant. I have often seen these animals following a boat for a long time, eyeing everything with the curiosity of a savage, and I do give some credit to the report, that they are fond of musical sounds. One of our number was certainly in this case whistling as loud as he could; but had that seal had any perception of tune, the horrid sounds of discord that emanated from our musician's lips would long ago



have driven it away. We rounded a small stack about 50 feet in height, on which the herring-gulls had built their nests, and then rowed into a narrow gio surrounded by tremendous precipices. On the ledges were numerous nests of green cormorants and teisties, and higher still the herring-gull had fixed its residence. Puffins and guillemots were also here, but we needed them not and did not wish to commit wanton slaughter. The cormorants were the main objects of our pursuit, and unfortunately the majority of their nests were situated 90 or 100 yards above our heads. This, of course, was considerably beyond the reach of a certain shot and it is unfair to wound the poor creatures, as they then often creep back into the nest and die. Here the rifle formed the only efficient engine of destruction, knocking them over in grand style, and frightening the rest from their elevated stations. On leaving their nests these birds always swoop down considerably, and this unfortunate habit frequently brought them within range of our guns. On this day they got but little quarter. If we missed them when they sailed over our heads from the rock, we at least intercepted them on their return, for they had to come in over a large shoulder of projecting [rock] which brought them close upon us ere they were aware of our presence.

We now re-embarked, for we had landed at the head of the gio to shoot the "scarfs," and on pulling out of the inlet we were greatly surprised at meeting with another party of sportsmen at this desolate cliff. It consisted of Mr. Lawrence Duncan, of Lerwick, and Mr. Cowan. As we passed between them and the rock, they fired right over our heads, at a cormorant sitting on her nest on the rocks. The bird could not be less than 80 or 100 yards distant from their boat, and of course for the moment it escaped unhurt, but Proctor the next minute enjoyed the exquisite delight of bringing it safely down into our boat. We again, after

pulling a few hundred yards, landed at the mouth of a cave which ran far into the rocks. It was of the kind termed here, as in Iceland, *hellyer* [O.N. *hellir*, cave in a rock] or a cave into which the sea flows. As we jumped upon the rocks I was much surprised to observe a seal swimming constantly around within a few yards of the mouth of the cave. I did not fire upon it, as it was in a direct line between me and Mr. Duncan's boat. But the two Lerwegian sportsmen were by no means so scrupulously careful of my life. Bang! bang! went both guns, and the heavy swan-shot and bullets rattled about me with no very agreeable music. I was almost tempted to retaliate in a similar way upon the authors of such perilous sporting. In the meantime Peter Williamson and our Herculean boatman had pulled into the cave and disappeared in its dark recesses. We hailed them from without to aid us in getting hold of a scarf that we had killed and which had fallen into the water. Out they came, exclaiming that they had had hold of a young seal by the flippers at the end of the *hellyer*, but which in the darkness had escaped from their hands. We accordingly proceeded to its farthest extremity, where there was a beach of large stones, and in one recess of this darksome dwelling the poor little seal was lying, when the approach of the boat caused it to betray itself by the most plaintive cries, which Williamson said very much resembled those of a puppy. Our boatman said that he thought at first that it was an otter, but declared he would readily have gripped it even if it had been a full-grown animal of that species.

We now rowed again to the stack on which we had before seen the nests of the herring-gulls, and our boatman volunteered to climb to its summit, though its sides were as nearly as possible perpendicular. This he boldly accomplished, and having filled his cap with the eggs, he tied it around his neck and prepared to descend, a task far more arduous than the gaining of

the summit, and which was rendered still more difficult by his losing his way when in the most dangerous part of the precipice. Close to this rock we shot at and wounded an oyster-catcher, which, falling into the sea, swam away very fast before our boat. In pulling up in pursuit, a great question arose as to whether this bird could dive, but was soon convinced of my error by its disappearing under the very bows of the boat. Down he sank in the clear blue water, till a faint, faint shade of white was all that distinguished him from the element with which he was surrounded; by degrees, however, it grew brighter and brighter, he was rising again, and as he emerged all breathless from the depths below we seized the poor bird in triumph and placed him in the boat. We killed a few marrots,<sup>1</sup> razor-bills and teisties on our return homewards, and we had really a good stout pull of three hours to reach Lerwick. On the way our Charon had the pleasure of being made acquainted with the use of the double-barreled gun, of which, as I before stated, he was entirely ignorant; and on comprehending its mechanism he expended all his vocabulary in praise of the ingenuity of mankind.

On arriving at Lerwick we concluded our day's sport by shooting a hooded crow, close to the south end of the town, and it is singular enough that this was the only bird of that species that we procured during our stay in Shetland, although they are by no means uncommon in the country. At night we were busily engaged in preparing our specimens, and retired to rest reflecting on the difficulty of finishing them by the ensuing evening.

Tuesday, June 19th. During the whole of the morning and the greater part of the afternoon we were engaged in arranging and laying by the spoils of the preceding day. About noon Dr. Cowie called and

<sup>1</sup> In Scotland and Cumberland (1) Common guillemot or (2) the razor-bill.—E. D. D.

detected me in the act of taking a sketch of the good town of Lerwick out of Peter Williamson's window.<sup>1</sup> He accompanied me to the south of the town to some cottages, where we engaged three ponies for the next day's journey to Scalloway. Their owner was a right funny old Shetlander, and entertained us with some long stories regarding his pecuniary losses, in the broadest Shetland dialect and with an amazing quantity of genuine humour. We purchased some biscuit, rum and whiskey, to support us in Foulah, for the necessities even of life are scarce enough in that remote island.

In the evening we went to see Mr. Bain's collection of bird-skins, he had some which I greatly coveted, but at the time we could not arrange about the price. He showed some beautiful skins of the sea-eagle, the pintail-duck, the fulmar, etc., etc.

By dint of really hard labour, Proctor had skinned all the birds by about 11 p.m., and we then retired to bed to prepare for the severe exertion of the morrow. Proctor has since obtained several skins from Mr. Bain, the specimen of the fulmar had been shot in Bressay Sound, where many are seen every winter.

*(To be continued)*

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## CLICK MILL AT BUTTERMERE.

BY NICHOLAS SIZE.

IN Buttermere village at the point where the Ordnance map shows a change in the name of the Sail Beck to the Mill Beck, there is a curiously carved rock showing a large crescent or segment of a circle, the diameter of which must have been about seven feet. It is balanced on the other side of the beck by a broken carving showing a small segment of a similar circle.

<sup>1</sup> Facing p. 44, Vol. ix.

The two together are said to mark the site of a click mill built across the little gorge through which the beck runs. Each circle contained a shaft with a set of paddles which revolved with the flow of the stream running between them. The shafts went up to the milling chamber above, and each went through the nether millstone and operated the upper one, which would rotate perpetually by direct action whether in use or not. The carving is about eighteen inches deep, and as there has been a natural fall immediately below them, the paddles (working horizontally) would not be impeded by slack water, as it would not get away rapidly; and the two sets of paddles would occasionally click together, hence the name by which such mills were known in Scotland and Ireland. I cannot learn of any similar mill in England, but have seen the remains of one at the Isle of Man, and have drawings of others in Orkney and Shetland. There is one still working at Kilshanwy, near Galway, in Ireland, and three still working in Norway. Their merit is that they are very simple and do not get out of order. Ours at Buttermere was dismantled about 1735, when the miller's house was purchased for a Parsonage, and for three years was occupied by "Wonderful Walker," who obtained a license for it as an inn.

This type of mill was probably invented in China in remote times, as similar remains to ours have been found along the Siberian trade route, Thibet, Turkestan, Persia, and various out of the way parts of Europe, so it was almost certainly introduced by the Norwegians who populated the valleys after the withdrawal of King Dunmail.

Ours is attributed to that Norwegian, Shelagh of Eskdale, who died in the year 1000, and whose cross still stands in Gosforth Churchyard. She was the daughter of Olaf Cuaran, King of Dublin; and even if the mill is older than her period it is a curious fact

that the adjoining hill is called Blakes Riggs (Blakes ridges or cultivated land), and Blake is a Galway name; so that this Irish lady may have imported people from the mill she had seen near Galway to carry out her imitation of it in Buttermere, which in her time was converted into a large stronghold where refugees could be provisioned by boat from Lindsays Peel at the foot of Crummock Water.

An illustration of the Shetland mill will be found in *Miscellany*, Vol. II, p. 76.<sup>1</sup> The upper millstone is attached to the spindle of the water wheel (probably consisting of eight paddles), and the grain probably descended through a hopper into the centre of the upper stone. This would operate automatically, but as the grain would probably be rye or oats it would need stoving before being put in.

Such mills were extravagant of water power, but would work whether the stream was high or low.

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## SOME GROAT RECORDS.

NOTES OF EXTRACTS FROM INVENTORIES OF MEY AND  
FRESWICK PAPERS ILLUSTRATING HOW THE GROAT LANDS  
OF WARSE AND DUNCANSBAY PASSED TO THE SINCLAIRS.

COMPILED BY JOHN MOWAT.

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1540. Charter set by Laurence Lord Oliphant to Wm. Grot, sone to Hucheon Grot, elder, of one farden land in Dungesbey, dated at Oldwick, September, 1540.

1549. Instrument of seasing signed by Gilbert Grot, noter publict., 1549.

Mey Charters.

<sup>1</sup> See also Goudie's *Antiquities of Shetland*, p. 260, and *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. xx., p. 257.

WRITS OF BONSTAFF AND PART OF STEMPTSTER.  
(CANISBAY).

1680. Extract Disposition by William Groat eldest lawful son and heir to Hugh Groat portioner in Duncansbay in favour of Donald Groat of Liquoy, of the lands of Bonstaff, and part of Stempster, dated 5th June, 1675, and regd. in the Sheriff Court books of Caithness 3rd Feby., 1680.
1680. Sasine thereon registered at Wick 4th March thereafter.
1692. Disposition of said Donald Groat to Alexander Sinclair of Brabster of the said lands. 12th May, 1682.
1702. Sasine thereon dated 4th Sept., 1702 and regd. at Wick 6th October thereafter.

From Freswick papers.

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1681. Charter. John Groat, portioner of Dungasby, heritable proprietor of the tennament of land, etc.

Signed John Groatt.

at Wick 14 day dec. 1681.

“tenement of land lyand within the town and burgh of Wick sometimes called Grott’s tenement. (Boundaries.) The Cross of the said burgh at the south, with all the sundrie houses, biggins, yards mosses, mures, grassings, delvings, peat banks, stackhills, biggad and to be biggad.”

Sasine of the decesst Malcom Grott portioner in Dungasby to and in favour of the said John Grott his elder lawful son.

Nicolson MS.

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FROM AN INVENTORY OF THE PAPERS OF ROBERT  
SINCLAIR OF FRESWICK, 1793-5.

1731. Copies of papers at the instance of Esther Groat and her husband, and James Sinclair, merchant in Freswick their assignee, against Malcom Groat,

portioner of Duncansbay for £829 - 16 - 8 contained in a decret of the Commissary of Caithness. 1731.

1731. Horning: James Sinclair merchant in Freswick against Malcolm Groat, portioner in Duncansbay and Elizabeth Dunnet for £829 - 16 - 8 Scots and expenses. 5th Jan. 1731.

1733. Extract Bond of cautionary dated Nov. 26 1733 by Malcolm Groat portioner of Duncansbay for Malcolm Groat of Warse, at Warse instance against Donald Groat tenant in Ockingill of a debt of £533 - 6 - 8 by a decret of the Commissary of Caithness.

1734. Summons: James Sinclair merchant in Freswick against Groat of Warse, dated and signed 24th Dec. 1734, for £520 Scots contained in his father's bond.
- 

TRANSMISSIONS AND DILIGENCES RELATING TO DEBTS  
DUE BY THE GROATS IN DUNCANSBAY.

1731. Discharge: dated June 10 1731 by William Groat in Southronalsy to Donald Groat in Milltown of Ockingill.
1734. Disposition and Assignment; 1st Feb. 1732 by James Groat tenant in Seatter, and John Groat tenant in Duncansbay to the said Donald Groat, their brother, regd. Thurso Jan. 12 1734.
1736. Disposition dated May 10 1736 by Mary Dunnett relict of Thomas Groatt to Donald Groat her son.
1734. Disposition and Assignment: Thomas Groat to the said Mary Dunnet and her children of his haill goods and gear dated March 23, 1726 and regd. in Commissary Court Books of Caithness 12 Jan. 1734.
1735. Assignment: the said Mary Dunnet to said Donald Groat 10th May 1735 of obligation by Malcolm Groat of Warse to her.



1730. Precept of Poinding the said Donald Groat against the said Malcolm Groat for the sum of 242 merks Scots dated 14th Aug. 1730.  
 Horning thereon dated 11th Nov. 1733.
1733. Precept of Poinding the said Donald Groat against said Mary Dunnet and Malcolm Groat of Warse. 29 Aug. 1733.
1730. Disposition and assignation 4th June 1730. Esther Groat spouse to James Sinclair and him for his interest to James Sinclair merchant in Freswick etc.
1731. Disclamation dated 25th Nov. 1731 by Elizabeth Dunnet of the process at the instance of her and Malcolm Groat against the said Esther Groat and her husband. —————

SINCLAIR OF FRESWICK AGAINST MALCOLM GROAT OF  
 WARSE.

1743. Bond granted by said Malcolm Groat of Warse to William Sinclair of Freswick for the sum of £4000 dated Aug. 1741. Regd. in Books of Session 21 Jan. 1743.
1730. Bond of the said Malcolm Groat to Donald Groat in Nybster for the sum of £819-16-8 Scots dated 1st Dec. 1730.
1734. Assignations of the said Donald Groat to the said William Sinclair dated 19th Feby. 1743.
1742. Bill dated 29th Dec. 1742 drawn by the said William Sinclair upon and accepted by Malcolm Groat £7-11-9.
1748. Horning thereon 6th Jan. 1748.
1739. Bill dated 24th Jan. 1739 drawn by Robert Winchester, mercht. in Wick against and accepted by Malcolm Groat for £10 etc.
1739. Horning thereon 24th May 1739.
1743. Assignation of the foresaid debts by said Robert Winchester to Wm. Sinclair of Freswick 5th Feby. 1743.

1743. Adjudging the Lands of Warse for payment of all the foresaid debts extending in whole at date to £6697-17-Scots. Dated 15th Nov. 1743.
1743. Horning said William Sinclair against superior 30th May, 1743.
1740. Summons Freswick against the said Malcolm Groat. 6th June 1740.
- Note of the scheme dividing the rents of Duncansbay among the creditors of the said Malcolm Groat.
- 

SINCLAIR OF FRESWICK AGAINST MALCOLM GROAT OF WARSE.

1740. Accompt owing by the said Malcolm Groat to John Anderson merchant in Wick £39-13-8. The Sheriff of Edinburgh's decree for sum in above account and interest £6-15-0. Interest in Bill by Robert Gordon to John Anderson 12th Mar. 1740.
- Horning thereon 7 Aug. 1740.
- Extract Heritable etc. granted by Malcolm Groat to John Anderson for sum of £42-10-0 str. 6 June 1740. Seasine thereon 20th Oct. 1740.
1741. Disposition and Assignment by John Anderson to John Sinclair of Barrock 17 March 1741.
1741. Horning the said John Sinclair against Malcolm Groat for sum of £59-12-0 Scots, drawn by the said Malcolm Groat, upon James Budge of Toftingall. 20 Feby. 1741.
1740. Horning Alexander Sinclair then of Barrock against Malcolm Groat. Caption thereon : 29th Oct. 1740.
1746. Special charge. Alexander Sinclair against Malcolm Groat 9th Oct. 1746.
1747. Decreet of Adjudication etc £855-4-Scots dated 21 July 1747.

1750. Disposition and Transactions by the said Alexander Sinclair of Barrock to said William Sinclair of Freswick, 4th Dec. 1750.

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SINCLAIR OF FRESWICK AGAINST MALCOLM GROAT OF WARSE.

1740. Extract Heritable Bond by Donald Groatt of Warse to Dame Margaret Stewart relict of the deceased Sir Archd. Stewart of Burray for the sum of 5000 merks Scots with interest and penalty 5th Feby. 1707. Regd. 9th March 1740.
1707. Registration of Seasines, Wick, 11 Feby. 1707.
1719. Disposition of Assignments 26 Jan. 1719.
1742. Decreet of Constitution before the Court of Session by Sir James Stewart against Malcolm Groat of Wares for payment of aforesaid Bond etc. 16 Nov. 1742.
1742. Special Charge. The said Sir James Stewart against Mal. Groats debts. 6th Dec. 1742.
1743. Disposition of Assignation by said Sir James Stewart to Francis Sinclair of Milltown of the fore-said debts. Dated 5th March 1743.
1743. Instrument of sasine thereon. Wick 24 June, 1743.
1743. Special Charge. Francis Sinclair against said Malcolm Groat 22 March 1743.
1744. Decree of Adjudication, adjudging the lands of Warse for payment of accumulate sum of £5614 Scots dated 24th Jan. 1744.
1745. Act of Commission and Diligence in process of ranking a sale Mr. Francis Sinclair and Malcolm Groat 15 Feby. 1745.
- 17—. Disposition and Translation of the premisses of the said Mr. Francis Sinclair to the Earl of Galloway.
1752. Disposition and Assignation thereof by said Earl of Galloway to William Sinclair of Freswick 20th Dec. 1752.

SIR JAMES STEWART OF BURRAY AGAINST MALCOLM  
GROAT, PORTIONER OF DUNCANSBAY.

1730. Heritable bond by the said Malcolm Groat to Sir James Stewart of Burray for the sum of £175 Scots 24th Sept. 1730.
1732. Sasine thereon : Reg. of Seasines for Shire of Caithness, 20 Oct. 1732.
1733. Bond by said Malcolm Groat to said Sir James Stewart for £44 Scots. 2nd March 1733.
1738. Bond of corroboration of above bond. 6th Jan. 1730.
1742. Adjudication before Court of Session 7th July 1742.
1743. Disposition etc 16th March 1743.
1753. Disposition and Assignation of the premises of the said Francis Sinclair with consents of the Earl of Galloway to William Sinclair of Freswick 17th Jan. 1753.
1754. Summons etc. at Freswick's instance against the said Malcolm Groat 27th Nov. 1754.
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DONALD GROAT'S INSTANCE AGAINST MALCOLM GROAT  
PORTIONER IN DUNCANSBAY.

1720. Extr. Bond granted by John Groat portioner of Duncansbay to Thomas Groat in Kirkstyle of Cannisbay for sum of 242 Merks Scots, dated 18th Feby. 1707 and regd. in Sheriffs Books of Caithness 22 Oct. 1720.
1739. Ext. Heritable Bond of Corroboration granted by Malcolm Groatt son and heir of the said John Groatt to Donald Groat son and heir of the said Thomas Groat for the sum of £474-15-2 Scots. dated the last day of Jan. 1739. and Regd. in the Commissary Court Books of Caithness 4th Sept. 1739.

1739. Poinding by the said Commissary Donald Groat against Malcolm Groat upon the foresaid bond 4th Sept. 1739.
1742. Decreet of Adjudication; adjudging the lands of Duncansbay for accumulate sum £630 - 1 - Scots, 8th Decr. 1742.
1754. Decreet Absolvitor and for Expenses before the Court of Session the said Wm. Sinclair of Freswick and Donald Groat against Malcolm Groat, dated 27 Nov. 1754.

CAITHESS DOCUMENTS FROM THE PROTOCOL BOOK OF DAVID HEART. (H.M. Register House, Edinburgh).

- 1625, Sept. 13. Sasine by William Grot, now of Tankernes, oy and air of umquhile Malcolm Grot, of Tankernes, for infesting Williame Sinclair, of Tolhoip, in William Grot's one pennyland in Dungasbie quhilk pertinit to the said Malcolme Grot his guidsyre and the myln thairof &c., presentlie possest and occupyit be Malcolme Grot portionar of Dungasbie, in parish of Cannesbie, Caithnes.

Instrument of protestation whereby John Grot, portionar of Dungasbie, for himself and on behalf of John Sinclair, of Rattar, protested that the said instrument taken by the said Williame Sinclair in the pennyland and myln above specified "sould nowayis be hurtfull nor preiudiciall to the said John Sinclair his right of the samin, nor yet to the said John Grotis right of one farding land in Dungasbie sumtime pertening to Donald Bernard-sone."

- 1628, June 19. Resignation by Williame Craigie, of Papdaill, procurator for John Hutcheon Alestersone, of Bower Tower, proprietor of 7 pennvland in the town and lands of Bower Tower and lands

of Ockorne called the outset, etc., in the earldome of Caithnes, sometime occupied by umquhile Alexander Hutcheonsone and umquhile Magnus Hutcheonsone, in the hands of George, bishop of Orkney, superior thereof, for new infeftment to be granted by him with the consent of the chapter, to Mr. John Sinclair of Ulbister.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

## OLD NORSE PLACE-NAMES OF SCOTLAND.

### A REVIEW OF

Place-names of Scotland. By JAMES B. JOHNSTON, B.D.  
*London : John Murray, 1934. Pp. xvi. + 335. 15s. net.*

By A. W. JOHNSTON.

(Abbreviations are given at the end).

The *Bibliography* of this book lacks the following works which are indispensable in the elucidation of Old Norse place-names: Fritzner's *Ordbog over det gamle norsk Sprog*, 3 vols., 1886-1896; Aasen's *Norsk Ordbog*, 1873; Ross's *Norsk Ordbog*, 1895 (supplement to Aasen); and *Norske Gaardnavne*, edited by O. Rygh, 1898, etc., especially Rygh's *Forord og Indledning*, 1898; *Gamle Personnavne*, 1901; and *Norske Elvenavne*, 1904.

The only authority on the old Norse language made use of is Cleasby's *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, 1874, edited by G. Vigfusson, which the author describes as "Icelandic or Old Norse," whereas it consists of Old, Middle and Modern Icelandic, with some old and modern Norse forms, which have been all, indiscriminately, and often inaccurately, cited as 'Old Norse' and 'Norse.'

The Icelandic branch of Old Norse dates from about A.D. 900 (long after Norn-land—Orkney and the West—had been colonised and place-named by the Norse), and later does not correspond closely with contemporary Old Norse, more especially in the elements of place-names. For example, ON *herað*, of which the Or, Sh and Heb derivatives are *herra* or *harri*, which occur later in Heb. with the English plural *s* in *Herris* or *Harris* (ON *heruð*), of which the GF is Na *Hearadh*; whereas in Isl it is *hérað*, now pronounced and spelt *hjerað*, from which the Norn and Gaelic forms could not have been derived.

In every case Gaelic and Norn forms correspond with ON and not with Isl. For example: Isl\**Kálf-ey*, ON\**Kalf-øy*, Heb Calva; Isl *skálpr*, ON *skalpr*, from which Or Skalp-eið, now Scapa and Heb Scalpa of which GF Scalpaidh (pron. Scalpa, AM), from ON\**Skalp-øy*.

It should be noted that *Orkneyinga Saga* is a literary work, the early part of which is founded on the lost oral sagas of the earls, and was written by Icelanders for Icelandic readers, and consequently the place-names are in the Icelandic and not the Old Norse forms, and the names of the days of the week are in their peculiar Icelandic Christian forms and not in the ON forms which have been continuously in use in Orkney. In Caithness the Saga gives Isl *Kálfadalr* for ON *Kalfadalr*, of which the Gaelic form is now Caladal, and the colloquial form Caldel, now Calder, through dissimilation of consonants *l l, l r*; Isl *Eysteinsdalr* for ON *Øysteinsdalr*, now Ousdale; *Ásgríms-erg*, or -ærgin, for *Asgríms-erg*, now Asserie; in Orkney, *Vágaland* for \**Vágar*, now Waas (*aa* as *a* in *far*), map form Walls; *Hauga-heiðr* for *Haug-eið*, now Hoxa.

The difference between the Isl and ON meanings of *eið* and *ey, øy*, are as follows:—

Isl *eið*, n., isthmus, used in that sense only.

ON *eið*, n. and f., and *eiði*, n., borrowed into Gaelic as *ùidh*.

1. isthmus; in G *e.g.* Bràigh na h-Ùidhe, etc. AM. p. 91.
2. a path between two places through a depression in a hill OR, Fr. In Latheron, Caithness, the place Mavesey answers to this description; and, as there is a haugh there, it may possibly be ON\**Mæf-eiðs-øy*, haugh of the narrow *eið*-road. (For *øy*, haugh, see *øy* 3. below.)
3. a path alongside the unnavigable part of a water-way by which goods had to be transported by land to avoid a waterfall or other obstruction in the river, OR; corresponding with English *portage*. Probably also G *ùidh*, as applied to "that part of a stream leaving a lake before breaking into a current," AM, where water-borne goods probably had to be transported by land. G *ùidh* also means a ford, which one would expect to find at the unnavigable part of a river. In Sutherland, *ùidh* occurs in the forms *igh* and *i*, "a small stream with green banks." AM.
4. a short stream between two lakes. N, *e.g.* *Eida* (N. Elvenavne, s.r. *eið*-); G, *e.g.* Poll Ùidhe a' Chrò, "Pool of the water-isthmus of the fold; joined to Loch Kernsary by a narrow neck." WJW.

Isl *ey*, island, only used in the sense of land surrounded by water.

ON *øy, øyja, øyland* (*ey, eyja, eyland*), of which *øyland* is borrowed into G as *eilean* (Ir. *oilean*, E. Ir. *ailén*, AM).

1. island, land surrounded by water, ON *øy*, *øyja*, *øyland*, G *eilean*:—
  - (a) ON *øy*, derivatives: N *øy*; Norn (in order of age, beginning with the oldest), -*a*, -*ay*, -*ey*, JJ; GF -*aidh*, pron. *a*, AM.
  - (b) ON *øyja*, derivatives: N *øya*, Sh *øja* (written *Uya*, JJ).
  - (c) ON *øyland*, derivatives: N *øyland*, G *eilean*.
2. peninsula, ON *øy*, *øyland*, G *eilean*:—
  - (a) ON *øy*, derivatives: N *øy*, e.g. *Grasøy*, *Skog-øy*, etc., also used of a peninsula formed by the winding of a river, Aa; Sh *\*Rauð-øy* old name of Northmavine, JJ.
  - (b) ON *øyland*, derivatives: N *øyland*, G *eilean*, e.g. an t-Eilean Dubh (the Black Isle), WJW.
3. haugh, land alongside water, especially when liable to be flooded, Fr, ON *øy*, *øyja*, *øyland*, G *eilean*:—
  - (a) ON *øy*, occurs in Norway, Fr.
  - (b) ON *øyja*, derivative: Sh *øja*, name of a farm on the shore of a lake in Northmavine, JJ.
  - (c) ON *øyland*, occurs in Norway, Fr; derivative: G *eilean*, e.g. *Eileanach* (in Kiltarn), place of haughs, "it lies low by the river side, and is liable to be flooded." WJW: Cf. G *innis*, island and haugh.
4. river, ON *øy*, occurs in Norway? Fr. Cf. Old English, *ēa*, river, and *ēa* *ēu*, island (English Place-name Society, Vol. I., part II., 1924).

The different meanings attached to ON and OIsl *eið* and *øy*, *ey*, and the use of the ON meanings in Norn and Gaelic should suffice to show the necessity of using ON chiefly and as well as OIsl in the derivation of ON place-names in Scotland. OIsl is useful in preserving ON words not now found in ON records, such as Isl *slakki*, found in later N *slakke*, Or *slack*, and Eng. dial, *slack*. There is, therefore, every reason to believe that there was an ON *\*slakki*. Similarly Isl *breiða*, f. a drift, flock [spread] of hay, etc., found in later N *breidevoll*, m., a convenient field (*vøllr*) on which to spread hay to dry, and N *breida*, f. something spread out, such as hay, to be dried, also applied to a widespread crowd, especially a flock of birds on the sea; also N *høybreida*, f. = *høyflek*, m., a spread of hay to be dried, Aa. We are, therefore, safe in assuming that there was an ON *\*breiða*, u, f., a spread, and ON *\*breiðu-vøllr*, a field for drying hay, etc. This must be taken into account in finding a derivation for the Scotch names Brawl, Braal, GF *Breithal*, *Brei'al*, ON *breiði-vøllr*, broad field, or ON *breiðu-vøllr*, drying-field. It must also be remembered that there are many ON words, and different forms and meanings of words, which are not found in Old Icelandic. In addition to those already given may be mentioned: *kleif*, *klif* (from *klífa*, to climb); Isl 'a ridge of cliffs or shelves



in a mountain side'; ON a steep hill-side with a path up it, a place one can climb over, corresponding with G *crasg*, a hill crossing. Derivatives of ON: N *kleiv*, *kløyv*; Sh *clev*, JJ; Su *clay*, in Clay-side, ON\**Kleif-setr*, AM; Cai *clay*, in Hilliclay, etc.; GF *cliof*.

To derive ON p.n. from old and modern Isl would be almost equivalent to deriving old Irish place-names from Scotch Gaelic.

Icelandic is still the same as when its place-names were formed, so that the meanings are still understood, and consequently little, if any, change has taken place. Whereas in Norway and Norn-land, after ON ceased to be spoken and understood, the meanings of their place-names also ceased to be understood, with the result that they have undergone drastic alteration, through curtailment, dissimilation of consonants, assimilation of vowels, etc., so as to be, in many cases, corrupted beyond recognition. The obvious reason of the change was the convenience of a shorter form of an otherwise meaningless name, and one easier to pronounce, such as Brabster for Breiðibólstaðr. Caithness examples are: 1198 (*Ork. Saga*), Øysteinsdalr, 1541, Hoistisdale, 1683, Austisdale, now Ousdale.<sup>1</sup> The change from Asgríms-erg to Asserie is not so great as has been generally supposed, because the 17th cent. form Askarie was simply the substitution, perhaps from the first, of the pet-name Aski, so that the change is merely from the 17th cent. Askarie (ON and G\**Aska-ðirigh*) to the present Asserie.

Considerable shortening of place-names took place in Caithness in, and after, the 17th cent., e.g. *-buster* (ON *-bólstaðr*) changed to (1) *-bster*, when the first element was one syllable with which initial *b* of *-buster* could be pronounced, such as (ON Skarabólstaðr<sup>2</sup>>) Scra-buster now Scra-bster, Bulbuster> Bylbster, etc. (2) *-ster*, when the first element consisted of one syllable with which initial *b* of *-buster* could not be pronounced, such as Rospuster> Roster, Tuspister> Tister, etc., and when the first element ended in *m* with which *b* could be assimilated, such as (ON\**Steinbólstaðr*>) Stem-buster > Stemster<sup>3</sup>, Occumbuster > Occumster, Thrubbuster > Thrumster<sup>4</sup>, etc.

In Norway, the Hebrides, and in the Gaelic forms, ON *-bólstaðr* changed to *-bost*, whereas in Orkney, Shetland and Caithness it

<sup>1</sup> Identified by P. A. Munch in 1857.

<sup>2</sup> The author derives this from "N. *skjære bolstað-r* 'rocky place.'" N. *skjære*, pair of scissors, in error for ON *sker*. It is probably derived from ON *skǫr*, gen. *skarar*, gen. pl. *skara*, a step, platform, terrace, etc., such as is found at the foot of the cliffs here, and is a characteristic of the place.

<sup>3</sup> The author derives this from "'Place like the stem or prow of a ship,' O.N. *stafn*, *stamn*, O.E. *stemn*." The various places called Stemster are all adjoining sites of standing stones. Cf. Stenness in Orkney, *Ork. Saga* Steins-nes (10th Cent.). In ON place-names, *nb* > *mb*, regularly, as Stenbol > Stembol. OR.

<sup>4</sup> The author states that "In Caithness the *-sters*—Occumster, Thrumster, etc., . . . come from N. *sætor* [sic], 'summer pasture.'" As the old forms of both these places are in *-buster*, the author is wrong in both cases, his sole examples of *sætr* names.

changed to *-buster* with a few cases of *-bust*, *-bist*, *-best*. As pointed out above, in Caithness *-buster* changed to *-bster* and *-ster* since the 17th cent., whereas in Orkney and Shetland *-buster* continues unaltered, and the *-bust* names continue in Cai and Or unchanged.

With regard to Gaelic forms in Caithness, the 17th cent. Lybuster (now Lybster, *y* pron. as in *rhyme*) is Liabost in Gaelic, pointing to an original ON\*(H)*líðar-bólstaðr*, and also indicating that *-buster* was changed to *-bost* in the GF, corresponding with the regular GF elsewhere in Scotland. The GF Liabost preserves the original ON pron. of *i*, which in the English form has become the diphthong *ai=y* in *rhyme*, in the same way as ON\*(H)*líð* > Lyth in Cai, and ON Vigr > Wyre, líri > lyre, mýrr > mire in Orkney.

The question is, does the fact that the GF *-bost* corresponds with the shortened N and Heb form *-bost*, and the GF *-aidh* (pron. *a*) corresponds with the Norn derivative form of ON *øy*, point to the probability that GFs of Norse place-names date from the corresponding stages in the development of Norn place-names? In the case of ON *-staðir* > N and Norn *-stad* > *-sta*, the GF *-sta*, *-stagh* (AM) corresponds with the latest stage of the Norn form.

In those districts where Gaelic took the place of Norn, such as the Hebrides, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, etc., the Norn place-names would naturally be supplanted by their Gaelic forms, which would, thereafter, be subjected, in English, to the usual changes in Norn names, side by side with the Gaelic forms which remained unaltered. *E.g.* ON\**Øyrrar-bær* > G *Eòrrabaidh* > Eng. Eorpie, which otherwise would have become \**Erraby*; ON\**Ør-firis-øy* > G Or'asa, AM, Orfhasa (Dwelly) > Eng Orasa, WJW, and corrupted into Oronsay, which otherwise would have become Orfasay, as in Shetland.<sup>1</sup> ON\**haga-*, or \**tqðu-dalr* > G [\**t-haga-dal*] Tao'udal > Eng Tweedle.

This ON > GF > Eng development would explain an otherwise difficult p.n., Bower, in Caithness, of which the old form was Bouer in 1222. The Gaelic form is Bàgair, and Sgìre Bhàgair, parish of Bower. It is a district of several houses (and not a single farm), extending more than half a mile along the foot of ridges (which, in the form of a horse-shoe form a valley), answering to ON *jaðarr*; so that ON\**Baka-jaðarr*, is descriptive. In G this would become \**Bàgair*: ON *jaðarr* > *jair* > G *air*; ON *bak* > G *bàg*, with lengthened *a* > *à* in compensation for contraction of second element, *jaðarr* > *air*, as frequently occurs in other G forms: *e.g.* the hybrid Inbhir-àsda! from ON\**aspa-dalr*, 'a contraction with the compensatory lengthening of the vowel *a*'. WJW. The name \**Baka-jaðarr*, therefore means

<sup>1</sup> All the islands Orasay, or Oronsay, are tidal islands accessible at low water by means of a neck of land laid bare at ebb (ON *Ørfjara*, 'out of ebb') In G a tidal island is *Eilean Tioram*, and the neck of land connecting it with the mainland, at low water, is *saothair*. WJW; but the author derives the name from "St. Oran's isle."

the (inhabited) district of the ridges: *bakar*, *m.*, *bak*, *n.*, gen. pl. in both cases being *baka*. It is obvious that this ON name could not have become Bouer as early as 1222; but, on the assumption that the GF was substituted at an early date, and then developed in the usual English way, then Bågair would become Bouer. In Norway ON *Skóg* > *skau*, OR. Between vowels *g* is soft and sometimes disappears as in Sigurd > Sjurð, JJ.

The derivations of the place-names in this book are at their best when they are simply copied correctly, without comment, from the works of recognised experts; but the author's accuracy cannot even be depended on in this simple process, as is shown below, *s.v.* Farr, in which case Dr. MacBain is quoted as saying diametrically the opposite of what he actually did say. Students must therefore consult the authorities quoted, directly at their source, so as to be certain of accuracy.

A few typical examples of the author's own derivations are given below.

"Clickimin (Lerwick) O.N. *Klakk-minni*, 'rockmouth'." Tudor<sup>1</sup> states that "the Loch of Click-em-in takes its name from a change house, or whisky-shop, which once stood close to it, the motto of which, as of many similar places in the mainland of Scotland was Click-em-in, or *hook them in*." In E.D.D. "Clickem Inn" is explained as "a name applied to lonely wayside public-houses."

"Blingery (Wick). Prob. N. *bliong airigh*, 'lythe shieling'." "N. *bliong*," is non-existent; "lythe," the pollack, is probably in error for "lithe." The old forms are 1456, Blenser. 1472, Blensary. There is a Norse personal name Blæingr. \*Blæings- > Blen(g)s- > Bling(s)-airigh. There is a place Blien, in Sh, with which JJ. compares Blæing in Færoes, the name of a plot of land.

"Balishare (Lochmaddy). N. *bals eyri*, 'gravelly spit or point with the beacon,' N. *bál*." This is the English form of the simple Gaelic name Baile .sear, East-stead. *Bal* is not N, but a 15th cent. Icelandic vulgarism, *eyri* is modern Isl for OIsl *eyrr*, and ON *øyrr*, and ON *bál* is a funeral pile or pyre. The author apparently overlooked the fact that the accent is on the final, or qualifying syllable.

"Glenshiel (L. Duich). ON *skjól*, 'shelter, shieling'." The G name is Gleann .seile, "named, as usual, after its river Abhainn Seile. . . . Shiel is doubtless a Pictish word." WJW. ON *skjól*, is (1) shelter, hiding place, (2) roof-thatch, and (3) protection. It is not used for a *sætr*, shieling. ON *sk* > G *sg*.

"Balta Sound (Shetland). *Sagas* Balt(a)ey, 'belt isle,' O.N. *balti*, Dan. *baelt* [bælte], and *ey*, *ay*, *a*, 'island.' Some derive fr. *Balti*, a man found in Shetland in 13th cent." This island is not mentioned in the 'Sagas'; the Saga form quoted by the author is Dr. Jakobsen's suggested original form, from a man's name *Balti*; and to show

<sup>1</sup> *The Orkneys and Shetland*, 1883,

that such a name existed (otherwise little known in ON), he refers to a Shetlander of that name mentioned in *Hákonar Saga*. The author's 'O.N. *balti*, a belt,' does not exist, he is probably thinking of O.N. *belti*, a belt, and the 'Sagas' to which he refers are obviously Dr. Jakobsen's *Shetlandsøernes Stednarne*. The ON for island is *øy*, of which *ey* &c. are the Scotch derivatives.

"Brogar (Stennis). Prob. O.N. *breið-r garð-r*, 'broad enclosure.'" This should read *Breiði-garðr*; the author makes no use of the definite form of the adjective which is used in place-names—*breiðr garðr*, is 'a broad garth,' whereas *Breiði-garðr*, is 'the Broad-garth,' a definite place-name. The derivation is \**Brúar-garðr*, Bridge-garth, situated at the bridge at the junction of the Lochs of Stenness and Harray.

Dunrobin Castle (Golspie). After referring to the derivation [by Dr. A. MacBain] from *Robin*, the G form of Robert, the author adds: "But good scholars make it G. *druim rabhain*, 'hill-ridge with the long grass.' Cf. Allt bad a rabhain [sic], Dunrobin Glen and Raffin, Assynt."

But "*rabhain*" is "pronounced, as usual, rawain," and is "long grass growing in shallow, muddy parts of lochs or pools," WJW, and not on the top of a 'hill-ridge'; and the Gaelic name is *Dùn-robain*, the fort of Robin, exactly as derived by Dr. MacBain, who refers to it as "a name about which much nonsense has been written."

"Muckle Flugga (Unst). 'Big precipices,' Sc. *muckle*, O.N. *mi-mykill*, 'big,' and *flug*, pl. *fluga*, 'precipices.'" The plural of *flug*, n., is *flug*, the termination -a is the derivative of ON *øy*, island; Muckle and Little Flugga are remarkable as being the two northernmost of the Shetland and British Isles. The name is Flugga, not Fluga. ON *flug*, *flog*, a precipice, takes the N form *flog* in Sh. e.g. *Flogbergsgjerdi*, pron. Flobersgerdi, JJ.

"Corrigall (Harray). . . . O.N. *Karri-gil*, 'cock-ptarmigan valley.'" The suffix -*karri* is the modern Isl form of ON -*keri*, in the modern Icelandic *rjúp-karri*, for ON *rjúp-keri*, the male *rjúpa*, ptarmigan; and *keri*, probe, tent, indicates the masculine gender as explained by Fritzner: "Keri brugt som en Betegnelse af det masculine Avlelem, nl. i det sammen-satte ord *rjúpkeri*."

Similarly the author takes half of *geirfugl* in his derivation of Gear (Orphir), from "N. *geir-á*, 'auk isle.'" Gear is an inland place on the Mainland and is not an island. The author cites ON *á*, a stream, in error for his usual *a*, derivative of ON *øy*, island. The derivation is ON\**geiri*, a gore (of land), a very common p.n.

"Farr (N. Sutherld.). C. 1230 Far, which in O.N. is 'passage for ships, ship'; cf. Farness. Ships sail up the river here. But M[acBain] connects L. Farr [sic], Insh, with G. **FAR**, 'below,' so 'lower place.'"

Whereas MacBain states: "Forr is situated on a knolly ridge overlooking Loch Insh, and evidently contains the preposition **for** (**over**), as in *orra* for *forra*, on them. The last *r* or *ra* is more doubtful. Farr in Strathnairn and Sutherland, is to be compared with it," and "is possibly a compound from G. **FOR, over, above**, and means **upper land**."

As already pointed out, the author here deliberately misquotes MacBain, and has mistaken the simple G prep. *far*, *for*, *over*, *for fo*, *under*.

Gigha. The saga name Guðey, and Lumsden's translation, 'God's isle,' is all that need have been said, but the author cannot resist his "irritating alternatives," so "there is a N. name *Gyða*," which would give \**Gyðu-øy*, and [Dr. Gillies] "N. *gjá-ey*, 'goe rift isle'" (who "knows better than the Norse themselves." AM), neither of which give the actual ON name Guðey.

Gulberwick. "Ork. Sag. Gullberuvík." Instead of giving the simple translation, 'the wick of a woman, Gullbera,' the author gives his inevitable alternative: "O.N. fr. 'yellow town (N. *bær*) bay.'" He omits ON *gulr*, adj., yellow, and is apparently unable to piece his jingle together in grammatical form: \**Gula-bæjar-vík*, which would have shown him that it was not Gullberuvík.

Maeshow. Ork. Saga, Orkahaugr. "The Maes- is perh. O.N. *mærst-r*, 'greatest,' i.e. most famous. Possibly a hybrid fr. G *màs*, 'a buttock.'"

*Orka-* is Pictish; and *Maes* of Maeshow and *Mae* of How Mae in North Ronaldsay, are also probably Pictish. On the analogy of Multovie, G Multamhaigh (locative) < \**Molto-magos*, wedders' plain (WJW, xlviii., 83, 278, *History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 1926, p. 502), the original Pictish name was probably \**Orka-magos* > \**Orka-mae*, mound's place, or plain, in Stenness and N. Ronaldsay. The ON equivalent would have been \**Haug-vøllr*. The survival of *Maes* seems to indicate that the Norn name in Stenness was \**Orka-mae-s-haugr* (shortened to Orka-haugr, mound's mound, by the Icelandic skald in *Orkn. Saga*, and afterwards shortened, in Norn, to [*Orka-*]\**Mae-s-haugr*, plain's mound, now Maeshow. Whereas in N. Ronaldsay \**Orka-mae* was partly translated into \**Haug-Mae*, mound-plain, now How Mae. As *Ork* is common as a p.n. in Or and Sh, the meaning was probably understood, and so translated.

Shaw-, Sheabost. "'sea place,' O.N. *sjá-r*, 'the sea.' . . . Shebster, Reay, is prob. the same."

Shebster (1539, 1642, Schabuster, 1683 Shebster) is inland, about 1½ miles from the sea, with other farms between it and the sea. The characteristic feature is the unusual number of cairns and mounds and a broch, by which it is surrounded, for which the most suitable name would have been ON \**Þýfi-bólstaðr*, from ON *þýr*, adj.,

covered with mounds. In Isl *þýfi*, a noun, is land covered with mounds. In Sh *þy* > *sju*<sup>1</sup>, so that *þýfi-b.* > *þý-b.* > *sju-b.* > *she-b.*

Shurrery. "Pig-shieling," O.N. *sý-r*." The old form 1558, Showrarnie (probably a misreading of *Showrarie*), is suggestive of a personal and not a pig name, viz., \**Sigurðar-àirigh*<sup>2</sup> > *Showrarnie* for *Showrarie* > *Shurrery*. *Sigurðar* > *Sjura*, in Sh, so *Sjuràirigh*. *Sýr* would give *Sýr-àirigh*, sow's shieling, or *Súa-àirigh*, sows' shieling.

Generally, the author has strewn his vowel accents haphazard, and the ON derivations are frequently corrupt and mis-spelt. The following are only a few examples.

*Passim*: Modern Isl *eyri*, quoted as ON, in error for ON *eyrr* (*eyrr*). Danish *næs*, as ON, in error for ON *nes*. *Skjær* in error for ON *sker*. Norn derivatives *a*, *ay*, *ey*, as ON, in error for *øy* (*ey*). p. 80. ON *vör*, inlet, in error for Isl *vörr*, ON *vör*, (*r*, radical), a pier, in error for ON *vágr*, inlet, in Aithsvoe.

p. 82. Lochandail derived from "O.N. *önd*, gen. *andar*, 'a duck,' 'duckdale.'" This is the English form of G Loch (n)an Dàil, 'Loch of the Divisions.' WJW.

p. 90. "Asgrims ærgin (-in, N. art.)." The def. art. would be out of place in that position. *Ærgin* of *Flateyjarbók* is probably a corruption of ON dat. pl. *ergum* > *ergun* > *ergin*, and this place is described in *Ork Saga* as *auðnar-sel*, deserted shielings: 'til auðna selja.'

Ballingry. "Perh. 'farm of the flock,' G. *graigh*, -e." The Gaelic name is *Bail' a' .gharaidh*.

Boisdale. *inter alia* "N. *búi*, 'a goblin.'" ON *búi*, a dweller, is only used in compounds such as *ná-búi*, neighbour, and *haug-búi*, a dweller, goblin or ghost, in a burial mound.

Bressay. "May be fr. a man *Bresti* [not a N name], or fr. O.N. *brést-r*, 'crack, burst,' or *brjóst*, Sw. *bröst*, so 'isle like a breast.'" From the 1490 form *Brwsøy*, Jakobsen derived it from a man's name *Brúsi*, \**Brús(a)-øy*.

Creagorry. "G. *creaga* is said to be 'a cluster of houses' and *gaire*, *goire* is 'shouting, laughter.'" The G. name is *Creag .Ghoraidh*, Godfrey's rock. WJW.

Cullivoe. "*Sagas* Kollavag." It is not mentioned in '*Sagas*'; Kollavag is in error for the 1307 form, Kollavaghe, given by JJ.

"Eiller, Helyer Holm." "O.N. *hell-r holm-r*, 'cavern isle.'" *hell-r* is in error for *hellir*. In *Ork. Sag.* it is *Hellis-ey*, cave isle, and is now called *Helliar Holm*.

<sup>1</sup> *Þykkvi* or *þjukkvi* > *sjukki*; but *þýrsa* > *tirsa*. JJ.

<sup>2</sup> MacBain states that *erg* of *Ork. Saga* "proves the identity of Gaelic with E. Ir. *airge*." So that the plural *ærgin* of the *Saga* points to an old Gaelic plural *airgean*, as compared with the later Ir. plural *airighe*, of *airghe*. It occurs in Shetland p n. as *ari(a)* and *ergj*, pron. *ærdz*, *dz*=Eng. "j" and "ch" (jaw, church). ON *mergð*, f, is pron. in Sh. *merdz*. JJ. In Orkney, Arion in Stromness parish is probably the plural *àirighean* (see further below). Dr. Watson strongly doubts an old G pl. *airgean*. The Danish translation of the lost *Ork. Saga* gives -*erg* n., nom. sing. and pl.), whereas *Flateyjarbók*, written in 1370-80, gives -*ærgin*, which is either a mistake or the usual corruption of ON dative pl. -*ergum* > -*ergun* > -*ergin*.

p. 173. "N *eora-ból*," in error for ON *øyrar-ból*; the author has lapsed into an erroneous form *eora-* of the GF *eðrra-*, of ON *øyrar-*.

En.hallow. "Eyin Helga, O.N. for 'holy isle.' Hallow is fr. O.E. *halgian*, to hallow, *hálga*, 'a saint,' O.N. *heilag-r*." It is ON *øy-in*, the isle, *helga*, adj., holy, the def. fem. form of *heilagr*, adj., holy, 'hallow.'

Evie. "Ork. Sag. Efju; also Efja, N. for 'backwater eddy.'" *Efju*, gen. of *Efja*, in Efju-sund, the only Saga form, has been mistaken for another form! ON *efja*, (1) muddy, miry ground; (2) a slack current in a recess of a river; later N. derivatives: *evja*, (1) a bay with a swampy shore, (2) a tributary of a river, (3) a quiet or slow running brook, and N *bak-evja*, *upp-evja*, an eddy in a recess, or bight, of a river. OR, Aa.

Eye. "Fy" in error for Ey. "Norse G. *y*, *iu*, *aoi*, 'isthmus, island, peninsula.'" 'y, iu' [in error for ui], and *ie*, *ey*, *ay*, *eie*, *huy*, *vye*, *uiy*, *wie*, *eye*, AM, are the English forms of G *úidh* (pron. *ōō-ēē*, AM), isthmus, borrowed from ON *eið*; and 'aoi' is another form of *úidh*. G *cilean* (from ON *øyland*) is used for island, peninsula and haugh.

Fitful Head. "Hofdi is for O.N. *hofuð*, Dan. *hoved*, 'head-land.'" ON *hofði*, headland, *hofuð*, a head. The "Saga Fitfugla hofdi" does not exist, it is in error for \**Fitfugla hofði*, Jakobsen's suggested original ON form.

Flotta. "Sagas Flotey, O.N. for 'fleet-isle,' O.N. *floti*, 'a fleet.'" It is not mentioned in Ork. Saga. The islands called Flotta in Sh and Or are derived by JJ from ON *flatr*, adj., flat, as in the case of Flatey in Iceland; ON \**flat-øy*, flat isle, as compared with the adjoining Hoy, ON *Há-øy*, high island, in Orkney. The Sh. p.n. Floda, Flota, etc. (not islands), are derived from ON *flata*, f., gen. *flotu*; *flati*, m., gen. *flata* (neither are in Cleasby); *flot* f., gen. *flatar*, a plain; and Sh Flet, Flets, are from ON *flotr* m., gen. *flatar*, a strip of cultivated, or grass-land.

Foula. "O.N. and Dan. *fugl-ay* [for *-ey*, ON *-øy*], 'fowl isle.'" The old form is Fogl [ON \**Fugl*], fowl, of which the locative 'i Fogle' [ON \**i Fugli*], probably gave rise to Foula. The deriv. is ON \**fugl*, fowl, corresponding to similar names in Norway, from the island having the appearance of a swimming fowl. JJ thinks that the alternative name Utrrie, mentioned by Low, is the older of the two forms, pointing to an original ON \**Ytra-øy*, outer isle.

p. 185. "Garson, 3 in Orkney, 1565 Garsoind, -sent, prob. fr. N. *sund*, 'a strait, a sound.'" Old form, 1500, Garsend, derived from ON \**Garðs-endi*, dyke-end, the name of a farm at the end of the hill-dyke, usually at the seaside or lakeside.

Hillswick. "Saga Hildiswick, N. for 'battle bay,' *rik*." It is not in Ork. Sag., and the form quoted is that of 1644, mentioned by JJ, who derives it from ON \**Hildis-rik*, the wick of a man Hildir.

p. 232. "N. *lachs-á*," in error for ON *lax-á*; *lachs* is German! Laxa. "ON *lax-ay* [-ey or -øy], 'salmon isle.'" In error for ON \**lax-á*, salmon river; there is no isle of that name in Shetland. Lunna. "O.N. *lund-r*, 'a grove' . . . *a* is 'island.'" There is no island of that name. The deriv. is ON \**lund-eið*, grove isthmus. The old form of Lunnasting [ON \**Lund-eiðs-ping*] is given as 'Lund-seidsting,' in error for Luneidesting, 1490.

"Malsay (Shetland)" does not exist.

Quendale. "O.N. *Kran* [for *Krán*], 'a wife,'" etc. It is deriv. from ON \**krern(á)-dalr*, mill[-burn]-dale, JJ. *rn* > *nn* as usual.

p. 298. "O.N. *smjórr bi*," in error for *smjör-*, or *smjqr-bær*. "*Smúgja*" in error for *smjúga*.

p. 304. "*Sagas* Straumsey," in error for Straumey. 'Straumsness' in error for Straumnes. "Ork. *Sag*. Stjornsey [sic] . . . must be 'star-like island.' O.N. *stjarna*, 'a stir [sic].'" In error for Strjónsey!

Sullam. "O.N. *Sule-heim-r*," in error for *súla-heimr*, gannet's home, or *súlna-heimr*, gannets' home. It is deriv. from ON \**sól-heimr*, sun-home, a common Norse place-name, JJ.

p. 306. "O.N. *þang* [sea-weed], 'a low, projecting cape,'" in error for ON *tangi*, a tongue of land.

In a Preface and Introduction of 87 pp., over one-quarter of the whole book, the hope is expressed "that many students will now find some of their puzzles at last solved," and it is stated that this edition "is only made at all feasible now through a grant from the Carnegie Trustees."

#### ABBREVIATIONS, ETC.

Aa, Ivar Aasen, *Norsk Ordbog*.

AM, Dr. Alexander MacBain, *Place-names Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, edited, with notes, by Professor W. J. Watson, 1922.

Cai, Caithness; Or, Orkney; Sh, Shetland; Su, Sutherland; Heb, Hebrides.

Fr, Johan Fritzner, *Ordbog over det gamle norsk Sprog*.

G, Gaelic. GF, Gaelic form of Norn place-name; and GN, Gaelic place-name, on the authority of Dr. A. MacBain, Professor W. J. Watson, and *A Gaelic Dictionary (Faclair Gaidhlig)*, E. MacDonald & Co. [E. Dwelly], 3 vols., 1902-1911, in which is a list of *Proper Names* (app. to Vol. 3) revised and added to by Professor W. J. Watson.

Isl, Icelandic. OIsl, Old Icelandic.

JJ, Jakob Jakobsen, *Shetlandsøernes Stednavne*, 1901.

N, ON, Norse, Old Norse.

Norn, ON dialect in Scotland: Or, Sh, Cai, Su and Heb.

Norn-land, districts in Scotland where Norn was spoken.

OR, O. Rygh, *Indledning to Norske Gaardnavne*, 1898.

WJW, Professor W. J. Watson, *Place-names of Ross and Cromarty*, 1904, and Notes to Dr. A. MacBain's book (see above).



pron., pronounced; der., derived, derivative; p.n., place-name.

\* suggested original form of name.

. at beginning of accented syllable, e.g. *.Orka-mae, Baile .sear.*

When there is no accent shown the first syllable is accented.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY. Edited by WILLIAM GRANT, M.A., LL.D. Vol. I, Part iv.

By the issue of Part iv. the first volume of the great Scottish National Dictionary has been completed, and though this is only the tenth of the undertaking it gives one a very good idea of how invaluable to philologists in general and to students of the "auld Scots" tongue in particular this monumental work will be. In notices of former parts attention was called to the masterly way in which the Editor, Dr. Grant, has marshalled his material gathered from all sources. No doubt, he had a band of willing workers, but their gleanings in many untrodden fields would have been of little avail were it not for the guiding mind that has so courageously and successfully faced this great task. The amount of information to be gleaned from the pages of the Dictionary is almost incredible. Students of Scottish literature will find quotations from an exceptionally wide range of Scottish authors. Ecclesiastical matters, folk customs, games, proverbs, etc., meet the reader everywhere and at times quite unexpectedly in these pages. To the student of languages the etymologies will make a special appeal.

D. B.

THE OLD LORDS OF LOVAT AND BEAUFORT. By the REV. ARCHIBALD MACDONALD, D.D. *Inverness: Northern Counties Newspaper and Printing and Publishing Company.* Price 5/-. Post free 5/6. Pp. 159.

Dr. Macdonald in the above volume has told the story of the Lords of Lovat as accurately as a tried historian can tell it. It is a record full of incident and human interest, and the story has been well told. The figure of Simon of the '45 naturally occupies a prominent place. Dr. Macdonald has a kindly word to say of Lord Lovat with all his faults who, if he "lived as a fox, yet died as a lion." A few minor typographical errors have been noted, but they do not affect in any way the narrative.

D. B.

THE SCOTTISH WAR OF INDEPENDENCE. By EVAN MACLEOD BARRON. 2nd Edit. *Inverness: 1934.* Pages xcvi. + 524. Maps and Plans. Price 7/6 net.

This is a second edition of Mr. Barron's important work which was revolutionary in its treatment of the Scottish War of Inde-

pendence period. To most Mr. Barron's contention that the dominating part in this struggle was played by the Highlands and not the Lowlands will be accepted as proved after his brilliant array of facts and lively discussion of his thesis. But whether he is as successful in contending that the Highlands were, in certain districts at any rate, in later times, what he sets forth in his Introduction to this edition may be open to question. It must be admitted, however, that Mr. Barron has brought to light important points that Scottish historians would do well to consider. The new edition has many important additions, notes, and an appendix which give it greater value to the student than its predecessor. The Appendix discusses the site of the Battle of Bannockburn in a paper reprinted from *Chambers' Journal* by Brig.-General Carruthers. The General has carefully worked out his subject and is forced after careful study to reject the view presented by Mr. W. M. Mackenzie in his *The Battle of Bannockburn* (1913).

An interesting problem is raised by Mr. Barron as to Bruce's hiding place in 1306. He rejects Rathlin as the traditional place and suggests Orkney. There is a tradition, he says, that Bruce found sanctuary with the Laird of Halero and that the Laird fought with Bruce at Bannockburn.

The proof-reading has been well done; at least, only a few printers' errors caught our eye. "Higland" (p. lviii.) should be "Highland"; "undertaken" (p. 274), "undertaken"; "contenporary" (p. 304), "contemporary"; "altogether" (p. 430), "altogether." Mr. Barron's statement as to the Earl of Sutherland signing the Covenant, while non-committal, would be better omitted, as it is now generally recognized that he did not do so. The mistake has probably arisen from the fact that his name is the first of the signatories to the National Petition (1637).

The whole get up of the book is excellent, printing, paper and format all lend themselves to the production of a book that is a pleasure to read and handle and is a credit to the publishers, Messrs. Carruthers & Sons, Inverness. Altogether it is a work of real importance, and no historian of the period can afford to overlook it.

D. B.

THE TRUE ROMANCE OF BUSTA. By FRANCES SCOTT. *Edinburgh: Printed by Lindsay and Co., Ltd., 1934. Pp. ix. and 73. Price 2s. 6d. + 3d. postage. To be obtained from Miss Frances Scott, Links Villa, Port Seton, Cockenzie, East Lothian.*

It is a matter of some difficulty to review this work, because the author writes with a grievance, and nearly the whole book is coloured by an undertone of complaint. Into the question of the

rights and wrongs of this complaint the reviewer has no intention of entering, but will confine himself to those parts of the book which are concerned with family history and incidents occurring mainly in the Shetlands during the 18th and 19th centuries.

There is much to interest the reader, especially if he or she is connected in any way with the Islands. The outstanding figure, as one might expect, is Thomas Gifford of Busta, and there is an interesting account of the changes that have occurred in connection with the Busta estate from his time down to the present. There are quotations and extracts from Thomas Gifford's "Historical Description of the Zetland Islands," also from the works of Brand, Hibbert, Goudie, Greig, and F. J. Grant; the printed reports of examinations and depositions of witnesses, written evidence, and other documents in the famous lawsuit, "Arthur Gifford of Busta v. Arthur Gifford, Purser in the Royal Navy," in 1832—1833, are drawn upon too. Some family letters are quoted in extenso, and these will well repay perusal, as throwing light upon life in the Shetlands during the 18th century. Taken as a whole the book is well worth reading, if its polemical character is realised.

There are many references to a projected work by the same author, entitled "The Busta Book"; it is to be hoped that this, when published, will be found to confine itself to a plain, unbiassed account of the Giffords and the Busta estate, for which there are plenty of materials available.

A. S. M.

SCOTTISH COUNTRY. Fifteen Essays by Scottish Authors. Edited with an Introduction by GEORGE SCOTT MONCRIEFF. *London: Wishart Books, Ltd.*, 1935. Pp. xvii.+281, 16 double-page illustrations. 7s. 6d. net.

This book is a sequel to *English Country*, and is "intended to give the spirit of fifteen divisions of Scotland as felt by fifteen writers" who are either natives or familiar with their respective subjects. It is not intended as a guide-book but rather as a "second primer" for foreigners. Mull, Stirling, Dumfries and Cromarty are not dealt with. 'Caithness and Sutherland' is written by Neil M. Gunn, with a view of Ben Stack, Sutherland. Caithness is described as a flat treeless plain with sea-cliffs dotted with the ruins of numerous castles, and with convenient ports for fishing. It is Norse rather than Highland. Sutherland has an endless variety of mountains. 'The Outer Isles' is by Hector MacIver, illustrated by a charming view of the Barra Isles. "The Hebrides are destined to be the last outpost of Gaelic in Scotland," though once an important Norse colony which has left its indelible mark on the Gaelic language, especially in seafaring terms. 'Orkney,' by Eric Linklater, is illustrated by 'Near Finstown' from a photograph by Thomas

Kent. 'Finstown' is a modern name for the township of Firth (ON Fjörðr), in which the parish church is built and from which the parish of Firth takes its name. In Orkney and Scotland the name of the parish is either that of the township in which the church is built, or that of the dedication of the church. The township of Firth takes its name from the Bay of Firth, which in Norse was Aurriða-fjörðr (which is mentioned in *Orkneyinga Saga* in its Icelandic form Örríða-fjörðr), salmon-trout firth, but latterly associated with the oyster fishery. Mr. Linklater states that there are no bankrupt farmers, but he omits to point out that, so far as the tenant-farmers are concerned, a probable explanation is the correspondingly heavily mortgaged and bankrupt landed estates of recent times. Regarding Skara Brae Mr. Linklater has "only one opinion and that is that it was much pleasanter and more entertaining before they excavated it . . . the best picnicking place on the island." He gives a general description of the islands. 'In the Shetland Islands,' by Hugh MacDiarmid, is illustrated by a lovely view of Scaloway, from a photograph by J. D. Rattar. We are told "the Shetlands are . . . happily very little encumbered with 'memorials of the past' of any kind; they have to all intents and purposes—in the consciousness of the people—no history." This appears to be supported by the omission of any reference to the 'memorials of the past' with which the islands are studded, including Jarlshof.

The book is well edited, illustrated and got up, and is undoubtedly one "that any country-lover may read with pleasure," and will undoubtedly provide a fertile source of discussion for the critical inhabitants of the various districts described after the varied individual tastes of the fifteen authors.

A. W. J.

THE LORDSHIP OF THE ISLES. Wanderings in the lost Lordship. By I. F. GRANT. *Edinburgh and London: The Moray Press, 1935.* 10-in.×7-in., pp. 514, with map and illustrations. 21s. net.

This charming book gives an account of a series of pilgrimages to the various parts of the old Norse earldom of the Western Isles, Hebrides, Suðrøyjar, or Sodor, so long connected with the kingdom of Sodor and Man. The book is written for the general reader and is consequently rid of hackneyed documentation and footnotes which are useless for the scholar and irritating to the ordinary reader. The author's bibliography contains only recognised authorities such as A. O. Anderson, J. Romilly Allen, G. S. Crawford, G. Henderson, Eleanor Hull, Cosmo Innes, E. T. Leeds, W. J. Watson, etc., which is a sufficient guarantee of accuracy.

The book begins with an account of the pre-Norse Gaelic background and then deals with the Viking earldom until it was ceded

by Norway to Scotland in 1266; after which the vicissitudes of the descendants of Sumar-liði, or Somerled, who became Lords of the Isles, are described in great detail. There are interesting chapters on the fiscal antiquities of the Hebrides—the Gaelic *tirunga* and the Norse *øyris-land*, etc., ‘tie-runga,’ p. 130, is an obvious slip for *tir-unga*.

A. W. J.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE WESTERN ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND, *circa* 1695. By MARTIN MARTIN, including A Voyage to St. Kilda by the same author and A Description of the Western Isles of Scotland by SIR DONALD MONRO. Edited with Introduction by DONALD J. MACLEOD. *Stirling: Eneas Mackay*, 1934. 540 pp. 10s. 6d. net.

The publisher has done a great service to Scottish literature by reprinting these three rare and valuable books. The map is of particular interest to students of place-names, as it gives older forms than those of the text. For example, Raasay, which in Gaelic is Ra'arsa, the form in which it appears ‘Raarsay’ in Dean Monro’s *Description* in 1549, of which the full Gaelic name is *Ratharsa*. Gaelic *rathar-* gives ON *raðar-*, genitive singular of *røð*, a heap of stones, also applied to a raised or high beach alongside the existing beach. There are four such raised beaches on the western side of Raasay, *viz.* at Ayre (ON \**Øyrr*, heap of gravel), Holman Bay, Inver Bay and Kirkton Bay.<sup>1</sup> The original ON name was probably \**Raðar-áss-øy*, ‘high-beach ridge island’; the *áss*, ridge, may refer to the hill-range extending from north to south in the centre of the island. Captain Thomas’s derivation from *rá*, a roe, \**Rár-áss-øy*, is impossible, as *rá*, a foreign word, first occurs in middle of 13th century and later, in romantic tales translated into Norse.

The book is full of interesting folklore—totems, wells, needfire, witches, folk-medicine, second sight, etc.

The reprint is greatly enhanced by the Editor’s scholarly Introduction, which contains a great deal of additional information of value to the student.

A. W. J.

<sup>1</sup> From information given by Mr. James MacKinnon, Inverarish, Raasay, who has since written that the local pronunciation of Raasay is Rathar-sear, not Rathar-saidh, and hence a native is called Rathar-searach; there is a hill, or hillock, overlooking Raasay House, called Cnoc a’ Raà, ‘hill of the roe-deer,’ and one of the by-names of the island is Eilean an Fhéidh, ‘the isle of deer.’



Symbol Stone from Burrian, Harray, Orkney, found in 1936.

# THE LEGEND OF DIL MAC RIGH LOCHLANN, LOCHPOOLTIEL, SKYE.

BY JAMES MACKINNON.

IT is said that before the battle of Largs, in 1263, the bay now called Lochpooltiel, situated at Glendale on the west coast of Skye, was known as Loch a' Chuain (ocean bay). The change of name is said to have arisen from the tradition that the body of a Norwegian prince, popularly known as Tiel Mac Rìgh Lochlann, who was drowned on his homeward voyage after the battle, was found by some fishermen on a tidal rock on the north shore of this loch, since known as Sgeir a' Lochlannaich.<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough, quite near to the body was found a *sgrath*, or turf, large enough to cover the grave which was afterwards made. Instead of proceeding to the fishing ground, the fishermen took both the body and the turf on board their boat and returned to the head of the loch and there prepared the body for burial, in accordance with the customs observed in the case of a chief or important person. It is said to have been the first body buried in the still used graveyard of Cill Chomhghain.<sup>2</sup> From a seed believed to have been embedded in the turf which was found with the body, an elderberry tree afterwards grew and is still flourishing.

Some forty years ago, John MacLeod, a local poet, wrote a poem about this tree, a poem which is regarded by many as perhaps the finest piece of dramatic composition in the Gaelic language. The incident which inspired this poem may be briefly summarised as follows :—

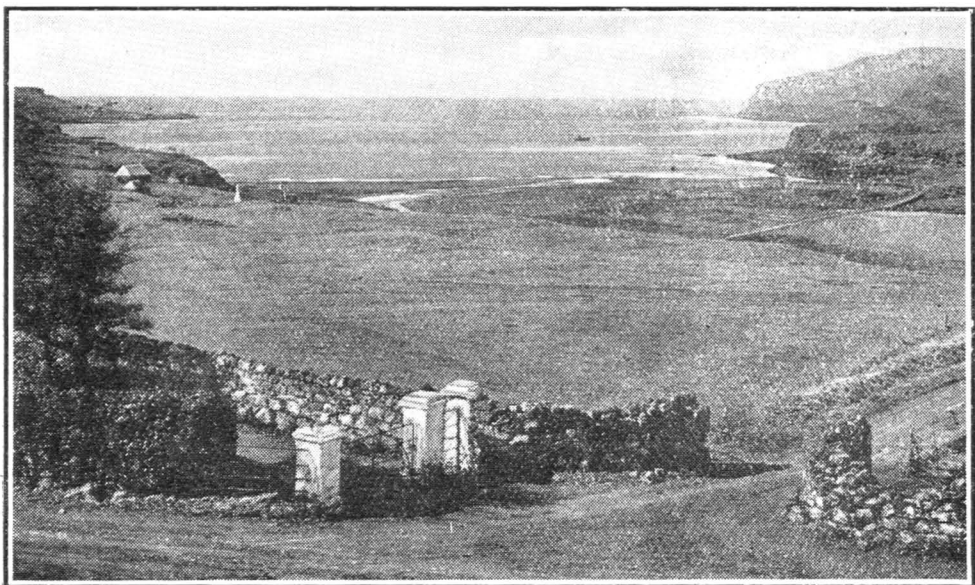
There lived in Glendale a crofter called Donald, who owned an excellent kailyard which he, according to the poet, prized more highly than Naboth did his vineyard. The yard appears to have been indifferently protected, with the result that the village sheep made occasional inroads. Timber for fencing purposes being apparently

<sup>1</sup> Skerry of the fjord-lander (Norwegian).

<sup>2</sup> St. Congan lived c. 615 A.D.

scarce, the crofter betook himself in the dusk of the evening to the graveyard and cut enough branches from the famous elderberry tree as would enable him to protect his kailyard from any further depredations by the sheep.

Donald probably felt tired and bruized from the effects of having carried such an unusual and heavy load for such a distance, but on the other hand, was



Loch Pooltiel, Glendale, Skye. Sgeir a' Lochlannaich is opposite outmost headland on the right.

*Copyright—by courtesy of Raphael Tuck & Sons, Ltd., London.*

particularly pleased with his evening's work and having escaped the prying eyes of his neighbours.

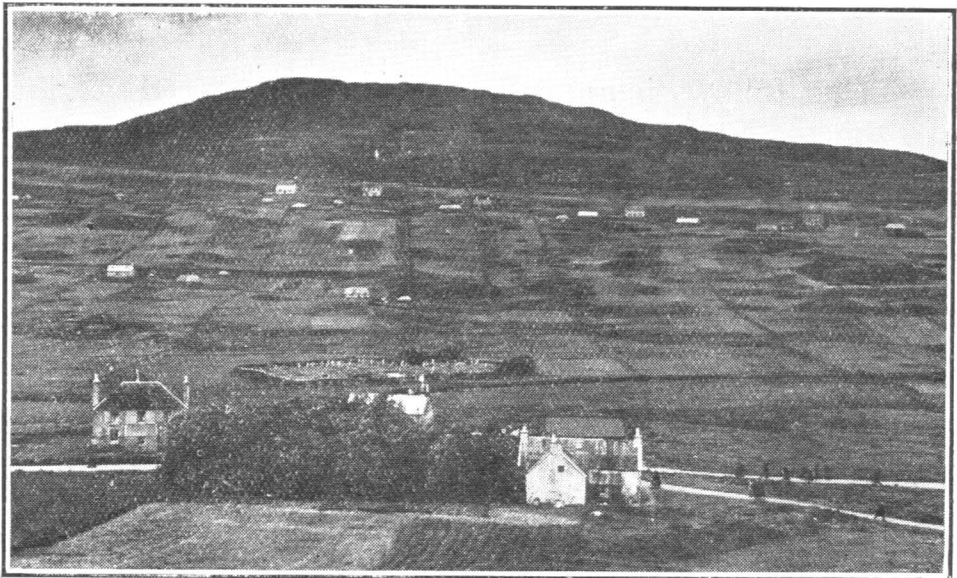
But the end was not yet, as Donald, to his horror, soon discovered. About the hour of midnight, when alone in bed, a seeming phantom, or some unearthly visitant, in flowing and luminous robes appeared, and at once announced himself to be the ghost of Dìl Mac Rìgh Lochlann,<sup>1</sup> whose body was the first to be interred in Cill Chomhghain cemetery, and sternly rebuked Donald for his brutal, callous and sacrilegious act.

The poem opens with an explanatory introduction,

<sup>1</sup> Dìl (popularly known as Tiel), son of the king of fjord-land (Norway).



and proceeds in the form of a dialogue between the prince and Donald; the first, pressing home the heinous enormity of his act or offence; the second submissively and apologetically pleading poverty, the beauty and succulency of the cabbages, the time and care devoted to their cultivation, the serious loss and suffering their destruction would inevitably entail, all which reasons urged and impelled the commission of the impious outrage, and all this forensic eloquence couched in language at once virile and logical.



Cill Chomhghain, Glendale, Skye. (Graveyard of Kilchoan in the centre).

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This wordy altercation, however, finally ended amicably by the prince wishing Donald good-night, as his shadowy outline suddenly disappeared through the smoke-vent in the thatched roof.

NOTE.—The poem, "Cill Chomhghain," appeared some fifteen or sixteen years ago in *Deo Grèine*, the Highland Society's monthly publication. The author, John MacLeod, was the eldest son of another famous poet, Donald MacLeod (some of whose poems are found in the "Beauties of Gaelic Poetry") and a brother of the late Neil MacLeod, a popular Gaelic poet whose work "Clarsach na Doire" has already passed through several editions. John was a seafaring man, and died, aged sixty, within a few hours of reaching Montreal, where he was buried in Mount Royal Churchyard.

THE MEN OF NOROWAY  
*contra*  
THE MEN OF ORKNEY.

By W. C. FAIRWEATHER AND R. MELDAU.

THE title of this paper is taken from a marginal note in the Register of Acts and Decrees, Vol. 20, fol. 249.

What follows is an abridged and modernised version of the record.

“Anent the summons raised at the instance of the seniors and eighteen men of the merchants of the Hansa of Germany, resident in Buren, town of Norway, and especially by John Tetkelenburcht, James Garhanrie, Jechoim Ryik and colleagues, against John Crummertie in Rannaldsay, Robert Tulloch there, Donald McLauchlane in Wallis, Robert Jamesoun *alias* Donaldson there, Donald Jamesoun there, William Gyre, William Mudy, father to Master William Mudy there, Gilbert Mudy there, Gilbert Jamesoun there, Magnus Mudy there, Thomas Zule there, Andro Skarten there, Robert Osowar there, Magnus Angussoun there, William Zule there, Robert Donaldsoun there, Henrie Patersoun there, William Mudy younger there, Nicholl Chalmer in Wair at the brig thereof, Peris Loutfitt in Corwall, William Mertyne there, Robert Tailzeour in the Isle of Hoy, James Betoun in Stromness, Henrie Halcro in Kirkwall, Master William Mudy there and William Halcro there. Whereas in the month of September or thereby, in harvest, in the year of God 1557, the deceased Jacques Edern, captain, and Nowell Edern, master, Bretons, in charge of a ship called the (blank) invaded, robbed and took away from the haven

of Akarne Sound, on the coast of Norway, a ship of the burden of one hundred and twenty lasts or more, freighted from the town of Rostock to the town of Buren, and chartered from Jeochim Han, Turgen Toune, Jeochim Runniris, Mathias Eggellis, and Panschen Raidhane, our beloved friends of the town of Rostock; thereafter the said ship, with her entire cargo, was brought by Johan Bellaten, Breton, as captain thereof, after the decease of the said Jacques Edern, and by his accomplices, in the month of December, the year of God aforesaid, to the port of Orkney, where, immediately thereafter, in the month of December or thereby, the year of God aforesaid, the defendants, by themselves, their servants, accomplices and others, wrongfully and fraudulently, the crime of the said robbery and spoliation not been purged, knowing the said ship to be an unlawful prize and stolen by the sea robbers as aforesaid, intromitted with and disposed upon the said ship of Rostock and her whole cargo and apparel referred to below, and masterfully robbed, wrecked, wasted and despoiled the same.

That is to say, of Danzig barley, belonging and marked as follows :—two lasts and three barrels to Hans Tetkelenburcht (1), one last to Jacob Gerhame (2), one last to Jeochim Ryik (3), one last to Louk Fieke (4), one last to Hans Pawnels (5), one last to Hans Jenderyik (6), half a last to Oltman Willers (7), one last to Roke Witnarn (8), one half last to Cômers Borthard (9), one last to Claus Scharnebekes (10), one last and a half to Jurgen Linders (11), one last to Diryek Widderfelt (12), half a last to Jeochim Gaschall (13), half a last to Dionis Raveman (14), two lasts to Peter Jode (15), one last to Edwart Elmenhorst (16), half a last to Mathias Ruge (17), one last to Sabell Ruge (18), one last to Arene Galhoip (19), half a last to Hans Baden (20), two and a half lasts to Mathias Steigewerth (21), half a last to Peter Brakenwagon (22), one last to Claus Snethen (23), one last to Herman Benthorst (24), four lasts to Laurence



The marks of the Men of Norway.

Cranst (25), one last to Hermon Stencamp (26), four and a half lasts to Jurgen Toune (27), three lasts to Dryoith Cromer (28), two lasts to Hans Henmerdie (29), two lasts to Hans Brunckhorst, four lasts to Asmus Segar (30), half a last to Hans Crawnell (31), half a last to Hans Prien (32), two lasts to Jurgen Burthrop (33), one last to Jeochim Lutkow (34), half a last to Mathias Kerstans (35), half a last to Henrick Wyse (36), one last to Berendt Salamon (37), half a last to Jacob Sathe (38), half a last to Hans Tunemon (39), half a last to Hans Preen (40), half a last to Hans Bone (41), two and a half lasts to Marcus Offe (42), half a last to Hans Lindeman (43), and one and a half lasts to Hans Hyndeman (44); the price per last being 37 dollars 18s.

Also of rye meal, priced and marked as follows :— Seven barrels to Louk Fieke marked (45), three barrels to the cook (46), half a last in barrels to Rocke Witwarne (47), half a last in barrels to Henrik Hannyman (48), nine barrels to Jasper Scharmer (49), one last in barrels to Cord Wolters (50), two lasts in barrels to Edwart Elmenhorst marked with his mark aforesaid, two barrels to Claus Peirsyn (51), half a last in barrels to Henrick Ronneman (52), two lasts in barrels to Henrisk Folsche (53), half a last in barrels to Peter Scheill (54), three barrels to Laurence Crann (55), one barrel to Claus Soundt (56), three lasts in barrels to Asmus Segar, marked with his mark aforesaid, one last in barrels to Mathias Eggers (57), one last in barrels to Hans Crawnell, marked with his mark aforesaid, six barrels to Hans Coster (58), half a last to Jurgen Burthrop, marked with his mark aforesaid, half a last to Hans Winkelman (59), three barrels to Henrick Croger (60), half a last in barrels to Mathias Kerstans, marked with his mark aforesaid, half a last to Henrick Wyse, marked with his mark aforesaid, four barrels to Carsten Cordes (61), four lasts in barrels to Marcus Offe (62), and half a last in barrels to Hans Lindeman, marked with his mark aforesaid; each last comprising twelve sacks or fourteen barrels, the

price per barrel last being 42 dollars, and the price per sack last 60 dollars.

Also of wheat flour belonging and marked as follows :—Six barrels to Claus Peirsyn, marked with his mark aforesaid, ten barrels to Hewes Kerkoff (63), and ten barrels to Carsten Cordes, marked with his mark aforesaid, the price per barrel being 4 dollars.

Also of malt in sacks belonging and marked as follows :—Six sacks to Louk Fieke, marked with his mark aforesaid, two sacks to Hans Hoip, marked with his mark aforesaid, fourteen sacks to Cort Wolters, marked with his mark aforesaid, half a last to Edwart Elmenhorst, marked with his mark aforesaid, two sacks to Henrick Folsche, marked with his mark aforesaid, one sack and one barrel to Claus Soundt, marked with his mark aforesaid, two and a half barrels to Asmus Segar, marked with his mark aforesaid, in which was hidden silver amounting to 500 dollars, with five sacks and two barrels belonging to Henrick Croger, and one last in barrels to Marcus Öffe, marked with his mark aforesaid ; the price per last being 84 dollars, each last comprising 12 sacks.

Also of peas belonging and marked as follows :—One vat to Hans Pot (64), and six barrels to Hans Crawnell, marked with his mark aforesaid, the price of the barrel being 3 dollars, and of the vat 4 dollars.

Also of shirts belonging and marked as follows :—One barrel to Louk Fieke (65), and four shirts belonging to the said Claus Soundt, marked with his mark aforesaid, each barrel containing 120 shirts, the price per four shirts being  $1\frac{1}{2}$  dollars.

One half barrel of herrings belonging to the said Claus Peirsyn, marked with his mark aforesaid, price 2 dollars.

Eight pounds and four mark pounds of copper belonging to Henrick Folsche ; price of each pound 32s., and of each mark pound 5s., in money of this realm. Five webs of Gettingis cloth, price 20 dollars ; six webs of Garlienses cloth, price 25 dollars ; five webs of Rostock

cloth, price 20 dollars; one barrel of bonnets, price 5 dollars, all belonging to the said Henrick Folsche, marked with his mark aforesaid.

Four "leische pund" of tin made in stoups, belonging to the said Hans Pot and marked with his mark aforesaid, price 6 dollars and 18d. Scots.

Two sword sheaths of silver, fifteen (*blank*) of silver gilt, eight webs of Garlienses cloth, six ells of green cloth, the whole apparel of a horse, two gunners' culverins, and a chest with clothes, belonging to the said Hewes Kirloff and marked with his mark aforesaid, price together, by just estimation, 140 dollars.

Two quarters of Skon herring belonging to Hans Crawnell, marked with his mark aforesaid, price 2 dollars; one culverin, price 3 dollars; five webs of Heyde linen, price 16 dollars; one sword, price 1 dollar; and one chest with a bed and clothes, price 13 dollars, all belonging to the said Hans Crawnell and marked with his mark aforesaid.

One barrel of biscuit bread belonging to the said Henrick Croger, marked with his mark aforesaid, price 2 dollars; one vat with a bed and four shirts belonging to Jurgen Jorgensack, price 7 dollars; and a vat full of camelot belonging to the said Carsten Cordes, and marked with his mark aforesaid, price 30 dollars.

The goods, clothes and instruments of the ship, belonging to the skipper, Hans Schrowder, who died through displeasure taken of the spoliation, together estimated at 200 dollars; also the clothes and goods of the mariners, together estimated at 200 dollars.

The said ship with her three anchors, cables, ropes and other equipment, together estimated at 1,600 dollars.

Also books in Latin, Greek, German and Danish, large and small, to the number of three thousand volumes and more, amounting at the first purchase to the sum of 500 dollars, belonging to Henrie Sumen and shipped in his name to be forwarded to the said town of Buren. All of which money, books, goods and equip-

ment the defendants wrongfully, violently and masterfully took possession of, together with many other sundry goods and equipment of which specification is not now to be had."

The defendants having refused to make restitution to the pursuers or their procurators, Duncane McFersoun and Swader Schroder, and having failed to appear before the Lords of Council, the pursuers produced depositions of certain witnesses.

The Lords continued the case until 1st July, 1561, and ordained a commission to be directed to the Burgomaster and principal judges of Lübeck, to call both parties before them and to summon such witnesses dwelling within their jurisdiction as it should please the pursuers to name for proving the points of their summons.

No records bearing on the case have been traced in the archives of Lübeck.

It would appear superfluous to enquire whether the pursuers' claim was satisfied.

It may be noted that reference to the marks of the pursuers is in accordance with the common practice of the time.

Other references are mentioned in an article by the present authors published in "*Markenschutz und Wettbewerb*," June/July, 1936, pp. 223 and 224. In an article by Dr. Kurt Bussmann, on page 225 of the same issue of "*Markenschutz und Wettbewerb*," attention is called to earlier records of Lübeck and of Hamburg.

The resemblance of the marks of the men of Norway to Runic signs is characteristic of the marks still used by merchants of the Northern nations at the close of the Middle Ages, as exemplified by Scottish marks of the fifteenth century reproduced in Halyburton's ledger, and earlier Scottish marks recorded at Veere. Evidence of the use of such marks in Orkney and in Shetland would be of great interest.



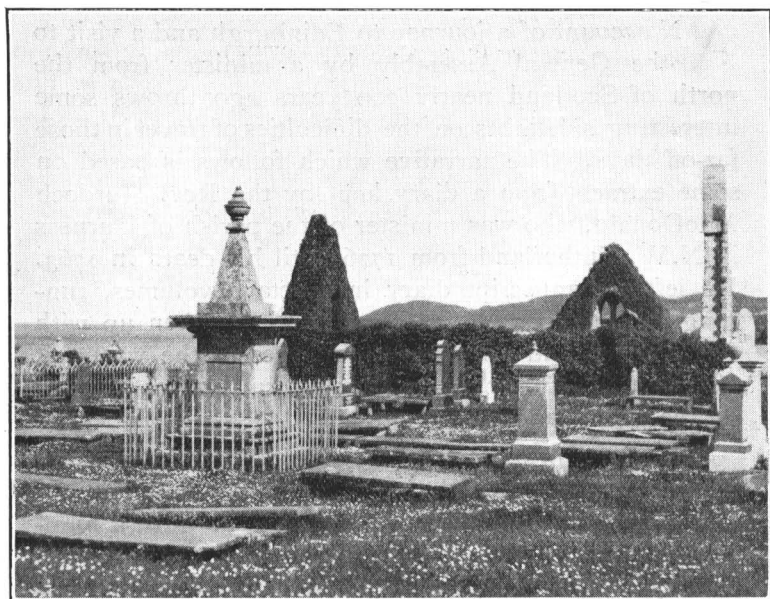
# A JOURNEY FROM SUTHERLAND AND CAITHNESS TO EDINBURGH IN 1737.

EDITED BY JOHN MOWAT, F.S.A.Scot.

**A**N account of a journey to Edinburgh and a visit to the General Assembly by a minister from the north of Scotland nearly 200 years ago throws some interesting sidelights on the difficulties of travel in those far-off days. The narrative which follows is based on some extracts from a diary kept by the Rev. Murdoch MacDonald, who was minister of the parish of Durness in N.W. Sutherland from 1726 until his death in 1763. He left a manuscript diary in 8 octavo volumes, running to 4,000 pages. Although mainly taken up with the personal and religious experiences of the writer, it also contains many interesting topical entries bearing on the people and the period.

The diary is mentioned by Hew Scott in the first edition of the *Fasti Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ* and the late Dr. Hew Morrison, then of Brechin, who gave a number of extracts from it in a paper read to the Gaelic Society of Inverness in 1885. It is mentioned by the Rev. Adam Gunn, D.D., in "Sutherland and the Reay Country," and by the Rev. Donald Beaton in the "Ecclesiastical Annals of Sutherland." (*Northern Times*, 28th Aug., 1919, *et seq.*). The diarist was a native of Fearn, Rosshire, born about 1696, and a graduate of the University of St. Andrews. He became minister of Durness in 1726. In 1728 he married Agnes, daughter of the Rev. Patrick Coupar, minister of Pittenweem. They had a family of four sons and seven daughters.

With a stipend reckoned as a little over £44, it is not surprising that the pious and good man should refer to "straightened circumstances" and "worldly affairs much in disorder." Nevertheless he seems to have been able to give his family, who were, as he was himself accomplished musicians, a very good education. Patrick, his eldest son, afterwards minister of Kilmore,



*Photo by Johnston, Wick.*

THE OLD CHURCH OF DURNESS WITH THE MONUMENT TO ROBB DONN IN THE FOREGROUND.

Argyllshire, made a notable collection of Highland music. The Rev. Mr. Macdonald was the "Maigh-steair Murchadh" of Robb Donn, the Sutherland poet, who lived in his parish and who must have worshipped in his church. Some of the poet's songs were set to music by the minister. Macdonald was also Presbytery clerk up to the time of his death and he figured prominently

in several ecclesiastical controversies during his Durness ministry. He made frequent visits to Caithness.

In June, 1746, he preached in the church at Thurso at the pressing desire of some eminent and worthy persons, in the absence of their own minister, who is now about a year out of the country and kingdom, in a state almost of exile, by reason of his faithful appearance in favour of the Government, and against the enemies thereof, who therefor made the place too warm for him.

While at Thurso, on the Monday, he says :

I had the pleasure to witness some Companies of the King's Forces coming into the town, and although only 250 in number yet I thought there was something regularly awful in their appearance.

In 1740 he attended communion at Odrig and preached a Sermon in which he comments on the methods of the young ministers of the time :

The method of preaching now in fashion by the young set of ministers, who have got up within these years, is not so pleasing to such who have been acquainted with the good old way. Morality is mostly insisted on by the new tribe, and perhaps it is not without reason that some of the more judicious hearers are afraid of a legal extreme, though they might also advert that practical Christianity may have been in the preceding period too much neglected.<sup>1</sup>

Reference is made in the diary to things temporal only so far as they served spiritual purposes. Mention is made of famine and death among his parishioners in this connection.

He sets down, among other things, an interesting account of a journey to Edinburgh in 1737. It is this narrative with which we are in the meantime concerned. Early in the 1880's a long extract from the diary must have been sent to the *Northern Ensign*, Wick, with a view to publication. After two sheets of 24 pages had been in type, the purpose was abandoned. Two copies of these incomplete and unpublished sheets were discovered by the present writer, and it is from these we

<sup>1</sup> Trans. Society of Inverness, Vol. XI., p. 300.

are now culling the following extracts. The copy in type is headed "A Journey to the South in 1737," and begins with an introduction dealing with the formidable difficulties of travel in the Counties of Caithness and Sutherland two centuries ago. It was not unusual then for business people and merchant traders to walk all the way to Edinburgh, purchase their goods and have them shipped to Wick or Thurso, and then walk back.

Meantime we will let the diarist tell his own story. The last entry previous to his setting out on his journey to the south was dated April 11th, 1737. Then under date September 27th, 1737, he resumes:

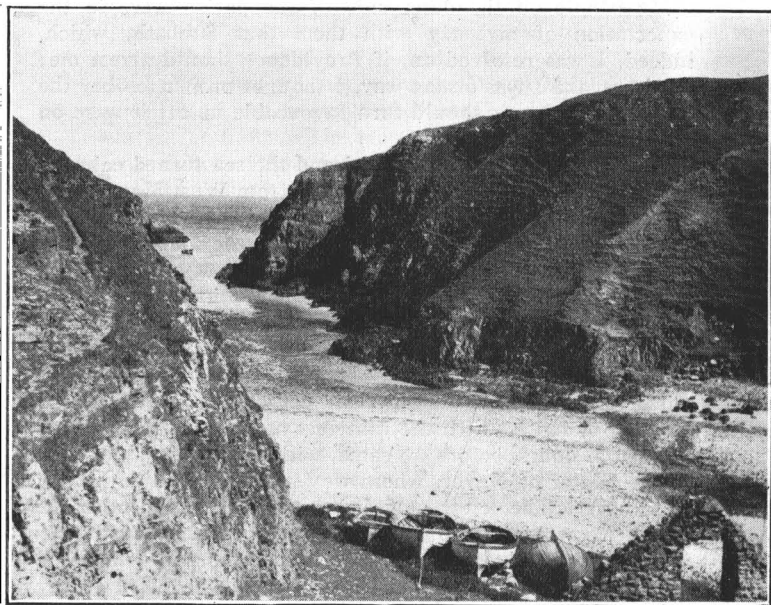
This is the first day I have put pen on paper of this kind since I came home from my south expedition, of which I have to say in the general that though my gracious God had never done anything for me but what I have to notice on that matter, I am ever bound to believe these sacred truths on record in His Word, and to the practice of the piety naturally issuing from such a belief and persuasion. God was remarkably kind in our journey out and coming in, by Sea and Land. . . .

But more particularly, the Lord knows how exercising the apparent side of my prospect was when about to set out on that expedition, with such a tender retinue, *viz.*, a wife in delicate health and two young bairnies, the one but eight and the other only about six years and a half old, with whom I was to launch out into the angry ocean, first in an open boat for above fourteen leagues, and then in a ship for near seventy leagues besides that we had no certainty of getting a ship at Thurso, where only we could expect it commodiously. These straits drove us to God in the family way of fasting, prayer and humiliation, the day before we set out, *viz.*, the 19th of Aprile.

We set out from our house on the 20th of Aprile, and had our youl<sup>1</sup> within a mile of our habitation, *viz.*, Smow<sup>2</sup>. The day was gloomy and foggy, as indeed it was to me in several respects, and there was a gentle north-east breeze, which made the heaving sea unfavourable to our purpose; so that we came to the place, my wife durst not try it, but chus'd to continue on horseback till she came to Ruspín, where we stayed that night. The bairnies went by sea from Smow to Ruspín, and got the first handsell<sup>3</sup> of sea sickness.

<sup>1</sup> open boat.      <sup>2</sup> famous cave of Smoo.      <sup>3</sup> a present or gift.

Next day being Thursday, there was a pretty brisk breeze of south-easterly wind, which was almost ahead of us. But the crew thinking to make way by rowing and coasting close by shore, which they expected would shelter them, they set out with us to the White Head, as they call it, but as we were advanced halfway to turn the Head, the wind increased to such a height of strength and contrariety to us, that by the unanimous voice of the crew, it was best to turn back,



SMOO HAVEN.

*Photo by Johnston, Wick.*

*From here the Minister set out on his journey.*

which accordingly we did, and in the afternoon came on shore at Badilhavish<sup>4</sup> in West Moan,<sup>5</sup> where I intended to stay, it being one of the preaching places of my parish, till it should please the Lord to favour us with better weather.

Here I must notice that when on Thursday we were beat back off the Head, we observed, just coming after us, into Loch Eriboll, two ships, which were diverted from their easterly course by the same cross wind. . . .

<sup>4</sup> On the south side of Loch Eribol.

<sup>5</sup> Moin east part of Durness parish.

It came into my head that perhaps these ships, one or both, might be bound for the south, and we might in that case have the convenience of a passage by them just come to our hand. When, therefore, they came to anchor, I went in the evening against a boisterous gale to see, but found none of them was bound for the south further than Peterhead. Thus God's ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts ours always. Besides that the Providence of God might have more important affairs to bring about by that gale.

My people on the other side of the parish were in the expectation of my stay with them that Sabbath, which, indeed, I was resolved on, if Providence should arrest me; but in regard I was on my way, I thought proper to obey the weather whether it should turn favourable unless it were on the Lord's Day.

Therefore, as the wind abated and the sea turned calm on Saturday, the 23rd Aprile, we set out from West Moan about eleven o'clock, and had a good easy sea all the way till we came to Island-nan-Roan, at which place the south-east wind blew directly in head of us again, and cost strong labour before we made Skerry about four or five in the afternoon.

There we thought to stay over Sabbath, but finding rain coming on, and apprehending this might lay the wind, we set forward after an hour's stay at Skerry. But we found ourselves much mistaken by our conjecture, for the wind blew so violently, with the rain just against us, that it took us several hours, before we came, with much ado, to the side of the Water of Naver, where we landed in a narrow entry to a cove. The crew, not being well acquainted with the place, we were like to have got our boat stav'd to pieces within a few paces of shore which in all probability had been the case, had not a very silly boy, who came down to spy our tossing, directed us by his cries to escape the danger.

After staying in the Minister of Farr's House over the Sabbath, we proceeded on our voyage on the Monday, when, with a favourable wind, we came to Sandside, in Caithness, about two or three afternoon, from thence I and my son Pattie,<sup>6</sup> went in the boat with the crew for Thurso next day, leaving my wife and daughter Mally in the House of Sanside who welcomed us to stay with him till a fair opportunity should offer—a Providential change by the by, considering that some seasons ago that gentleman<sup>7</sup> and I were at such wide odds. . . .

<sup>6</sup> Patrick, afterwards minister of Kilmore.

<sup>7</sup> William Innes.

I went as above for Thurso to see if there was an occasion of a vessel for the south, and we got tolerable passage till we passed Brims but the cheek-wind permitting us to sail no further, we row'd to Holborn-head, close by shore, till we came to turn the head and face the wind, which was so strong that the crew after a while's rest and deliberation, were in doubt whether they durst try the Bay of Thurso in face of the wild blast; which at length they did, and found it next to impossible to make it out, till just when they were like to give up with toyl and making no way, the Lord was pleased all of a sudden turn the storm into a calm, to stay His rough wind in the day of His east wind.

And to Thurso we came in at the Water Mouth, where were several ships, and the very first of them I addressed was receiving a cargo for Leith. The master was an honest well meaning man, one Robert Brown from North Queensferry. He told us he would be ready to sail in four or five days. In the faith of this I immediately sent for my wife who came with the girl a-horseback to Thurso. But Mr. Brown was detained long beyond his expectations, so that we were twelve days in Thurso before the vessel loosed. In which interval we might observe a good deal of kindness of God and man.

It is a remarkable circumstance of our voyage by boats that when we landed at Thurso, the crew observed the boat so weak that in drawing her up from the sea she was like to be pulled assunder. Every deal in her was loose, so it was next to a miracle she was not stav'd to pieces by the way. Surely God was at the helm.

On Saturday, the 7th of May, we loosed from Thurso, in the face of a brisk north-east gale. We weighed anchor about five afternoon and found enough ado in the rapid Pentland Firth, till about one in the morning we turned Dungsby Head. Then the wind and sea proved so kind that we were at Pittenweem in Fife, on Monday, the ninth of May, about six in the morning. By which means we made the voyage quicker than ever was heard of before. My wife was not a bit sick all the way, which made me bear my sickness the more easily. The children were sick but very manageable. I had found of humility on sea, where I could do nothing as a man or a minister by reason of sickness.

When we arrived at Pittenweem, we found all our friends there in good health and great joy, which was no small wonder of mercy in their circumstances—the family we had principally to do with, consisted of an old man<sup>a</sup> of 80 years

<sup>a</sup> His father-in-law, the Rev. Patrick Coupar, min. of Pittenweem.

and two young women, sickly for ordinary, and one of them some years ago often dispared of in a disease uncommon and very dangerous. We found the old man as straight as a rash, clever and nimble, beyond many who in point of age might be his sons. It is remarkable of him that he never used glasses for the help of his sight and yet reads the smallest print. Nor is there a grey hair in his head or beard.

It might be expected, when we were thus mutually loaded with Divine Mercy, that we should join in some extraordinary way of acknowledging that goodness which brought us together, but as this is not a fashionable way of doing, we had not the freedom to propose it, nor had we any motion from them to the purpose. So that if God knows no more of us this way than we know of one another, we have little comfort in the reflection. . . .

Among other impediments that hindered us from keeping touches with our God, this was one, *viz.*, I stayed but two nights in Pittenweem when I was obliged to go for Edinburgh to the General Assembly, where I got not leave to sit as a member, because I had only a letter from the Moderator of our Presbytery, bearing a material commission, and signifying that the Presbytery could not meet at the proper season for choosing a Commissioner. Meantime this ommission was wilfull in some of our few members. However my letter was rejected, and that perhaps justly. All I had to do was to see and hear the proceedings of that court. . . .

In Edinburgh I was seized with a pain in my right ear, which continued very uneasy to me for some days, and when the pain abated it was succeeded by a deafness which, thanks to God, was new to me, but made me for a while very lumpish and dull in company, and unfit for being a member of any Court though I had title. This was discouraging, but in twelve days the Lord was pleased to remove both the pain and deafness.

After leaving Edinburgh, where I stayed for 14 days, I was in case to go and see my brother to Valleyfield, where he is presently a Doer<sup>9</sup> on General Preston's estate. I should have observed that there was a natural cause for the pain and deafness above mentioned, *viz.*, I shaved my head too closely in Thurso, before I went to sea and I was sensible of the piercing cold which did not break out until I came to a warm town in hot weather. But as I said I went over to Queens-

<sup>9</sup> Factor or steward.



ferry and saw my brother in good health and no bad circumstances, which was a new matter of thankfulness, considering how ill he was as to both for a considerable time, till within a few months before I saw him. He came down with me to Pittenweem, where we found our friends again pretty well, which mercy was aggravated by my being recovered of my illness at Edinburgh, and that the bairnies in my absence had a disease called nirles,<sup>10</sup> which confined them for a while.

In Fife we stayed from the beginning of May till twelfth of August, in which period of time I might observe much of the Divine Goodness to me and mine. But the truth is we were so intoxicated with the jollities of friendship and pleasure of rubbing up old acquaintances and making new ones, that we had little time and perhaps as little inclination to mind the one thing needful.

We were resolved to make for home about the beginning of August. Here a new dilemma was puzzling whether my still delicate child should take the sea or land, both being in humane appearance equally dangerous, it being hard to determine whither the jogging on horseback or the tosses of the sea was the greater risque, but on the most mature deliberation her friends did chuse the sea, as probably the more expeditious, cheap, and easy, about which I had my fears little less than at first, but consented with a certainty of being seasick myself, which was not my greatest concern, but on the contrary would most willingly submit to on condition I should have an equal certainty of my friends being well. . . .

We were advertised that there was a vessel bound from Leith to Thurso about the beginning of August, about the certainty whereof we were not apprised till within three days of her sailing, which was too short a time to take leave of our friends and get our baggage carried up. For this reason we laid aside our thoughts of that occasion and waited for another ship that was to come from St. Andrews to Anstruther, where she was to receive salt and casks for the Lewis. This was every way more commodious for us. The great strait here was whether the skipper would land us near our house, our coast being on his way to the west, or drop us at the Orkneys, which was the alternative.

When the vessel came to Anstruther the honest man, one Mr. Robertson, told us he could not assure us of calling at our coast for this depended on the weather, but was so kind as to tell us he would make ourselves judges.

<sup>10</sup> A skin eruption like chicken-pox.

It happened that the vessel got neeped in Anstruther harbour and there was a delay of four days waiting the rising spring tide. On Friday, the 12th of August, she was expected to float but stuck this tide also. Preparations were made for the evening tide and the minister and his family were kept in nearness by friends at Anstruther and received a jolly send-off. The unfinished page leaves us to imagine the homeward journey.

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## SOME EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LATHERON SURNAMES, Etc.

IN looking over Excerpts from the Register of Baptisms and Records of Contracts and Marriages kept by the Kirk-Session of Latheron from 1740 to 1813, of which I had a perusal recently, one comes across entries of names that appear strange to us in these later times; over and above these now peculiar surnames there are entries of the trades, etc., of some of those whose names are recorded in the Registers. We purpose giving a list of some of the surnames with explanations of their meanings.

### SUTHERLAND ALIASES.

1.—*Sutherland* was the commonest name in the parish and the Gaelic-speaking folks of those days got over the difficulty of confusion of designating the bearers of the common surname by distinguishing either by the name of the trade followed or the place the person belonged to and this distinctive name was continued in the family.

(a) Place-surnames of the Sutherlands.—Among these are McKaliscay (1743), named after Aliscay in Sutherland. The *alias* is the Gaelic *Mac.Mlascaidh*. A Sutherland family bore the name of *Houstry* (1795), which

explains itself. Another method in distinguishing the Sutherlands was by giving them as an *alias* the name of their occupation, such as *Skipper* and *Cooper* or *Couper*, or in their Gaelic forms *Seer* or *Sear* (Gael. *Saor*, joiner); *Gresich* (1758)—Gael. *Greusaiche*, shoe-maker. Others were distinguished by their father's or grandfather's Christian name, such as *McConnel* with its variants *McOnil*, *Mickoll* (1741)—Gaelic *MacDhomhnuill*, son of Donald. *McKorraiche* (Gaelic, *MacMhurachaidh*, son of Murdo.

*McPhadruig* (1759), Gael. *MacPhàdruig*, Peter's son.  
*McFrancy*, son of Francy.

*McEamish* (1763), Gael. *MacSheumais*, James's son.  
*McPhaul*, Paul's son.

*McRyrie*, G. *MacRoithridh* or *MacRaoraidh*, Roithridh's or Ryrie's son. Dr. W. J. Watson says the MacRyries were a sept of the Macdonalds; in the Latheron records the name is given as an *alias* for Sutherland.

*Georgeson* is also given as another *alias*—in its Gael. form it is *McOrish*, Gael. *MacSheòrais*, George's son.

Descriptive terms are also used to distinguish one family of Sutherlands from another, such as :

*Moar* (1768), Gael. *Mòr*, big.

*Beg* (1777), Gael. *Beag*, little.

*Don*, Gael. *Donn*, brown-haired.

In the following list some of the names may be *aliases* of Sutherlands also, but as no indication is given in the Registers for the years 1740 to 1813 we cannot offer an opinion whether they were Sutherlands or not.

#### OTHER SURNAMES.

*McKinvin* (1758) is Gael. for *MacFhionghuin*, Mac-kinnon.

*McCandy* (1758) is Gael. for *MacShandaidh* (pron. MacHandy), Sandy's son. It may be also *MacAndaidh*, Andie's (dim. Andrew) son.

*Kard* (1758), Gael. for *Cèard*, a tinker or a tradesman working at smith-work of any kind. The surname *Caird* comes from this word. The Gael. for Sinclair is *Mac na Cearda*. The Sinclairs are *Clanna na Cearda* (in the west) but in the north *Singleir* (Dwelly's *Gaelic Dictionary*).

*Bui* (1768), Gael. *Buidhe*, yellow-haired.

*Golach* (1775), Gael. *Gollach* or *Gallach*, a native of *Gallaibh*, Caithness; the name still exists in the county.

*McEan* (1740), Gael. *MacIain*, son of John. He was a Gunn in Braemore.

*McOnlecaie* (1740), Gael. *MacDhomhnuill 'ic (mhic) Aoidh*, son of Donald Mackay.

*McRobb*, alias *Falconer*, son of Rob.

*McJock* (1740), in Lybster, son of Jock.

*McComais* (1741), Gael. *MacThòmais*, son of Thomas.

*McIllem* (1745), Gael. *MacUilleim*, William's son or Williamson.

*McEarcher* (1740), Gael. *MacFhearchair*, Farquhar's son or Farquharson.

*McOnilickean* (1742), Gael. *MacDhomhnuill 'ic (mhic) Iain*, son of Donald, son of John.

#### OCCUPATIONS, ETC., MENTIONED IN THE REGISTERS.

In the entries of the Registers the following occupations, etc., are mentioned: Skipper, cooper, wright, miller, gardener, carpenter, tailor, weaver, mason, boatwright, bowman, squear-wright, doer, piper and fiddler. Most of these terms are familiar enough, but how many of us know what a *bowman*, a *squear-wright* or a *doer* was?

A *bowman* was a cattleman on a farm. The name was sometimes applied to ploughmen.

A *squear-wright* (or *square-wright*) was a joiner who worked in the finer kinds of furniture.

A *doer* was a legal agent, steward, or factor to a landlord.

D. B.

# JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION TO SHETLAND IN 1834.

BY EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.

EDITED BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

V.

(*Continued from p. 7.*<sup>1</sup>)

Friday, June 20th. At half-past four this morning we were roused by the arrival of the lad with the ponies, and having seen our luggage, trunks, bags and boxes safely stowed away upon and around the poor animals, we again retired to rest till near seven when Chalmers awoke us, and having breakfasted we started for Scalloway, over a road well known as one of the most dismal and uninteresting in Shetland. But think not, gentle reader, that I speak here of a noble turnpike, smooth as a bowling green and hard as adamant withal. Turnpike road here there is none, by-road here there is none, foot-path there is none, no!, indeed, there is scarcely a vestige of a track, it is all jump, jump, from one peat-hag to another, till you arrive in sight of the castle of Scalloway, the monument of the tyranny of Earl Patrick Stewart. The edifice was inhabited but for six years, when its owner paid the forfeit of his oppression; being beheaded at Edinburgh in 1615. Its only tenants now are the starlings and wild pigeons, but the famous inscription over the doorway can still be partly deciphered:

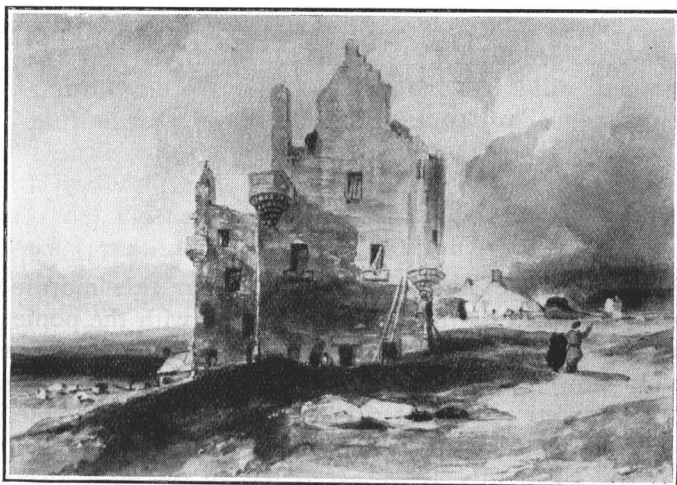
Cujus fundamen saxum est,

Domus illa manebit:

Labilis e contra, si sit arena, perit.

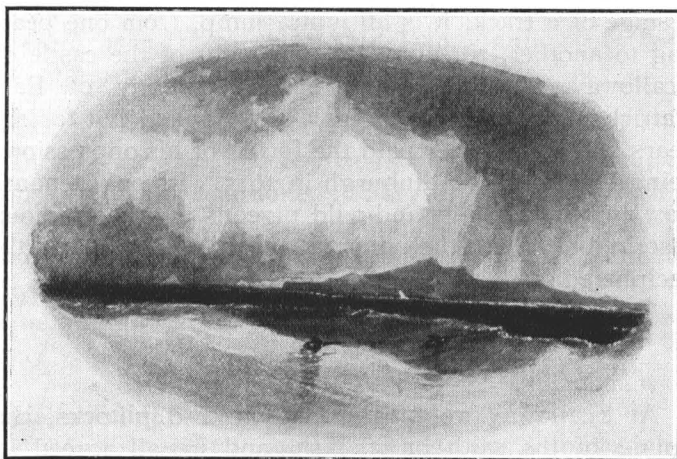
At Scalloway we breakfasted on cold pillocks, the young of the saith or coalfish, and we all agreed in pronouncing them to be a great delicacy. Of the town of Scalloway little can be said. Its position is one of

<sup>1</sup> On p. 6 *Tuesday* should read *Thursday*.



SCALLOWAY CASTLE.

From G. C. Atkinson's MS. "Excursion to Shetland" in 1832.



FOULA from the East.

From G. C. Atkinson's MS. "Excursion to Shetland" in 1832.

the most sheltered in Shetland, and the numerous islands that stud the surface of the bay render it certainly more picturesque than the busier harbour of Bressay Sound.

Here we hired a boat to convey us to Vailey Sound, the residence of Mr. Scott,<sup>1</sup> we hoped to reach at early period of the afternoon, if the tide would favour us in rounding Skelda Ness. We started in a stout six-oared Norway yawl, which propelled by four active Scalloway men, carried us rapidly through the beautiful archipelago of islands in the bay. We passed far clear of a small sloop which lay out at some distance from the shore, and which, by a curious stretch of authority, had been put in quarantine for having a few cases of typhus fever on board. I really sympathised with the poor fellows, for the remembrance of my sixteen days of dismal quarantine in Bressay Sound was still quite fresh upon my memory.

In a short time we arrived at Papa Little, the island in which the junction of the epidotic syenite with the gneiss is beautifully seen. I worked long and arduously with my heavy hammers at the former of these rocks ere I could procure even a decent specimen, for in toughness it is only exceeded by the diallage of Balta Sound and the hypersthene of Coruisk in Skye. The name of Papa is derived from the Icelandic, and an islet bearing this appellation yet exists in Iceland on the eastern coast of that country close to the entrance of the Hammersfjord. Papey Litla, or Papa Little as it is now termed, was anciently a residence of the Papas, or Irish monks . . . . Whilst I was busily engaged with these rebellious rocks, Proctor had wandered away to the west end of the island to search for the stormy petrels which are said to breed here in considerable numbers. A young man of almost Herculean frame came up to me whilst I was working at the epidotic

<sup>1</sup> John Scott, of Melby, b. 1760, d. 1850. *Grants Zetland Family Histories*.

syenite. From his begrimed and sooty visage, the finely developed right arm, and above all from the knowing way in which he handled my tools, I knew him to be a blacksmith, but of what use that trade could be in this almost uninhabited island, I acknowledge, as yet, to remain a subject of conjecture. I questioned him about the stormy petrels; "Oh ya! ta mooties,<sup>1</sup> lamm, we will fin dem suin"; and away I went with him, and we found Proctor gazing listlessly on the blue ocean, in utter despair of obtaining the object of his search. We roused him from his reverie, and our guide led us to the shore where masses of huge sea-borne stones lay piled in hideous confusion. He bade us now be silent for an instant, and we listened with breathless attention. "Dere is ane doon hier," he said, bending over the stone on which he stood. I approached and heard a low purring noise which seemed to issue from the very bowels of the earth. To work we went, turning over with surprising exertion the mighty stones, till in a few minutes our guide, thrusting his hand beneath a half-raised rock, brought out in triumph a little struggling stormy petrel. How did the face of Proctor beam with joy at the unexpected good fortune, and sadly did he moralize over the poor creature's melancholy fate, whilst he held it a prisoner in his hand. Did he let it go?! The quantity of oil the little creature squirted from its nostrils was indeed surprising and our guide earnestly entreated me not to allow any of it to fall upon my hands or face, assuring me that it was a most deadly poison. Let us not smile too readily at the harmless delusion, for daily do we, in our own educated land, meet with individuals of the middle, nay even of the higher ranks, who talk seriously of the venom of the toad. We found but one egg, as they had scarcely begun to lay, but the day being bright and sunny we heard them purring on all sides of us, and had soon collected a

<sup>1</sup> Shetland *mutti*, storm-petrel (Jakobsen).



sufficient number of specimens to satisfy the most greedy naturalist.

The petrel fly mostly in the dusk of the evening and in dark and cloudy weather, of which there is no want in this climate. One individual escaped from our hands after being captured, and I observed it flitting for a considerable distance from stone to stone till it was at last enabled to take flight. It is obvious from their great length of wing that they cannot rise from a level surface.

To the south of Papa lies the island of Oxna, *olim* Øxna-oy, or ox-island, which appellation it yet deservedly merits by affording excellent pasturage for cattle.

Leaving Papa, we sailed to the north-west past Hildasay till we arrived at a small low rock called Scourholm. Here we landed and shot several of the oyster-catchers and common terns, which birds, however, are at all times somewhat scarce in Shetland. We procured also on this lone and desolate rock a few eggs of the last-named species of bird and some of the eggs and young of the kittiwake gulls; and caught, moreover, three young oyster-catchers, little downy piping fellows as fond of liberty as their parents; and it was with great difficulty that we prevailed upon the boatmen to leave them on their desert home.

Our boatmen now, to our great disappointment, informed us that the tide and wind were too strong against us to pull round Skeldaness and, therefore, proposed to land us at Raewick whence we could easily get our luggage carried overland to Vailey Sound. There was no alternative; so, leaving on our right Big-setter Voe, we pulled round a point of granite rock into the harbour of Raewick, and landed on a beach of fine sand below the house of Mr. James Garriock.<sup>1</sup> Our luggage was put on shore, the boatmen received their

<sup>1</sup> James Garriock, merchant, Raewick, who married as his second wife the widow of Lewis F. C. Umphrey, of Raewick, who died 1823. (Grant).

fare and immediately pushed off again to avail themselves of the strong tide running into the bay of Scalloway. Here then we stood with all our heavy luggage upon the sand, wondering greatly how we should ever get it conveyed across the hills to Vailev Sound. It was, however, an easy task to procure carriers for our things, a woman and two boys immediately offered themselves, but at the same time somewhat damped our hopes by assuring us that it was six good Shetland miles to Vailev Sound. We now proceeded to divide our luggage and each took as much as he thought he could conveniently carry. Proctor took my gun-case with two heavy geological hammers and a large bag of swan-shot, and on the top of all he slung his own carpet-bag. The woman, a stout Shetland dame of mature years, brought from her house a cassie, or straw-basket, into which she put Chalmers's carpet-bag, a heavy bag full of minerals, my own botanical apparatus and two stones of shot! The strongest of the two lads had Proctor's large deal box on his shoulders and besides this a bag of shot as ballast; and the younger boy was somewhat overloaded by my leather trunk. Chalmers took charge of my weighty rifle and of Proctor's double-barrelled gun, and bore besides another stone of shot. My own load was small, three boat cloaks, two guns, and two shot-belts; but the cloaks annoyed me sadly by their unwieldy size. At starting we all felt considerably wearied, having eaten nothing since 9 a.m., and it was now six in the evening. As we advanced, however, upon the desolate moor and against the higher grounds, our spirits rose and I amused myself, loaded as I was, with shooting golden plover, of which birds we met with several large flocks. We were also fortunate enough to find one of their nests placed snugly on a grassy hillock where a depression of an inch in depth answered to the more curious receptacles for the eggs of birds in more southern climes.

The nest, or that which corresponded to a nest, contained four eggs, of which we of course took possession. I chased a dunlin for a long time but could not bring down, though I fired at it repeatedly. These pretty little birds are to be found scattered all over the Shetland moors. Our burdens became truly oppressive, in fact, to use a racing phrase, we were all overweighted, and often did we call a halt, to rest our wearied selves and to allow time for the stragglers to come up. In order to accomplish this with the greatest possible comfort, we found a convenient peat-hag, and then slipping down its yielding sides into its still more yielding bottom of black moss we rested our shoulders and the heavy burthen they bore against the top of the bank. In this position the greater part of our bodies were concealed, and it was curious enough when gazing over the wide waste to see nought save six heads appearing at very considerable distances from each other upon the desolate moor. We straggled miserably apart and I blush to record that the woman was generally the foremost of the party. On we toiled "on moss and moor and holt and hill," till the welcome sight of a long voe stretching inland to the right told us that our toils were drawing to an end. We began speedily to descend from the high grounds, the declivity was occasionally very steep and the loads then pressed doubly heavy on our galled shoulders. Right glad was I when, on surmounting the last low hill, we espied a voe close beneath our feet, and I was sure it was the one upon whose waters we soon should be embarked. Close below the little eminence on which we stood was a town, a scattered town indeed of homely edifices and to the nearest house we turned our wearied steps. It was the abode of a blacksmith, one of a numerous fraternity in Shetland; we bowed low (to save our heads from encountering the doorway), and entered Vulcan's dwelling.

In true old Norse fashion, the entry was through the cow byre steaming and redolent of ought but sweets, and from thence we were ushered into the hall of dais, into the sanctum of the edifice. The "riggin" was above our heads, but a bare riggin we could not term that, which was incrustated with at least three inches deep of soot. Chimney, of course, there was none, an opening in the centre of the roof, immediately above the fire, allowed of egress of the smoke and admitted light enough to see one's way in the apartment. The smithy was at the other end of the house, and the doorway was guarded by two stout young calves, which in the smoke and darkness Proctor mistook for two huge mastiffs. Had he been conversant with the heathen mythology I should have bantered him upon his fears regarding Cerberus and Hades.

Around the fire were ranged soft seats of turf for the family, and above these were piled chests, skin-coats, dried fish, etc., in endless confusion. The old man himself, a stout and hearty Shetlander, soon appeared with a bowl of bland, which we eagerly drained, and then longed to drink again. We soon bargained for a boat to Vailey, and having dismissed our crew of porters with a gratuity of a shilling a head, we descended to the shore and were soon, on a most beautiful summer's eve, gliding over the smooth waters of the voe. On our way down the inlet, we passed a sloop coming in from the cod-fishery, with 700 cod on board; the crew were all in high glee and celebrated with loud songs and hurrahs the good success that had attended their labours. This year, 1834, the sloop-fishery has been exceedingly successful, but for many previous seasons it had been in a very languishing state. But this year the small boat fishery has produced little or nothing, so that the gain for the few proprietors of the sloops will be very great indeed.

As we rounded a point at the entrance to the voe and

came in sight of Vailey, the old smith called my attention to a curious perforation in the rock, which may have been a couple of yards in width by eight or ten in height. "Yea," said he, "I mind when I could no get my arm through dat hole." The ocean had done this boring and breaking the solid rock as effectually as the blast of the miner, though the perforation was many feet above the level of the water.

It was now about 9 p.m.; twelve hours had elapsed since we had tasted food, and faint, cold and hungry were we indeed, as we stepped on the beach in front of the hospitable house of Mr. Scott of Melby. I immediately took up a letter to Mr. Scott which had been given to me by Mr. Charles Ogilvie of Lerwick. The introduction was unnecessary. I was met upon the staircase by a gentleman apparently of about fifty years of age, though I had been given to understand that Mr. Scott was in his eightieth year.<sup>1</sup> Impressed with this idea I half hesitated ere I gave him the letter; he smiled, perhaps he guessed the cause of my delay, but in a few minutes all our luggage was brought up into a bedroom and we ourselves were installed before a blazing fire in a well furnished apartment. Supper was hastily prepared; and stout indeed must have been our digestive organs to have submitted with a good grace to a meal of thick ropy sour cream with hard-boiled eggs and oatcake, and the whole commenced and concluded by a dram of genuine Hollands. Having finished our repast we adjourned to rest, and to our astonishment our couch was a noble feather-bed, too soft almost for those who at the best had enjoyed nothing but a straw mattress for the last fortnight. The privations of this day were severely felt by us, as we were without food from nine in the morning till eleven at night, whilst the heavy burdens we carried materially increased our fatigue.

<sup>1</sup> b. 1760, in his 74th year.

Saturday, June 21st. Proctor was busily employed to-day in skinning and setting up the stormy petrels we had yesterday obtained on Papa Little. The best mode of preserving these greasy little birds is to stuff them completely at once while the skins are fresh, although this process, of course, occupies a great deal of that time which is so valuable on these excursions.

The wind blew to-day from the south-west, so that, though by no means strong, it was directly opposed to our proceeding to Foulah, a circumstance I did not much regret, as we all required repose after yesterday's fatigues. I employed myself in writing my journals and finishing a few sketches, and in the evening amused myself with laughing at the absurdities of a Cockney tour in the Highlands and Shetland Isles, contained in a work bearing the romantic name-title of the "*Jew Exile*."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Scott had been visited here by the authors, whom he strongly suspected to be runaway London bankrupts, and indeed the profusion of bombast and false sentiment contained in their production savoured strongly of Threadneedle Street.

Sunday, June 22nd. The morning was cloudy and a heavy sea rolled into Vailey Sound from the west, and gave us but indifferent hopes of reaching Foulah on the morrow. About midday I made the tour of the island, with its most worthy proprietor, and meeting Proctor on my return we started together to make the circuit of the sea-girt isle a second time. Finding, on the south side a pretty good descent among the rocks, we scrambled down from one steep to another, till the bare and rugged rock frowned over us above, and below, at the perpendicular depth of two or three hundred feet, rolled the wild and stormy Atlantic. We proceeded on till we were fairly involved among the precipices;

<sup>1</sup>*The Jew Exile*: a pedestrian tour and residence in the most remote and untravelled districts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland under persecution. 2 vols., London, 1828, 12°, (British Museum Press Mark: 792 c. 30).

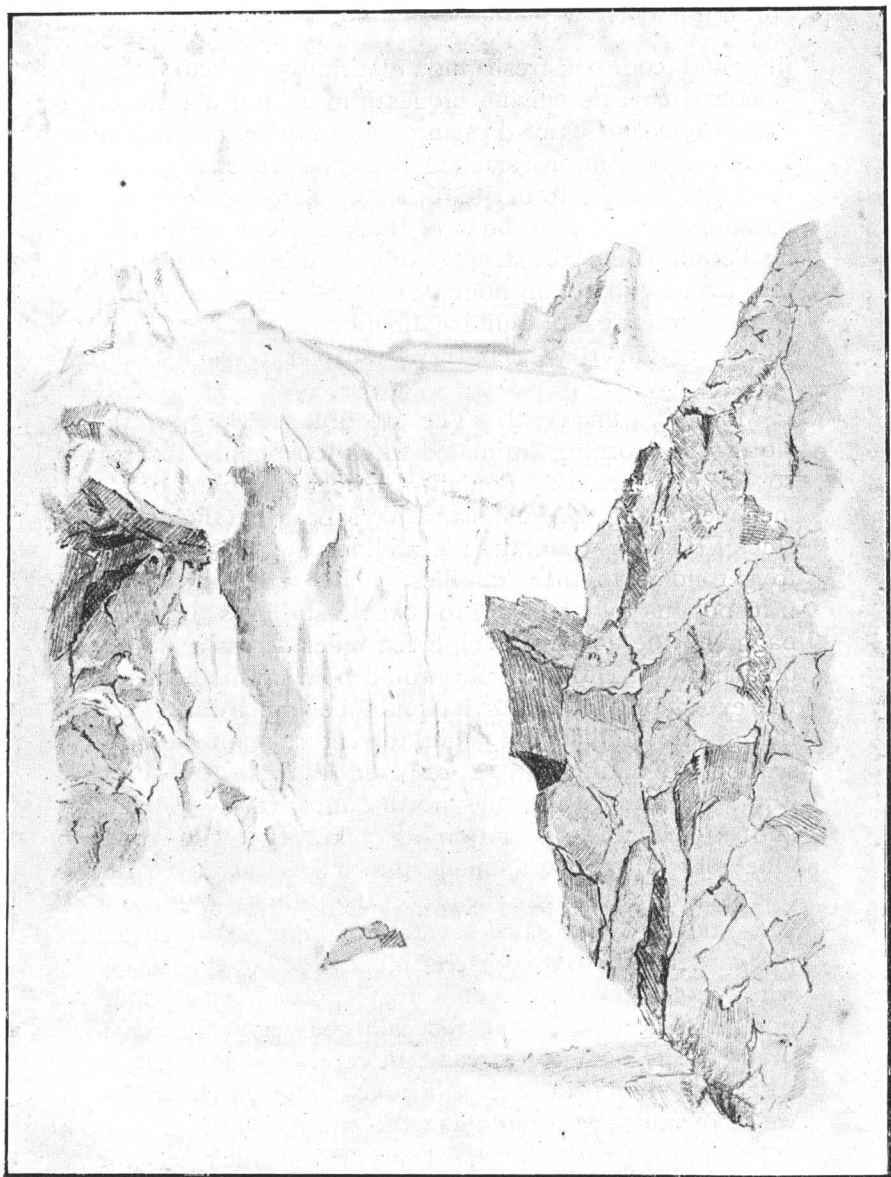
return we would not, indeed I doubt much if we could, onwards and upwards must we go, if we would escape from our rocky prison. We took off our shoes and, stowing them away in our pockets, crept cautiously along the face of the cliff. The undertaking was perilous enough; the feeling of the sublime vanished in a moment, nor was I touched with one spark of the fire of romantic enterprise, till I had reached a safe platform fully three feet by six, and situated about midway between the ocean and the summit of the cliff. Here a huge slip of the strata fortunately facilitated our progress. The superincumbent rock had receded from the strata below, and thus left a kind of natural road, though under any other circumstances we should have looked on it as a perilous path indeed. The dip of the strata was to the north at an angle of 40 degrees or thereabout, and such also was the level surface of our only possible pathway. But, unencumbered by shoes, we walked on easily, nay almost securely, resting our hands for support against the rocks above us. Occasionally there intervened a mighty chasm in whose dark depths we could hear and often view the boiling surges; over these in general we managed to spring, though once it was necessary to climb the overhanging rock at the real peril of our lives. We spent some time examining the nests of the herring-gulls, and when passing round some huge stones which had fallen from above, and whose fissured and gaping sides attested the violence with which they had descended, we heard from one of the chinks the cry of young birds. After a long search we discovered the nest placed far back within the 'rifted stone,' and sorely did they puzzle our ornithological eyes when drawn forth, for more hideous looking little monsters we never beheld. Half the list of British ornithology was guessed in vain when the twittering cry of a starling was heard above our heads, and an egg undoubtedly belonging to this bird, which we

now discovered in the nest, effectually satisfied us that we had not been fortunate enough to add a new species to the British fauna. We restored the poor young starling to the nest, and then clambered on for another hundred yards to a corner of the rocks where a gio (Icelandic gjá) cuts into the land. Here we came to a dead stop, the cliff beyond was perpendicular as a castle wall. What was to be done? Return we could not, too many fearful chasms had been cleared on our progress hither to make us wish to retrace our steps, and indeed some I thought would hardly be possible to pass from the side on which we now stood. I looked at the rock above, it was steep but apparently not very high, and afforded some good footing. I called to Proctor, up we went, and after a few minutes of anxious scrambling, we stood in triumph upon the summit.

Once more upon the level sward we directed our steps toward the Brough of Cullswick, though we were separated from that interesting ruin by a sound or strait of half a mile in width. Until within a few years the Brough of Cullswick was more or less in a perfect state, until an avaricious proprietor demolished a large portion of it for the sake of the materials wherewith to erect a few paltry cottages, and the heavy gales of the past winter have accelerated its destruction. Such was the fury of the storm that a family in the adjoining cottage was obliged to leave their dwelling; and, though the Brough is situated at least seventy feet above the sea, the surges washed over its summit and bore down large masses of its ancient walls.

After making a rough sketch of the Brough we returned to dinner, and reader, allow me to introduce you to the table of a Shetland landlord of the better kind. Even at this unfavourable season of the year, Mr. Scott could furnish a repast worthy of a southern table. Fish in the summer is the most plentiful article of food, and to-day we saw before us tusk,





BROCH OF CULLSWICK.

W. Cameron del. from pencil sketch by Edward Charlton.

ling and cod, all fresh and admirably cooked, for a Shetland chef de cuisine piques himself not a little on the various modes of dressing the finny inhabitants of the ocean. Mutton, smoked beef and vegetables succeeded, and then, to our surprise, appeared a monstrous pudding flanked by a bowl of thick luscious cream that no hermit could resist. To this succeeded cheese, to that tea and toast; an hour or two after came a copious supper, followed by sundry libations of brandy, rum, whisky or gin, till at length we escaped to rest.

Monday, June 23rd. The dreadful howling of the storm this morning intimated to us too plainly that we could not venture to Foulah. A boat and crew of six men belonging to that island have been detained here since Friday last, and the poor fellows are sadly anxious to get home to their families. They have agreed to transport us to the island for twelve shillings, bag and baggage, the distance is eighteen miles across a stormy ocean; how a Deal boatman would hold up his hands at the exorbitant fare. As it would be impossible, even though the wind should abate, to venture upon the open sea before midnight, we resolved to visit the high hills of Sandness to the north and west of Vailey, and to examine the adjoining lakes for wild fowl. One of Mr. Scott's men pulled us across from the island up to the head of the Sound. On our way thither we saw several of the red-breasted mergansers, but they were much too wary to get within shot, and we had a long pull after a young northern diver which at first allowed us to approach pretty near, but soon became more shy and at length rose from diving at such a distance from our boat that we were obliged to relinquish the chase.

Landing at a small harbour, near to which was the Kirk and two dissenting chapels, we were met by Mr. Kerr, the kind old Independent minister, who had been

our fellow passenger on board of the "Magnus Troil." After a short conversation we pushed forward to the hill of Sandness, over bleak mossy moors, not perhaps so wet as those of the west of Northumberland, but far exceeding them in barrenness. We saw few or no birds, nay, scarcely a single hooded crow, the plaintive whistle of the ring-dotterel, and the cheerful carol of the larks was all that enlivened our dreary march over the broken peat-hags. From the summit of the hill of Sandness, one of the highest in Shetland, the view was as extensive as any traveller could desire. To the south lies Foulah with its pointed mountains of sandstone, rising majestically to the height of nearly two thousand feet from the Atlantic. To the west lay, almost at our feet, Papa Stour, which, from the commanding height on which we stood, appeared low and flat and its famous rocks, of such varied and beauteous forms, were too diminutive to be visible at this distance. To the east rose the swelling hills of Delting and Sandsting, where a long chain of lochs was all that varied the monotony of the barren scene. Northmavine, with the bare granite summit of Roeness Hill, bounded our prospect to the north, save where, over the shoulder of the last-named mountain, rose a blue far-distant hill, which was probably Saxafrid in Unst. The top of Sandness Hill is a dismal agglomeration of small grey masses of quartz covered deeply with luxuriant moss, while on its two principal peaks huge slabs of stone have been erected either as landmarks for the shepherd, or more probably by the ancient Scandinavian inhabitants of the country.

We descended the north side of the hill and directed our course towards the chain of lochs which lay in this direction between us and the sea. Near the first of them we fell in with some whimbrels, the first we had seen in Shetland, but in vain did we seek for their nest, or endeavour to procure a specimen of the bird, they were so shy that we concluded they had not as yet

begun to breed. A little further down I discovered, by my telescope, a brace of wild duck sitting in a small creek on the opposite side of a large loch, and in an admirable situation for a shot. Cholmely and I crossed round by the western extremity of the long piece of water, and then we crept up on our hands and knees till the ducks were nearly within our reach, when, to our utter disappointment, Proctor fired at a flapper on the opposite side of the lake. Away flew our game and nought remained but to vent our spleen upon poor Proctor, who, however, was too far distant to hear distinctly our vituperations. We then sought in vain for some more wild ducks, and in the meantime Proctor had wandered away to the eastward and I did not see him again till we met at Vailey. Cholmely left me too to look for Proctor, and I trudged off alone towards some inviting lochs to the northward. The hillside which I now descended was clothed with heather at least two feet high, and there can be no doubt but that if the red grouse were once introduced they would thrive as well in Shetland as in Orkney.

On a large loch, in the centre of which was an island, the herring-gulls had established themselves in great numbers. A large brown hawk attracted my attention, it was probably an osprey, and I cautiously followed it down to a narrow loch which communicated by a brook with the aforementioned large piece of water. This I crossed and creeping up the opposite bank, I cautiously brought myself in view of the whole lake, when a red-breasted merganser flew out from the bank beneath me; as it passed, at the distance of perhaps seventy yards, I fired, but the shot was too light to take effect and the second barrel, loaded with swan-shot, was discharged with no better success. To complete my discomfiture, two other birds of the same species passed within a yard of my head as I was reloading my gun, and this was the climax of the misfortunes of the day. I waded with

considerable peril to a small holm in the centre of the lake in the hopes of discovering there either the eggs or young of the merganser, but nothing was to be found and I returned wet and weary to the land. From thence I wandered still further to the north towards a chain of lochs of great extent, but upon reaching the spot I found it consisted of one long tortuous piece of water nowhere above thirty yards in breadth. To my sorrow not a bird was seen upon its surface, and I had unwittingly involved myself in its numerous windings from whence, ere I could escape, it cost me many a weary step. I heard now several shots from my companions to the south, I guessed them to be signals to join them, but, as the wind blew from that quarter, it was impossible to answer them.

How wild and desolate was this scene; not a tree, not a house, not a human being was in sight, yet I loved it, I revelled in my solitude, I felt free as the birds around me, and I shouldered my gun and looked around me as proudly as did Crusoe in his desert island. Another large loch lay before me as I turned my back upon the sea and retraced my steps towards Vailey Sound. On the banks of this loch I lay concealed for some time amid a pile of huge stones thrown together by nature's hand, and waited patiently, but in vain, for a shot at some whimbrels which flew warily around me. I was forced, at length, to content myself with a brace of snipes and a couple of golden plovers as my day's sport; but though I had been then singularly unsuccessful, I was well pleased with my wild expedition.

*(To be continued.)*

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## REVIEWS.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY. Edited by William Grant, M.A., LL.D. Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association, Ltd., Vol. II., Part I. Vocabulary from *Bitterbank* to *Box*.

This monumental work has now reached the first part of the second volume. The same care in editing and skill in marshalling the material gleaned from so many fields is shown in this part as in those already issued. The dictionary is an education in itself. It is not simply explanatory, giving the meanings of words of the auld Scots' tongue, but its pages are full of items of interest to the philologist, the folk-lorist and the historian. Dr. Grant and his staff of workers deserve the sincere thanks of all students of language in general and of those of the Scots tongue in particular. The price of the Dictionary to Original Subscribers is £15, which may be paid in annual instalments of £3. Those who are interested in the work of the Dictionary, but for various reasons cannot see their way to become subscribers, may join the Association as members on payment of £1. This entitles them to attend meetings of the Association and to receive the reports issued regarding the progress of the Dictionary. Donors of £5 and upwards will be regarded as Patrons, and will have their names enrolled in the pages of the Dictionary.

D. B.

THE CELTIC CHURCH IN SCOTLAND: A STUDY OF ITS PENETRATION LINES AND ART RELATIONSHIPS, by W. Douglas Simpson, M.A., D.Litt. Aberdeen: The University Press. Illustrated. Pages, 120.

This is one of the Aberdeen University Studies (No. 111). In it Dr. Simpson presents with amplifications his now well-known thesis of the claims of Ninian as the first evangeliser of the Picts. In establishing his thesis Dr. Simpson takes his readers into the somewhat uncertain Roman background and then devotes chapters to the Picts, Mission of Ninian to the Britons and the Picts, and the maintenance of the Ninianic Church after its founder's death. A chapter is devoted to the Church in the Northern Isles and reference is made to the alleged Columba place-names. Dr. Simpson makes his appeal to the antiquities which he holds strongly support the thesis of the Ninianic school. The final chapter deals with the influence of St. Boniface (Curitan) in Romanising the Celtic Church. The book is beautifully printed and has excellent illustrations.

D. B.

"ROUGH ISLAND STORY," by William Moffatt, with illustrations by Peter Fraser. *Heath Cranton, Ltd., London.* 7/6.

This is a work of fiction of a somewhat unusual type. The author has chosen successive periods and incidents of Shetland history together with some examples of the Islanders' activities, and in chapters with captions such as 'The Morning of Time,' 'A Spanish grandee in a Fair Isle' and 'The Crofter' has made them the foundations for a series of pen-pictures, in which he has given his fancy full play.

In his preface he says that this book is "a care-free skipping on the hill-tops of Shetland's history. It is not a picture for pedants or precisionists." "Liberties," he adds, "have been taken with history both as regards characterisation and the incidence of actual events."

This is frank and disarming for anyone inclined to criticise any of his statements of fact, some of which are drawn from old authorities uncorrected by later knowledge.

But clearly any such criticism would be out of place here and the reader, if he skips on the hill-tops not caring for accuracy of fact, will be able to enjoy 'the rough idea' of the Story of Shetland as pictured by the author's lively imagination.

The plan of the book and the manner of its presentation is not unlike that of a 'cavalcade' as shown on a modern cinema film, where with a local background historical accuracy gives way, if required, to attractive pictures of how things might have happened.

Mr. Moffatt may fairly be said to have achieved the object with which he set out and Mr. Fraser's illustrations are well designed to help.

H.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF SHETLAND. By JAKOB JAKOBSEN. *London: David Nutt, 212, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2.* 1936. With portrait and language map. Pp. xiv. + 273, 5½ in. × 9 in. Cloth, 15s. net; postage, inland 6d., abroad 8d.

All English students of ON place-names and philology are placed under a lasting debt of gratitude to Mrs. Anna Horsbøl for the excellent translation of her lamented brother's works on the dialect and place-names of Shetland. The present volume includes in an Appendix, "Old stream names, fishing-ground names and firth names in Shetland," which was printed in *Namn och Bygd*, in 1922, after the author's death; it is, if possible, the most valuable part of the book, because the subject has hitherto been neglected by other writers on ON place-names in Scotland.

These studies have disclosed names, which cannot be explained, such as Fetlar, Unst and Yell, and Pictish and Gaelic names show-

ing the continued existence of the aborigines and their amalgamation with the early Norse peaceful settlers. The history of any country cannot be properly written without a thorough and systematic study of its place-names.

The author is of opinion that we cannot yet "point out an association between the Shetland place-names and those of a single definite part of Norway."

In the study of these names it is hopeless to attempt to explain many of them without the old forms. More especially is this the case in Shetland, Orkney and Caithness, where the Norse language has given place to English, so that the meanings of the place-names, being no longer understood, they have consequently undergone drastic contraction and corruption. It is only by the old forms that we know now that Samfra (p. 122) was originally Sandfríðar-øy, from a woman's name Sandfríðr. Ousdale, in Caithness, was identified, by Munch, by means of the old forms, with "í Øysteinsdal," the dale of a man Øysteinn, mentioned in *Flateyjarbók* in 1198.

The book consists of (1) Introduction; (2) Norn place-names, classified into groups, including those commemorative of the earlier Celtic population; (3) Celtic place-names; (4) Appendix, already referred to; and (5) an Index of names incidentally mentioned in the text.

*Breiða-bólstað-r* (pp. 27-29). With regard to this peculiar nominative form of ON *breiði-bólstaðr*, it appears that in Iceland, Shetland, Orkney and Caithness, some of those locative place-names which consist of a preposition, adjective and noun, e.g. 'í breiða-bólstað,' have developed a special nominative form, in which the preposition is omitted, and the dative form of the adjective, *breiða-*, together with the nominative form of the noun, *-bólstað-r*, are combined to form a hybrid, dative-nominative, compound: *breiða-bólstað-r*, in place of the original ON nom. *breiði-bólstaðr*, or more probably dat. *breiða-bólstað*. Other examples are: *mikla-*, *litla-bólstað-r*, *djúpa-dal-r*, *mikla-garð-r*, etc. These forms are used in Icelandic book-indexes and maps. It seems probable that this change came about in the following order: *breiði-bólstaðr*, nom.; *í breiða-bólstað*, dat. > *breiða-bólstað*, dat. > *breiða-bólstað-r* (by false analogy). Dr. Jakobsen gives an instance of the added *-er* (p. 27): "Kirkebostad," 1586, (an obvious dat.), now Kirkabister, with *-er* added. The Norwegian change is shewn in: *-staðir*, nom. pl.; *í stöðum*, dat. pl. > *af -stadhom* dat. pl. 1400 > *-stad*, 1506, and now; also: *sætr*, nom.; *af sætri*, dat. > *af -sætre*, dat. > *-set*, dropping the radical *r*.

In Norway and the Hebrides: *-bólstað*, dat. > *-bost* (open *o*), *-bust*; whereas in Shetland, Orkney and Caithness > *-bust-er*. One would naturally expect the Norse and Hebridean forms would also have prevailed in Shetland, Orkney and Caithness. That it did so



in Caithness is shown by the present *Lybuster* > *Lybster*, of which the unchangeable Gaelic form is *Liabost*, proving that the older form *-bost* > the later form *-bust-er*, *-bster*; and likewise the Shetland *-bostad*, dat. > [*-bost*] > *-bust-er*. It has always been *-bost* in the Hebrides, because it was stereotyped by the Gaelic form, *-bost*, of the contemporary Norn of the 13th-14th century. In Islay it became *-bus* (W. J. Watson).

Locative place-names survive in England and Scotland, with and without the preposition, e.g., Attington, OE 'æt þæm dūnum'; Ayresom, ON (at) 'ár húsum'; Howsham, OE (æt) 'hūsum'; Byfleet, OE 'bī Flēote,' etc. (Ekwall); Forsi, in Caithness, ON 'at Forsi' (Ork. Saga), locative of *fors*; and probably Shalmstry, Caithness ON \*'at Hjalmsetri,' locative of *hjalmsetr*, a hay-shed shealing (Fritznar, s.v. ON *hjalmr*, and Cleasby, s.v. Icelandic *hjálmr*); cf. Sjolmister, in Shetland (p. 153).

It now appears to be evident that the Icelandic *-bólstað-r*, and the Shetland, Orkney and Caithness *-bust-er* names are corrupt forms of ON *-bólstað*, dat., and *-bost*, *-bust*, respectively.

There are *-staðir* and *-bólstaðr* names in Shetland, Orkney and the Hebrides; but only *-bólstaðr* names in Caithness, some prefixed by personal names; while in the mainland portion of Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, these names are replaced by ON *-ból*, Gaelic form *-bol*, English forms now *-boll*, *-(vowel)-ble*, and *-bo*.

*Ärmensgil* (p. 206). (Instead of ON *ármanns gil*), a possible Celtic origin is suggested based on *ardmeen*, 'smooth height,' found in Scotland as a place-name in "Ardminish (Ardminnes)," and "Ben Armine." But the latter—Gaelic "Beinn Àrmuinn"—is derived, by MacBain, from Gaelic *àrmunn*, 'a hero,' which is borrowed from "an oblique case of Norse *ármaðr* (gen. *ármanns*), harmost, steward." Cf. the identical name in Iceland, *Ármanns Fell* = Gaelic, Beinn Àrmuinn. "Ardminish" is a Gaelic-Norse tautological hybrid: G *árd*, ness, and ON \**mið-nes*, 'mid-ness,' descriptive of the place. It is now further tautologized by the addition of English "Point" = 'Ness-midness-ness' = the original ON \**mið-nes*.<sup>1</sup>

*Airidh* (pp. 181-183). MacBain has shown that the correct Gaelic form is *àirigh*, with *g* not *d*, naturally corresponding with E. Ir. *airge*, *áirge*; Ir. *airghe*, plural *áirighe*. The Norse form "*erg* proving the identity of Gaelic with E. Ir. *airge*."

Gaelic words and place-names, even when only mentioned incidentally in ON, were given an ON form, gender and declension. E.g. E. Ir. (= E. Gael) *airge* > ON *erg*, neuter, nom. sing., and pl., hence, Icelandic *Ásgríms-erg*, ON *Asgríms-erg*, pl., 'Asgrim's Shealings' (Dan. transl. Ork. Saga). The form *-ærgin*, in *Flateyjarbók*, can only be one of its many errors mentioned by Vigfusson. J. Anderson's *ærgin* from Gaelic pl. \**àirghean* (not *airidhean*, p. 182)

<sup>1</sup> From description by Prof. W. J. Watson and Rev. Kenneth Macleod, of Gigha.

is impossible, because, in 1158, the contemporary Gaelic plural was *áirígehe*, while the modern Gaelic plural in *-ean* did not then exist.

Compare also E. Ir. (= E. Gael.) *coinnmedh*, 'billeting' (*Annals of Ulster*, 1063, Rolls Ed.), which is rendered in *Orkneyinga*, in 1152, as 'á kunnmiðum,' dat. pl. of *kunnmið*, neuter, which the Katnesingar (Gaels) correctly gave as their equivalent of the ON 'á veizlur,' billeting; again proving the identity of Gaelic with early Irish.

Foreign place-names were similarly treated in ON, e.g. Athole, Old Gael. *Athfotla*,<sup>1</sup> was rendered in ON, in 1134, as 'at Atjökllum,' locative pl. of *Atjökla* and 'af Atjötllum,' locative pl. of 'Atjötla,' (*Orkneyinga*, text, Rolls Ed.); and Athens as 'Óðins-borg,' etc.

It is an irreparable loss that the author did not survive to complete his researches into the dialects and place-names of Orkney and Caithness. In Caithness he discovered ON stream-names, incidentally referred to in the Appendix. It is sincerely to be hoped that the results of his researches will be published, which, together with his Dictionary and Place-names of Shetland, would form a monumental collection dealing with the district of the old Norse earldom.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

## MAGNÚSS SAGA HELGA ØYJA-JARLS.

ST. MAGNUS, EARL OF ORKNEY. By JOHN MOONEY, F.S.A.Scot. *Kirkwall*: W. R. Mackintosh, 1935. Pp. xv. + 324, 8½in. × 5½in. 17 full-page illustrations. 10s. 6d. net.

Eight hundred years ago, after Ronald won the earldom, and on the eve of his foundation of S. Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Master Rodbert indited his Latin life of the saint, which is cited in the Longer Magnus Saga. And now, on the eve of the eighth centenary of the foundation of that church, which is to be officially solemnized in Kirkwall in 1937, Mr. John Mooney has appropriately published the first comprehensive biography, in English, of Earl S. Magnus.

The book is divided into four parts with an Addenda and Index. Part I., Introduction and genealogy. Part II., the saint's life. Part III., visions, miracles, relics, etc. Part IV., dedications and memorials. The Addenda gives the recent discoveries of Professor Bruce Dickins—the name of the saint's wife, and the fact that 'St. Magnus Church near old London Bridge was a dedication to the Martyr Saint of Orkney,' and did not exist in 1067, as stated in a

<sup>1</sup> Prof. W. J. Watson writes: It is certain that *Ath-fotla*, *Ath-fodla*, *Ath-fodhla*, mean simply "second Ireland," "new Ireland," from *ath*, denoting repetition (like Latin *re-*), and *Fotla*, *Fodla*, *Fodhla*, a well-known old name for Ireland. This is only one of the names that commemorate the Irish settlement discussed in my *History of the Celtic Place-names of Scotland*.

charter now proved to be spurious. Part IV. gives translations of extracts from the *Book of Holy Offices* and the *Aberdeen Breviary*, together with a 13th century hymn and music, and a Hebridean hymn to St. Magnus.

The author has derived his information mainly from three Sagas: Orkneyinga and the Longer and Short Magnus Sagas. He has treated his congenial subject with the utmost sympathy and whole-hearted devotion.

This work will be indispensable to all who are interested in the north, and to those who will take part in the solemnities of 1937.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

*Errata*.—p. 28, read *riki* for *rikr*; p. 56, read *vikingar* for *vikinga*; p. 131, f.n.,\* read “one step further off than the [two] *earls’ fathers’* brother’s son,” ‘*firnari en brœðrungr jarla*,’ (*Orkneyinga* and the *Longer Saga*), i.e. agnatic first cousin once removed. So that Dufnjall was a great-grandson of Earl Thorfinn, and not of Ingibjörg and King Malcolm, which was also physically impossible.

Note on the chronology of the three Sagas:—In *Glossarium of Norges Gamle Love*, s.v. *magnúsmessa*, it is stated that he died on 16th April, 1115—which was *before* Easter, and on a Good Friday, the one and only day in the year when mass was strictly prohibited, and one of the four days in the year (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Eve and Easter Day) when burial was forbidden. All this in direct contradiction, in every particular, of the unanimous record of the three independent Sagas, which explicitly state that he was slain on 16th April, *after* Easter, heard mass on the morning of his execution and (inferentially) was buried the same day.

The *Annals* state that S. Magnus and King Olaf died in 1116, in which year April 16th fell on the second Sunday after Easter, Sunday being the only day of the week (except Saints’ days) in which mass was said.

King Magnús died 24th August, 1103, and was succeeded by his three sons Øysteinn, Sigurðr and Ólafr, who ruled jointly for 12 years (7 until Sigurd returned from his Crusade and 5 thereafter) until 1115, when Olaf fell ill in the 13th year of the joint rule and died on 22nd December (1116, *Annals*), King Øysteinn died 6 years after Olaf, in (1116 + 6 =) 1122 (*Annals*).

If these three sagas are arranged in accordance with their gradual accretion of erroneous chronological and other interpolations it may indicate their respective ages and credibility:—

1. Short Magnus Saga (from MS. c.1380)—No year of death.
2. Orkneyinga Saga (*Flateyjar-bók*, 1380; Danish translation, 1570)—Death year 74 years after fall of S. Olaf (1030 + 74 =) 1104, and 7 (omitting additional 5) years of joint rule of *earls* (in

error for *kings*)=A.D. 1111, which, in Roman numerals=MCXI, misread as MXCI, and extended as 'M. ok níu tigr ok einn vetr,'= 1091, in error for 1111.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise 'ok níu' must be a misreading of 'ellifu': 'M., ellifu tigr ok einn vetr,'= 1111. The date 1104 having been already given, it stands to reason that 1091 is a clerical error.

3. Longer Magnus Saga (from a 17th century copy of the lost *Bæjar-bók*). Death year 74 years after fall of S. Olaf, viz. 1104, and 12 years of joint rule of *earls* (in error for *kings*), which should have been added,  $1104 + 12 = 1116$ , (*Annals*). It further states that April 16th was a Monday, *Mánadagr*, obviously in error for Sunday, *Sunnudagr*, because A.D. 1117 was the only year, thereabouts, when April 16th fell on a Monday, viz. the third Monday after Easter Monday. Vigfusson states that the translated extracts from Master Rodbert's Latin Life can be easily distinguished by 'its somewhat inflated and zealous style.'

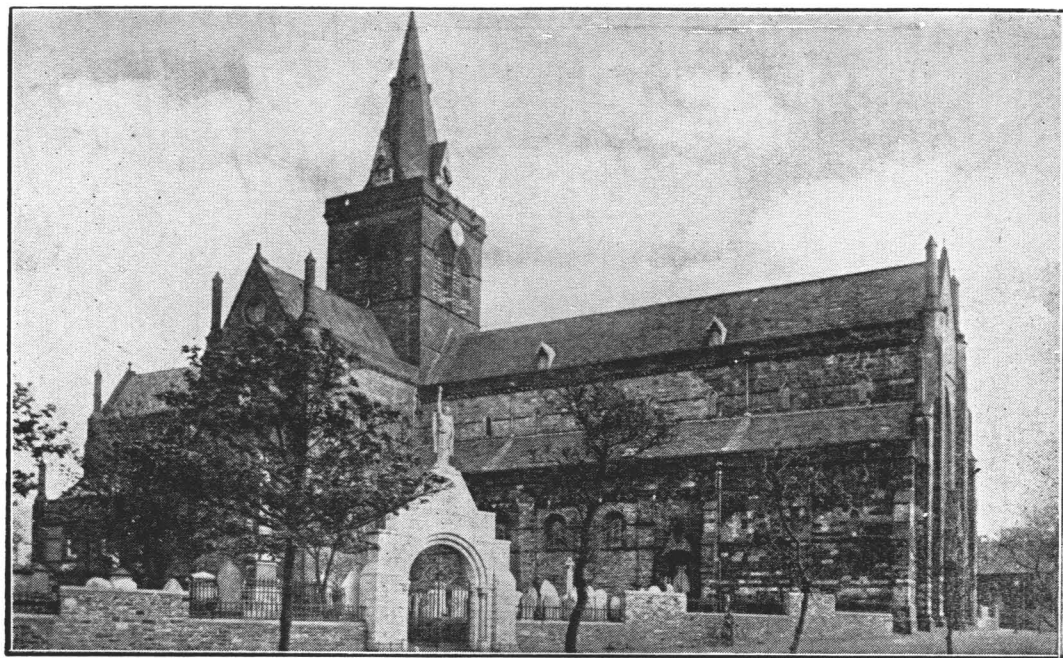
It is quite evident that the joint rule of the three kings (during whose rule, the Sagas state, Magnus was slain) as given in *Heimskringla*, viz.  $7+5=12$  years, was confused with that of the two earls; hence 7 years in *Orkneyinga* (overlooking the additional 5 years), and 12 years in the Longer Magnus Saga. The date 1104 was arrived at by deducting 12 (instead of 13) years from A.D. 1116 of the *Annals*, and was correctly described as 74 years after the fall of S. Olaf.

**MERCHANT LAIRDS OF LONG AGO.** Being studies of Orkney life and conditions in the early 18th century. Part I.—Traill family letters. Edited by HUGH MARWICK. *Kirkwall: W. R. Mackintosh*, 1936. Pp. 157, 6in.  $\times$  9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. 3s. Two full-page illustrations of signatures and handwriting.

These 151 letters, 1699-1735, are full of matters of local and general interest, of particular value to genealogists; *e.g.*, the hitherto unknown origin of the Stewarts of Masseter is now set at rest by the fact that the first of the family, Mr. Walter Stewart, was the second son of "John Stewart of Kilnegg from the family of Doun." An indispensable index is provided.

<sup>1</sup> cf. Cleasby, s.v. *nef*, where the *Gula* text 'xl' has been misread as 'lx,' and extended as 'sex tigr.' Also Fritzner, s.v. *silfr*, where *Grágás* text 'lx' has been misread as 'xl' and cited in Arabic numerals as '40,' but correctly cited as '60' s.v. *eyrir*.

PLATE I.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL FROM N.W.

*T. Kent.*

## OCTOCENTENARY OF S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL.

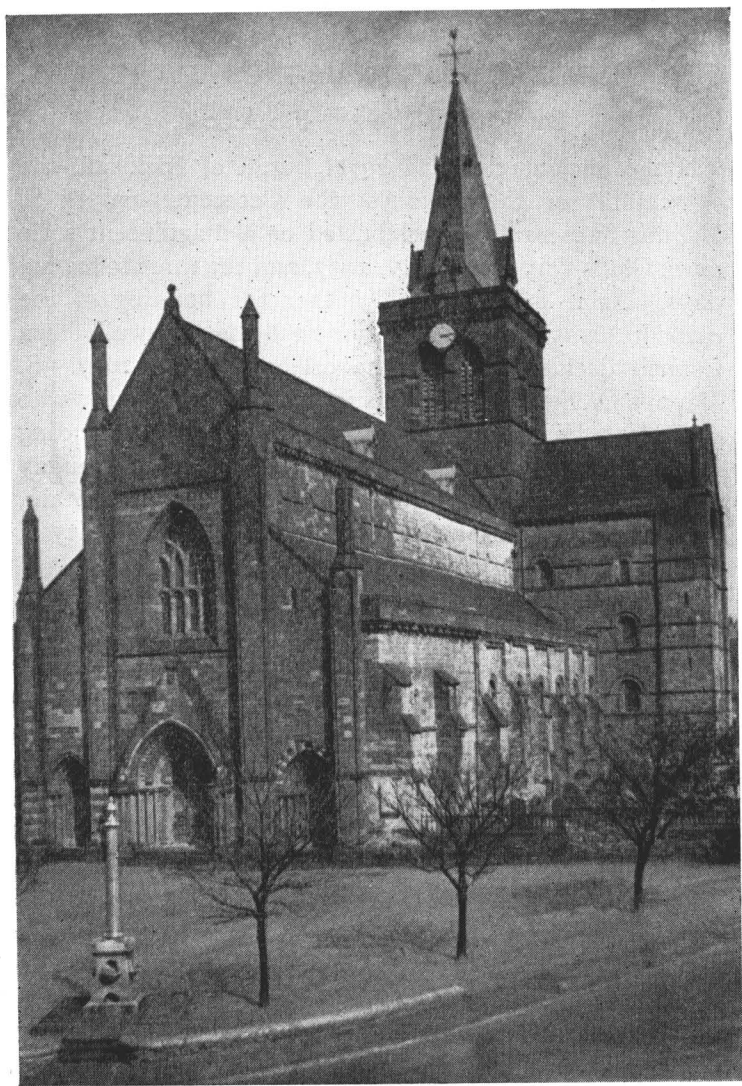
By JOHN MOONEY, F.S.A.Scot.

IN the ancient city and royal burgh of Kirkwall, the capital of the Orkneys, the Octocentenary of S. Magnus Cathedral was celebrated on a magnificent scale on S. Olaf's Day, 29th July, 1937, and the three following days. As it is uncertain whether the building of the cathedral was begun in 1137 or 1138 the Kirkwall Town Council decided to hold the celebrations in 1937. S. Magnus Day, 16th April, was inconvenient for many who wished to be present at an event of such outstanding importance, whereas S. Olaf's Day falls during the holiday season when church dignitaries and others in Britain, Scandinavia and elsewhere would have an opportunity of attending the celebrations.

A more appropriate place for staging the scenes of a great historical pageant could hardly be desired, for great events have taken place in the royal burgh, the most northerly in the Empire. Norwegian and Scottish kings have walked its narrow thoroughfares, famous earls and bishops have lived there, and Kirkwall Cathedral has come through the centuries unscathed, the scene of public worship uninterruptedly from the twelfth century. The Orkneyinga Saga furnished dramatic scenes of the period, portraying events in the lives of Earl Magnus and his brilliant nephew, together with the leading chieftains and udallers of the time. But could Kirkwall, with its handful of citizens, assisted by farmers and others from the surrounding parishes and islands, organize and carry through a performance worthy of the occasion?

It devolved upon the Provost, Bailies and Councillors of Kirkwall to take the first step. This was done at a

## PLATE II.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL FROM S.W.

*R. Rendall.*

specially convened meeting on 16th January, 1936, when the following were appointed by the Council to be in charge of the arrangements:—Provost John M. Slater, chairman, Bailie P. McCullie, Bailie H. Garrioch, Dean of Guild Flett and Treasurer Robert Slater, from the Corporation; the Rev. William Barclay, Councillor Alex. Leask and Councillor John A. Ballantyne, from the Kirk Session; Mr. J. Storer Clouston, Dr. Hugh Marwick and Mr. John Mooney, office-bearers of the Orkney Antiquarian Society; with Mr. William J. Heddle, Town Clerk, as secretary.

It should be explained that while the Town Council and Community are proprietors of S. Magnus Cathedral by royal charters, and are therefore in full control of the fabric of the building, the cathedral is the legal parish church of Kirkwall and S. Ola, and the minister and kirk session exercise sole power in connection with the recognised services of the congregation; the Town Council, however, has the right of holding special religious services of a local or national character, when these do not conflict with the ordinary services of a parish church, and subject to the concurrence of the minister. The Rev. Mr. Barclay readily concurred in the arrangements for special religious services in the cathedral on S. Olaf's Day.

At later meetings of the Octocentenary Committee the following additional members were co-opted:—Sir Francis Grant, Lyon King of Arms, G. Mackie Watson, the architect who had charge of the recent work of restoration, Stanley Cursiter, Director of the National Gallery of Art, Edinburgh, David B. Peace, Kirkwall, Rev. Dr. A. J. Campbell, James G. McEwen, Eric Linklater, Rodney Shearer, Lady Wallace, of Holodyke, and Sir Ronald and Lady Sinclair of Dunbeath. Henry Smith, Deputy Town Clerk, was appointed assistant secretary.



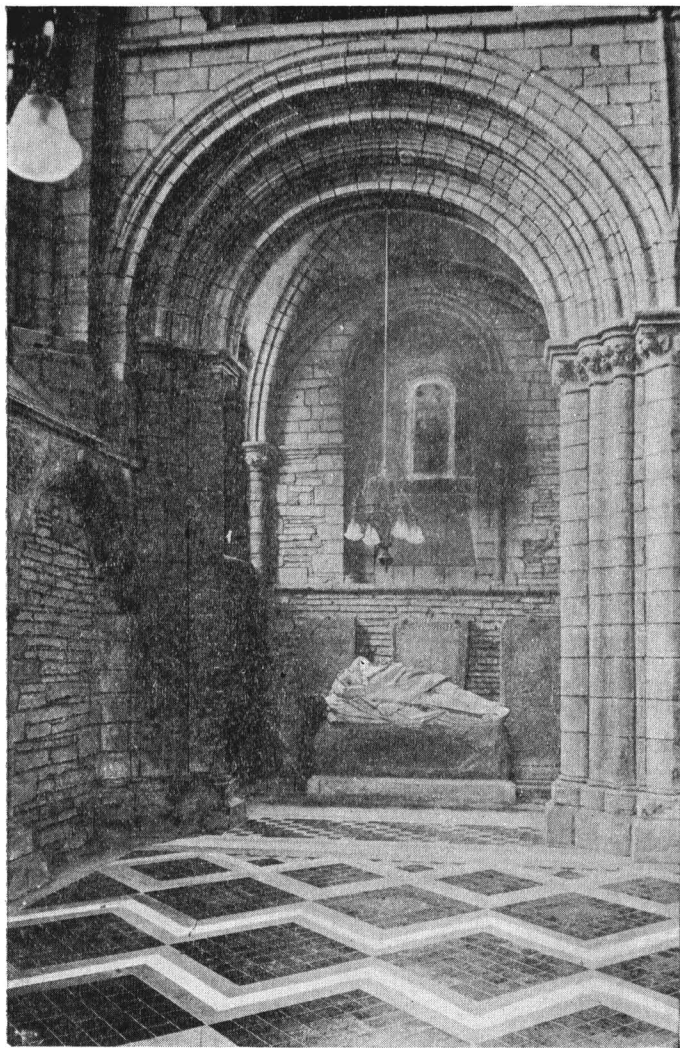
## PLATE III.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(Nave looking East).

*T. Kent.*

PLATE IV



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(East End of Choir looking South).

*David Spence (James Flett).*

It was provisionally decided at the committee meeting on 2nd April, 1936, that the celebrations should consist of a pageant to be staged on Thursday, 29th July, 1937, a reception by the Town Council in the Town Hall on that evening, a motor tour in the West Mainland for the guests and a lunch in the Stenness Hotel.

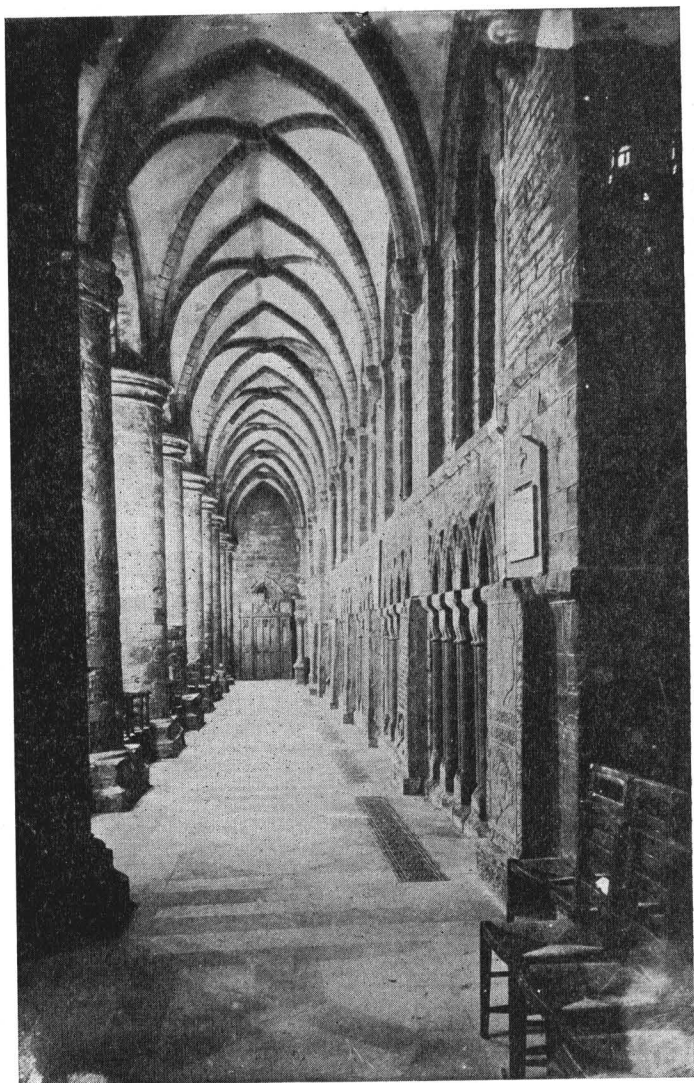
The place ultimately chosen as being the most suitable for the pageant was the enclosed park called Brandyquoy. This field slopes towards the Bowling Green, and was thus convenient for the erection of a gallery, with a sufficient area in front where the scenes could be performed, and with the Earl's Palace and part of the cathedral as background.

The Octocentenary Committee appointed the following as the full pageant committee:—J. Storer Clouston, Provost J. M. Slater, Stanley Cursiter, Alex. Leask, Eric Linklater, Dr. Hugh Marwick, D. B. Peace, J. C. Robertson, Sir Ronald Sinclair (pageant master), Rodney Shearer (assistant pageant master and director of music), Mrs. McClure, Mrs. R. L. Shearer and Miss Violet Firth (dancing mistresses). The authors of the script were J. Storer Clouston and Eric Linklater. The Committee decided to issue a handbook, to be compiled by J. Storer Clouston, Eric Linklater, J. C. McEwen, Dr. Marwick and J. Mooney.

Norway, the old mother country of the Orkneys and Shetland, did not let the occasion go past without showing its lively interest. King Haakon of Norway nominated Dr. A. W. Brøgger, Professor of Archæology in Oslo University, to represent the State of Norway, and the Right Reverend J. Støren, Bishop of Nidaros, with Dr. Oluf Kolsrud, Professor of Church History in Oslo University, to represent the Church of Norway. There were also prospects of visitors from Iceland and Farøe.

The Rev. William Barclay had been succeeded by the Rev. J. Arthur Fryer, but it was unanimously agreed

PLATE V.



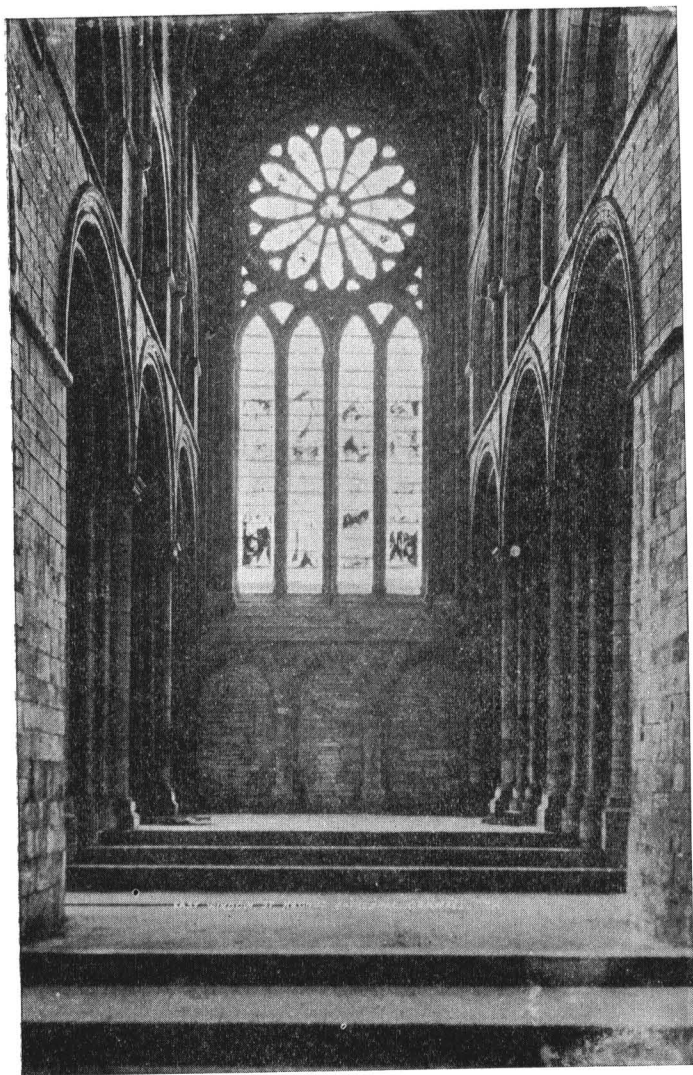
S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(North Aisle looking West).

*David Spence (James Flett).*

that he should continue to be a member of the Committee. The religious services, as arranged by the Rev. Mr. Fryer and the Rev. Dr. Campbell, of Evie, were to be a service in the cathedral at 11-15 a.m. on Thursday, 29th July, 1937, in which the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Bishop of Nidaros should take part with the local ministers, and three services on Sunday, 1st August, conducted by Church of Scotland ministers, with Holy Communion at the afternoon service.

Mr. Heddle, Town Clerk, was instructed to send invitations to the following guests:—The Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants of Orkney and Shetland, the Conveners and County Clerks of Shetland and Caithness, the Provosts and Town Clerks of Lerwick, Wick and Thurso, the Provost, Magistrates and Councillors of Stromness, the Earl of Caithness, Lord Sinclair, Lady Sinclair of Dunbeath, Sir John C. Watson, Sheriff of the three Counties, the Sheriff-Substitutes of Orkney, Shetland and Caithness, the County Council of Orkney, the Presbytery of Orkney, and the Moderators and Clerks of the Presbyteries of Shetland and Caithness. All the foregoing were from the three divisions of the old Norse earldom of Orkney. Invitations were also issued to the Viking Society for Northern Research, the Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Society and other societies connected with Orkney, to the Moderator of the General Assembly and other leaders of the Church of Scotland, to leaders of other denominations including the Episcopal and Catholic Bishops of Aberdeen and Orkney, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Rector of the Church of S. Magnus the Martyr, London, the Rev. W. Burnett, Secretary of the Ecclesiological Society of Scotland, the Kirkwall clergy of other denominations, Gilbert Archer, Leith, the Rt. Hon. Lord Salvesen, Dean Eik Naes, Trondheim, Karl Holter, Oslo, and other distinguished men in Iceland, Farøe and Scotland.

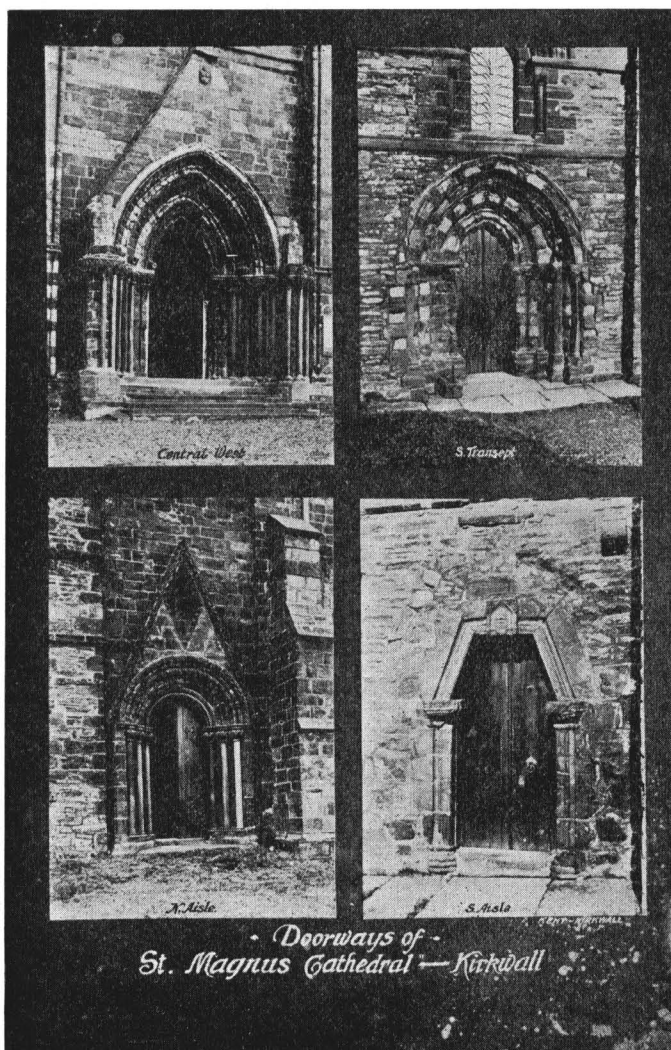
PLATE VI.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(East Window).

*David Spence (James Flett).*

## PLATE VII.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(Four Doorways).

*David Spence (James Flett).*

In order to defray the heavy cost of costumes and general arrangements it was decided to issue an appeal in the Orkney press for a guarantee fund of £500. By April, 1937, the desired amount was obtained locally, the Provost heading the list. By this time it had become

PLATE VIII.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(Statue of S. Magnus).

*David Spence (James Flett).*

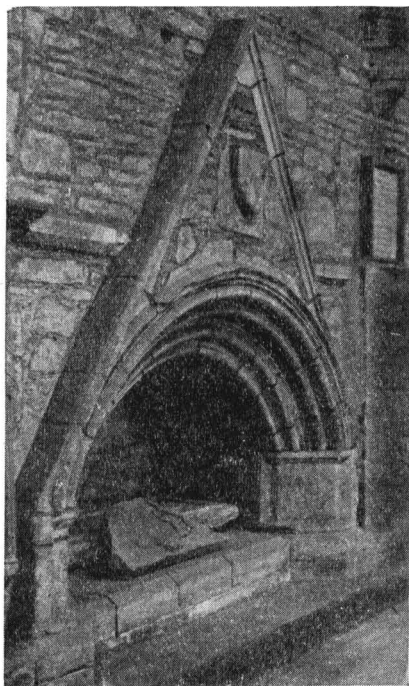
evident that £500 would be inadequate, and an additional anonymous guarantee of £200 was obtained by Mr. Storer Clouston.

The Handbook contains full lists of the various sub-committees. The principal Committee had appointed Mr. James G. McEwen officer for propaganda, and for a



year before the celebrations he supplied the leading daily newspapers of Scotland and England with reports of the arrangements. As the pageant was to be performed in the open air, its success, financially and otherwise, depended on the weather. Much was done to limit the

PLATE IX.



S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL  
(The Paplay Tomb).

*David Spence (James Flett).*

expenditure. Officials of the Corporation, especially the Town Clerk and his staff, performed clerical work which saved a large sum. A Kirkwall firm gave the use of their motor lorries for the transport of material to and from the grounds. Mr. J. A. Christie acted as transport officer.

Under the convenership of Mrs. W. J. Heddle, a special committee made arrangements to provide hospitality for the guests during the period of the celebrations. The visitors were delighted with the welcome they were given in the homes of the leading Orkney families, whose names are given in the Handbook.

Among the visitors may be mentioned the Norwegian actor, Herre Karl Holter, who was the producer of one of the scenes of the pageant. He had brought with him Herre Reidar Kaas, the famous Norwegian operatic baritone, and the young actor, Herre Aaeng. Costumes, armour and weapons for the pageant had been sent on loan from the Norwegian National Theatre, Oslo.

The Handbook contained the official programme, particulars of the pageant scenes, the names of all the actors, including children, and illustrations of the cathedral. The cover was designed by Mr. J. S. Richardson, H.M. Inspector of Ancient Monuments.

#### THE CELEBRATIONS.

Thursday, 29th July, was the outstanding day of the Octocentenary. All preparations had been made to ensure that full particulars of the historic occasion should be made known throughout Britain and the Scandinavian countries, by accounts in the press and by broadcasting. The Orkney papers, "Orcadian" and "Orkney Herald," and the Shetland and Caithness papers gave pages of photographs and full accounts of the ceremonies, and some of the Norwegian papers published equally exhaustive reports. "The Orcadian," on the morning of 29th July, issued a special supplement, written by the Rev. Dr. A. J. Campbell of Evie, giving a survey of the Church in Orkney before and after the Reformation and with photographs of Orkney churches, ancient and modern.

Thus there exist complete records of the Kirkwall

celebrations, but as the Viking Society desired a special account for the "Old-Lore Miscellany," the previous volumes of which contain a wealth of papers relating to the affairs of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Sutherland, the present writer consented to write one, and, in order that this should record some details not found elsewhere, he has given some reference to the preparatory work of the Octocentenary Committee during the eighteen months before the celebrations.

Kirkwall consists chiefly of narrow streets, but in the centre of the town there is the wide thoroughfare of Broad Street, at one side of which is the Kirk Green, covered with gravel, of considerable area, and running the whole length of S. Magnus Churchyard and the west gable of the cathedral. This large open space was thronged on Thursday morning with citizens and visitors. Kirkwall has good reason to be proud of its Broad Street, with the cathedral on one side, the municipal buildings and the ancient mansion of the Archdeacon of Orkney with its beautiful arched gateway on the other, the massive Bishop's tower near-by and the old Market Cross in the centre. This and other streets were gaily beflagged. The weather was all that could be desired; the sun was not too bright, no mists hung over the isles and bays, the sea was calm and the winds asleep.

The Provost, Magistrates and Councillors with their officials and the guests, except the Church dignitaries who assembled elsewhere, met in the Town Hall, and a few minutes after 11 a.m. walked in procession to the cathedral, headed by the town band. Among those in the Provost's procession were:—Sir Francis Grant, Lyon King of Arms, Mr. P. J. G. Rose, Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, Colonel H. Halcro Johnston, Deputy Lieutenant for Orkney, Major Basil Neven Spence, Deputy Lieutenant for Shetland and M.P. for Orkney and Shetland, Sir Robert Hamilton, former M.P. for



PROCESSION OF PROVOST AND MAGISTRATES OF KIRKWALL  
AND GUESTS TO THE COMMEMORATION SERVICE IN  
S. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

Orkney and Shetland, Sir John Watson, Sheriff of Caithness, Orkney and Shetland, and the Sheriff-Substitutes of these counties, Mr. J. Storer Clouston, Convener of Orkney, Herra Jón Baldvinsson, Premier of Iceland, Dean Knut Eik Naes, President of the Youth Association of Norway, Mr. J. S. Richardson, H.M. Inspector of Ancient Monuments, representatives of the counties and burghs of Shetland and Caithness, the Provost and magistrates of Stromness, the Viking Society for Northern Research, represented by Mr. William Traill of Holland, representatives of Orkney and Shetland societies in Edinburgh (Mr. A. Horne), Glasgow (Miss Garrioch), Aberdeen (Mr. C. Gorn) and Inverness (Mr. T. Delday). In another procession came Mr. Alfred Baikie, Lord Lieutenant of Orkney and Shetland, representing King George VI, and the representatives of the King of Norway and the Church of Norway. There were three processions of clergymen, the officiating ministers, former ministers of the cathedral, other members of the Presbytery of Orkney and members of other denominations. In the Moderator's procession came Dr. J. Støren, Bishop of Nidaros, Dr. Dugald Macfarlane, Moderator of the General Assembly, ex-Moderator Marshall B. Lang and others.

With a congregation of over fifteen hundred, a local choir of nearly seventy voices, the service of praise led by the organist, Mr. James Williamson, was most impressive. The town band also assisted.

The commemoration address was delivered by the Rev. William Barclay, of Shawlands Old Church, who for seventeen years prior to June, 1936, had been minister of the cathedral. I quote from his address: "Here in the Orkneys, in this ancient city of Kirkwall—and I know you are proud of the fact—there stands, and has stood, in all its quiet dignity and pulsing beauty, weathering the gales of eight hundred years, this old red sandstone

cathedral of S. Magnus, the wonder and glory of the North, casting its kindly benediction over land and sea. It is a story in stone worthy to rank with the work of the master builders of our great, historic fanes. It, too, has its own entrancing history, its own compelling appeal, it possesses that which marks it sharply off from all other cathedrals in the country. It has been justly called the finest Scandinavian monument in the British Isles, which has remained unimpaired from pre-Reformation times. Here, indeed, is a miniature history of the Norse race set in stone. It is one of those buildings, so beautiful, so sacred, so appealing that to speak of them without a certain reverent hesitation, is hardly possible . . . . Here, wonderful to tell, you have a church that contains in oaken caskets the relics of the founder, the accomplished Rognvald, and of his uncle the Saintly Magnus."

The head of the Church of Norway, the Right Reverend J. Støren, Bishop of Nidaros, was an appropriate Norse representative to appear in the pulpit of S. Magnus, for the bishops of Orkney from the twelfth till nearly the end of the fifteenth century were suffragans of the Metropolitan See of Nidaros. Bishop Støren, in the course of an interesting address, delivered in English, said: "We feel sure that when the foundation of this magnificent cathedral was laid in 1137 by Jarl Rognvald Kolson, the Orcadians and the descendants of the Norwegians who settled in Orkney were strongly combined in one Christian congregation. They all saw in S. Magnus a man who by the spirit of God was made a man of peace, and they built the cathedral as a memorial to him and the glory of Christ. We Norwegians feel happy that the greatest monument of the Norsemen in Orkney should be a church, a cathedral." He expressed the thanks of himself and the other representatives for the kind invitation to be present on the occasion of the Octocentenary

of S. Magnus Cathedral. "As Bishop of Nidaros, I have the honour and pleasure of handing over to S. Magnus Cathedral a gift from Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim, a statue of our national saint, King Olaf Haraldson, soon to be placed here."

PLATE XI.



Notable Spectators (counting from the right in the second row): 8th, Herra Jón Baldvinsson; 7th, Sir Francis Grant; 6th, Prof. Kolsrud; 5th, Mr. J. Storer Clouston; 4th, The Earl of Caithness; 3rd, Prof. Brøgger; 2nd, Mr. Alfred Baikie, Lord Lieutenant of Orkney and Shetland; 1st, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Dugald Macfarlane.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

### THE PAGEANT.

The historical pageant told the story of "how Christianity first came to Orkney, how the first cathedral church of Birsay was built, how S. Magnus, Earl of Orkney, was murdered, how his nephew and heir, Earl Rognvald,

tried to win back the inheritance by the sword and failed, and how he then placed his faith in God and S. Magnus, won the realm and thereafter began the erection of S. Magnus Cathedral.” The first performance began at 2-30 p.m. on Thursday, and the second was at 7 p.m.

In a prologue to the pageant, Mr. Eric Linklater, who was recorder for all the scenes, spoke thus: “ People of Orkney, our kinsmen out of Norway, our cousins from Scotland, and all who, being Christian men, follow the faith in which died the great and holy Earl Magnus, I give you welcome . . . . For a time the Earls of Orkney were princes of great power, ruling much of Scotland and the Southern Isles, and taking toll of all the seas between. These Earls came out of Norway, when Norway was the home of heroes and the mother of ships . . . . The virtues of the North took root in these islands and mighty deeds were done whose story we now tell with pride . . . . Among the great Earls was one whose eyes beheld a vision nobler than the vision of war, and in whose heart was that wish of God which is called Peace upon Earth. S. Magnus was a man of God, and the peace in which we now live was what he sought from God as a gift for his people whose sons we are . . . . Eight hundred years have gone, but the faith of Earl Magnus is maintained.”

The Pageant consisted of eight scenes. The first displayed a stone circle and a gathering of the inhabitants of Orkney in pre-Christian days. A young girl was placed on the table of sacrifice within the circle of Standing-Stones, ready to be offered up to the Sun-God. A procession of Christian missionaries chanting Latin hymns approached the circle. The leader carrying a great cross, forbade the shedding of blood. The sacrifice was prevented, the victim liberated, and the Christian faith accepted by the Islanders.

In this scene the players were Kirkwallians. Mr. D. B. Peace was producer.

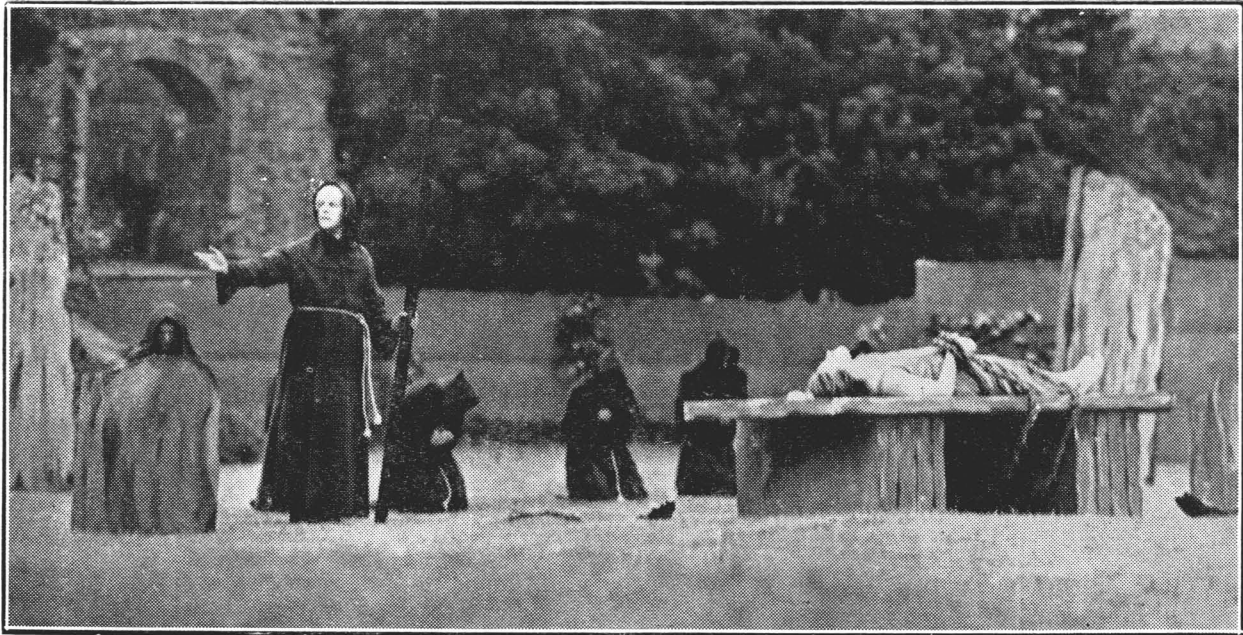


PLATE XII.



SCENE I.—THE ENTRY OF THE PAGAN PRIESTS.

*J. W. Sinclair,*

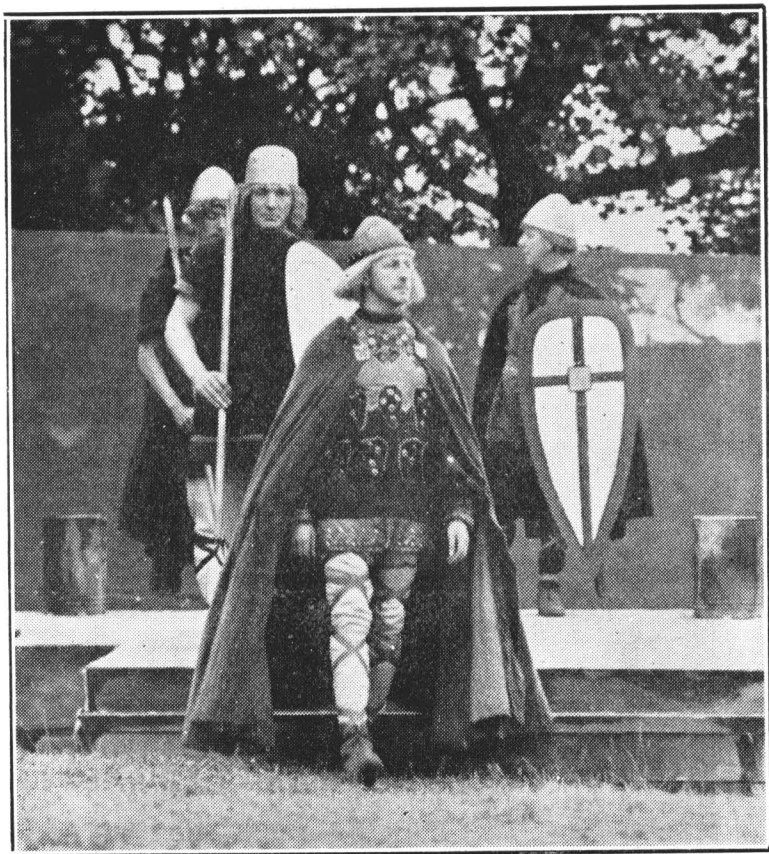


SCENE I.—THE LEADER OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES FORBIDS  
THE SHEDDING OF BLOOD

*J. W. Sinclair.*

Instead of a curtain falling at the end of each scene, the promoters had arranged a living curtain of sixty dancing girls trained and led by Mrs. Rodney Shearer and Miss

PLATE XIV.



SCENE III.—EARL MAGNUS.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

Violet Firth. The girls were arrayed in long yellow dresses with “wings” which they used to form a continuous screen as they danced slowly on either side of the arena, while scene-shifting was proceeding behind.



SCENE III.—MAGNUS FACES THE TREACHEROUS HAAKON IN EGILSAY.

*J. W. Sinclair.* 312



SCENE III.—THE SLAYING OF EARL MAGNUS

*J. W. Sinclair.*

Performers from Stromness enacted Scene II, set in Birsay about 1060. The dedication ceremony of Christ Kirk, built by Earl Thorfinn, grandfather of S. Magnus, was being carried through. The Earl and Ingibiorg, his countess, were represented; their two sons, Paul and Erlend, and officials. Vassals from the Celtic portions of Thorfinn's dominions came to do homage. Colourful representations were the keynote of this scene, the procession of churchmen arrayed as richly as the earl's party. The players numbered over 130. Mr. A. Guthrie, as Earl Thorfinn, and Mr. James Taylor as the bishop, made impressive figures. Mr. D. Innis was producer, and Messrs. I. Paterson and J. Taylor, assistant producers.

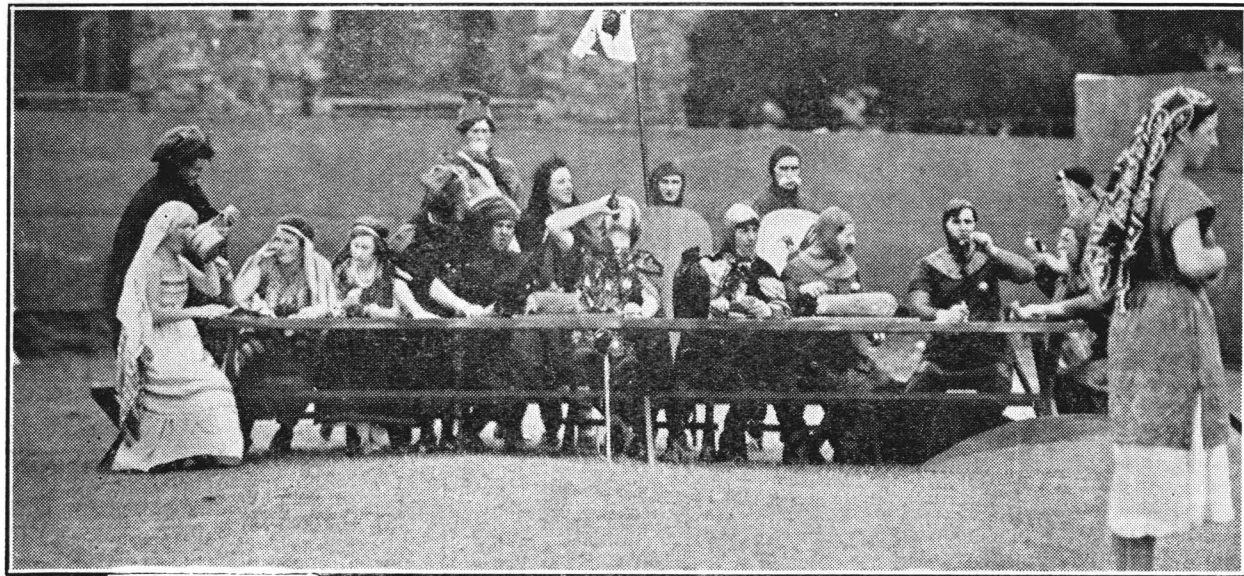
Scene III in the Island of Egilsay, in Easter-week, 1115 A.D. Thither came Earl Magnus and his cousin Earl Haakon, to settle all their bitter disputes of long standing, and it had been agreed that the earls should bring an equal number of followers to the island in two galleys each. Magnus arrived first. Instead of two longships, Haakon came to the island with eight ships. Magnus with two of his followers had spent the night in Egilsay Church, and next morning met Haakon and his chieftains. It was to have been a conference of peace; instead, it was at once seen that only the death of Magnus would satisfy Haakon and his bloodthirsty followers.

There were splendid dramatic incidents in this scene, the central scene of the Pageant. Haakon's standard bearer indignantly refused to obey his orders to strike the death blow, and Haakon then gave the command to Ofeig his cook. He, reluctantly and weeping, but encouraged and forgiven by Magnus, lifted the axe and clove the Earl's skull. Haakon refused permission to the followers of the murdered Earl to bury their chief. Mr. W. B. Hourston was the producer.

Scene IV depicted the great banquet at Paplay in the house of Sigurd, the second husband of Lady Thora,



PLATE XVII.

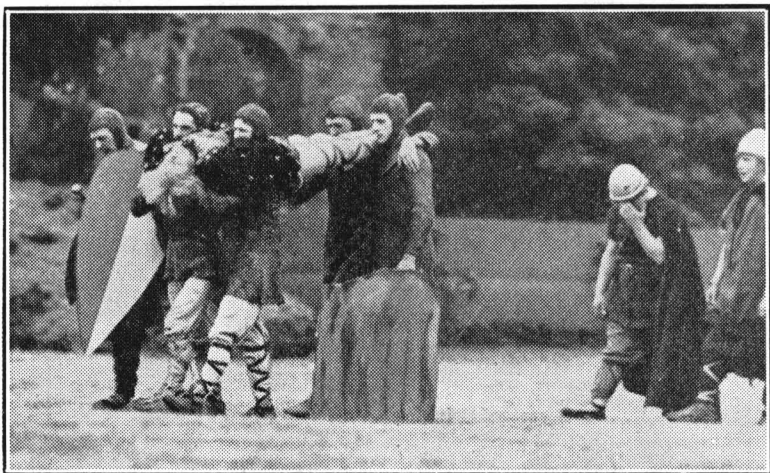


SCENE IV.—THE FEAST AT PAPLAY.

*J. W. Sinclair,*

Earl Magnus's mother. She was awaiting her guests. Haakon arrived but Magnus lay dead in Egilsay. The feast began, and she went about the hall waiting on Haakon, who, unknown to her, had slain her son. But the news came, and Thora's scream of horror brought the feast suddenly to an end. Haakon, moved by her overwhelming grief, repented somewhat of his deed, and

## PLATE XVIII.



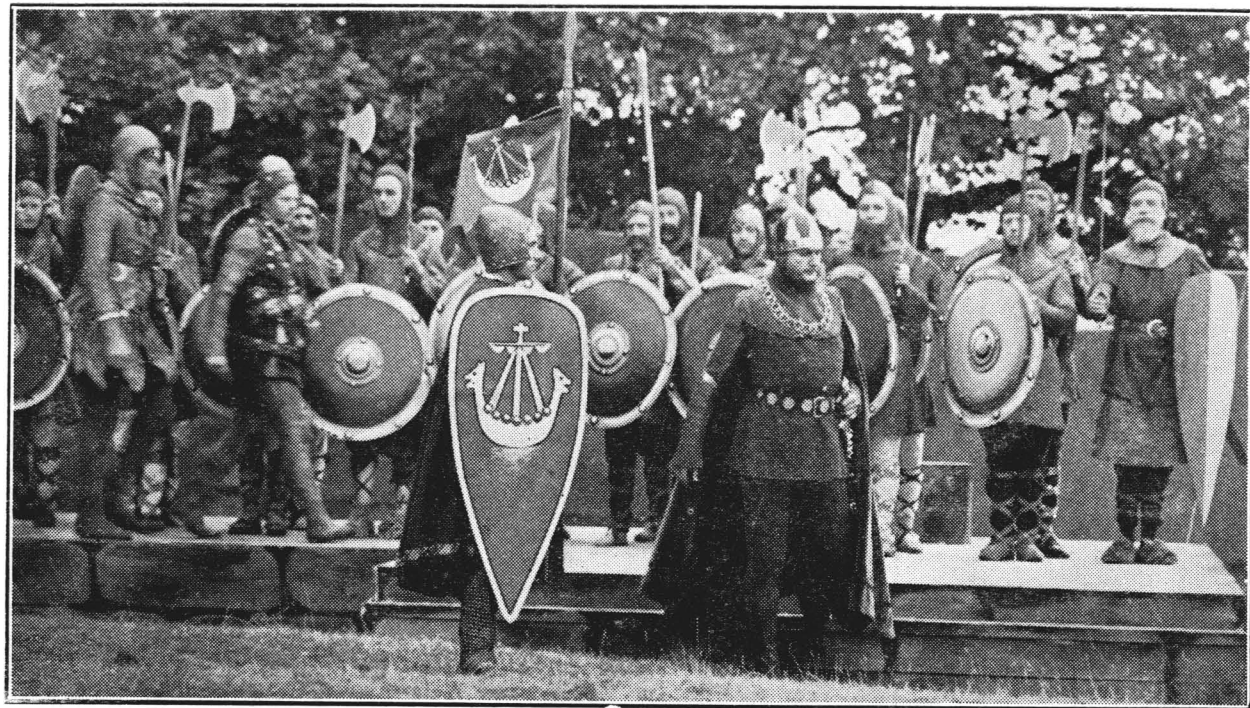
SCENE IV.—THE MURDERED EARL BORNE AWAY, FOLLOWED BY  
HIS MEN.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

granted her request for the Christian burial of her son's body. There were over 100 performers in the scene, which, like Scene III, was produced by Mr. W. B. Hourston.

It was followed by an interval when the Kirkwall Pipe Band paraded the arena playing a lament, then a march. The girls forming the "living curtain" entered from different corners of the field, and performed intricate ring dances to orchestral music. Selections were also played by Kirkwall Brass Band.

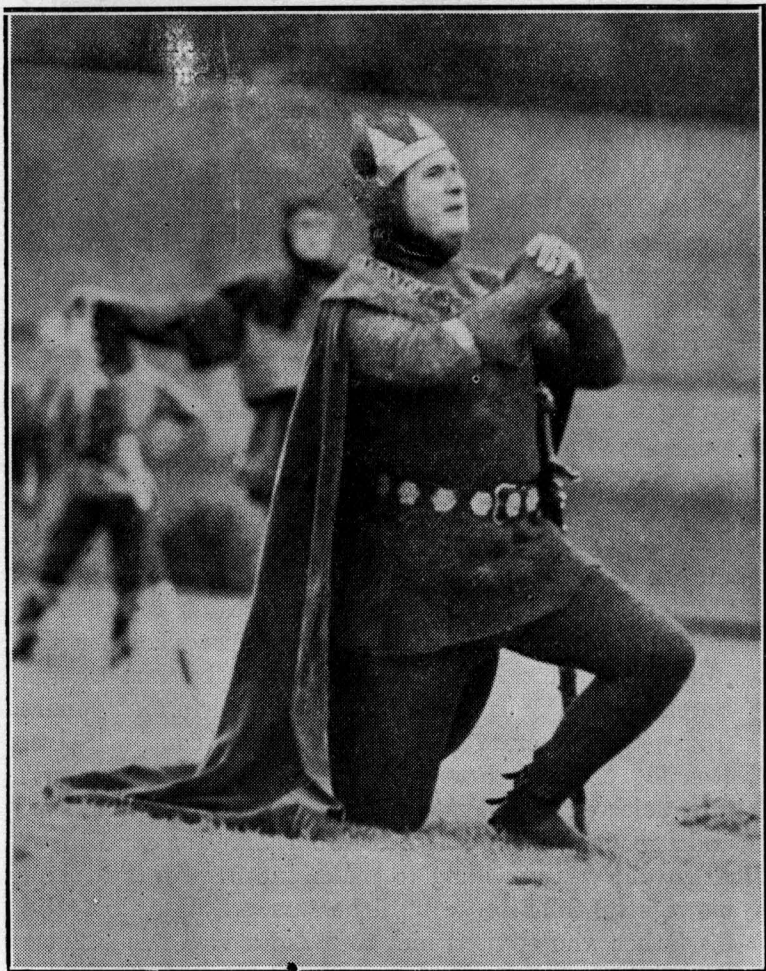




SCENE VI.—EARL ROGNVALD AND HIS MEN RETURN TO NORWAY AFTER  
DEFEAT AT SHETLAND

*J. W. Sinclair.*

PLATE XX.



SCENE VI.—EARL ROGNVALD VOWS TO BUILD A MINSTER AT  
KIRKWALL TO THE GLORY OF S. MAGNUS.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

Scene V. It is midsummer in 1136. Earl Paul Haakonson held the whole of the earldom and refused to give up to Rognvald the young Norseman, nephew of Earl Magnus, his uncle's share of it. A fleet from Sutherland and Caithness under Olvir Rosta set out for Orkney to attack and overthrow Earl Paul. Rognvald, with a fleet from Norway, was hourly expected, but he had been delayed, and Rosta's ships came round the Moul Head while Paul's fleet was waiting at Tankerness. The invaders were attacked and defeated. Skilful stage arrangements enabled the spectators to see the masts, sails and high prows of the longships; and an old crippled warrior named Thorgrim whom the Earl would not allow on board watched the fight from the top of a mound, giving a running commentary, in exciting and graphic language, of incidents in the fight. The part of Thorgrim was played by Mr. McInnes, one of the producers, who admirably sustained the drama of the scene. During the fight the clash and clang of swords and battle-axes, and the shouts of the combatants were heard by the audience. Mr. Ian Paterson was the principal producer of Scene V.

Scene VI was laid in Norway. The producer was the Norwegian actor Karl Holter, assisted by Mr. George Barclay of St. Margaret's Hope. The performers, apart from Karl Holter, were residents in the island of South Ronaldsay. Earl Rognvald and some of his followers, in a dejected mood, met the Norwegian King and Kol, and a goodly company returned from a hunting expedition. Rognvald was unwilling to make another effort to gain his rightful inheritance until he was urged to do so by his father who advised him to make a vow to his uncle the saint, that, if Magnus would grant him his inheritance and dominion over Orkney, he would build in his memory a magnificent church in Kirkwall. The historic vow was made, enthusiasm revived, and Rognvald from King and chiefs received ships and men for the expedition.

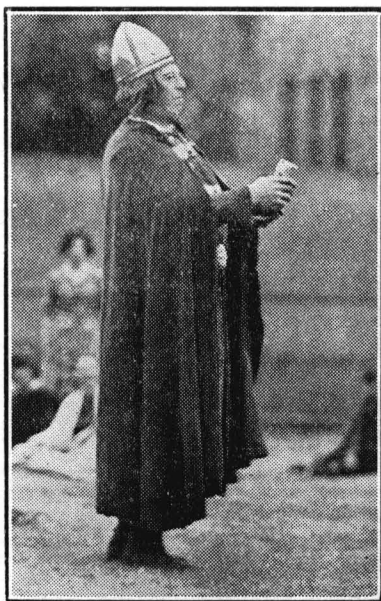


SCENE VII.—UNI'S GUILF SUCCEEDS. ERIC, THE KEEPER OF THE BEACON, HEEDLESS  
OF HIS WIFE'S ENTREATIES GOES OFF TO A WEDDING.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

Scene VII. This was produced by Mrs. Eric Linklater, wife of the novelist, with over 100 players—farmers and farmers' wives, sons and daughters from Dounby and district. Karl Holter, as Earl Rognvald, was the only performer from outside the district. The scene

PLATE XXII.



SCENE VIII.—SKALD'S DRINKING SONG.

*J. W. Sinclair.*

opened in Fair Isle, in the early summer of 1137, where the beacon stood ready to be lit as a warning to Earl Paul and his forces as soon as Rognvald's new fleet was sighted. A wedding procession entered with practically all the islanders. Rognvald's spy, Uni of Sogn, unknown to Earl Paul's guardian, had drenched the beacon with water. When the ships appeared there was a rush to

the beacon which could not be lit. Presently, Rognvald and his men arrived and the faint resistance of the islanders was soon crushed. Then came the main body of Norwegians followed by Earl Rognvald himself who was tumultuously greeted. There was much lively acting in connection with the hilarious wedding procession. The orchestra played the Foula Reel. But the really entertaining part of the Fair Isle scene was the dialogue between the half-intoxicated Erik, his wife, and Uni, the spy, Mr. D. Towers, Mrs. Sinclair, and Mr. W. Oag, whose acting evoked loud laughter from the audience, and prolonged applause.

Scene VIII—the final scene which brought all the actors in the Pageant, about 600, on to the arena, presented some memorable spectacles. A masterpiece of production, combining all the elements of realism and pageantry, it was itself a tribute to its producer, Sir Ronald Sinclair, the pageant master. The place is Kirkwall in 1151, fourteen years after the founding of the cathedral. Earl Rognvald and his followers were about to set sail on a voyage to the Holy Land; but the day before they left, Bishop William was to consecrate the great church with due solemnity. It was an important day in Kirkwall, the great annual fair took place; the town guard in their robes passed on its rounds, country folks came thronging in, town's people bustled about their booths, pedlars, musicians, acrobats and others solicited notice, taverns were open, animals for market were driven across the stage, boys and girls "jinking" among the crowd, playing games, running and shouting, all presented a scene of bustle and rejoicing. The ships were visible by a stage arranged like that in the Tankerness battle. A giant Norwegian, Herre Reidar Kaas, with a rich powerful voice, sang in Norwegian at one end of the field, while at the other a wrestler offered challenge to and overpowered one competitor after another.

The great ones passing on their way to the church were seen in turn:—Earl Harald Maddadson, the young joint-earl, with chiefs among whom were Thorbjorn Klerk, and the gigantic Kolbein Hruga of Wyre, Earl Rognvald and his daughter Ingirith, Bishop William, Norwegian barons, Orkney chiefs who were to sail with the Earl on his crusade, lastly came the great Viking Sweyn of Gairsay with his henchmen bringing up the rear. He was to guard the islands in Rognvald's absence. The consecration over, Earl Rognvald bade farewell to his daughter and to the chiefs remaining behind, and amid loud cheers, music and pealing of bells the crusaders marched off to join their ships.

Nothing but the highest praise can be given to those who conceived and produced the pageant. The greatest credit must go to Sir Ronald Sinclair, who spared no effort to make the pageant worthy of the occasion; he was ably assisted by the producers. The performance of the pageant gave to the youth of Orkney, that afternoon, more instruction regarding twelfth century inhabitants of the islands, and the stirring events that took place there, than could have been obtained from a course of lectures or from the study of books of history.

The names of all who took part in the pageant or who helped in any way are fully recorded in the Handbook of the Octocentenary Celebrations issued by the Committee, and readers are referred to its pages for details not given here.

#### BROADCAST FROM KIRKWALL.

Talks by Provost Slater, J. Storer Clouston, Sir Ronald Sinclair and others were broadcast on Thursday evening from a temporary studio in the Kirkwall Hotel. The Provost, referring to the Octocentenary celebrations, considered they had been the most important ever held here. They were not domestic merely, but national, he



must even say international. He referred to the cathedral as belonging to Kirkwall, and to its never having been ecclesiastical property. He spoke of the distinguished guests from overseas, and said that many exiles had made a pilgrimage to the land of their birth to take part in the celebrations.

Sir Ronald Sinclair in his talk spoke of the pageant. The burden of carrying out the scenes fell on many shoulders, notably on Mr. Rodney Shearer, on the producers and all the others. Geographical conditions prevented the performers being together for rehearsal, so that until that day, he had not had a rehearsal with a complete cast. Even the smallest children in the big crowd scenes threw themselves into living their parts. All ages were represented up to an old man of eighty. He acknowledged the valuable assistance rendered by Norwegian visitors, Karl Holter and Egil Aaeng, the former a famous actor who looked like a real Viking jarl, and the latter a young comedian.

Two of the actors in Scene VII, Mrs. John Sinclair and Mr. John Kirkness, Dounby, broadcast in a few sentences their delight that so many visitors had come so far to see the pageant, the cathedral and the ancient city of Kirkwall.

Mr. Eric Linklater's talk was on S. Magnus and S. Rognvald. He recalled how, 500 years after Rognvald's crusade, men in Orkney still called their daughters Ermingard after the hospitable lady who entertained Rognvald and his Norsemen in France.

Professor Brøgger, representative of the King of Norway, broadcast an account of the pageant, etc., direct to Norway.

#### CIVIC RECEPTION.

At 10 p.m. on Thursday over 250 guests attended a Reception by the Town Council in the Town Hall.



A hearty welcome was accorded by Provost Slater. Professor Brøgger conveyed greetings from his country. On behalf of the Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr. Rose presented compliments. The greetings of Iceland were conveyed by Herra Baldvinsson, the Premier; and he presented to Kirkwall a handsomely bound address from the Icelandic Parliament. Dean Knut Eik Naes conveyed greetings from the Youth Association of Norway. When Herre Holter stood up in the Hall he received rousing applause which was repeated when he announced a gift of 250 volumes of Norse literature to Kirkwall from Norwegian publishers. The gift was acknowledged by Dr. Hugh Marwick, Director of Education for Orkney. The compliments of Shetland were conveyed by Sheriff-Substitute Wallace, of Caithness by Provost Harper of Wick, and of Lerwick by Provost Smith.

Provost Slater read messages of greetings from the following: The Lord Mayor of Stavanger, Johannes Paturson, King's Bondi, Farøe, from their Thing meeting held that day (St. Olaf's), Mr. Mackie Watson, architect, Edinburgh, Poul Niclasen, Thorshavn, Farøe, the Farmers' Union of Norway, and members of the League of Norsemen in Canada. A letter from the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland signed by the President, Sir George Macdonald, and the Vice-President, Sheriff C. H. Brown, conveyed the Society's warm congratulations on the celebration of the Octocentenary of Kirkwall's magnificent church, and their gratification that the splendid building, one of the glories of Scotland's architectural heritage, was still serving the purpose for which its founder designed it.

The speeches delivered by Professor Brøgger, Mr. Rose, Under-Secretary of State for Scotland, Herra Jón Baldvinsson, of Iceland, Dean Eik Naes, Karl Holter and other guests were highly appreciated by the Orcadians and others present. Verbatim reports have appeared in "The Orcadian"

Votes of thanks were given on the motion of Mr. Alfred Baikie, the Lord Lieutenant. The meeting ended at 12-15 a.m.

FRIDAY, 30TH JULY.

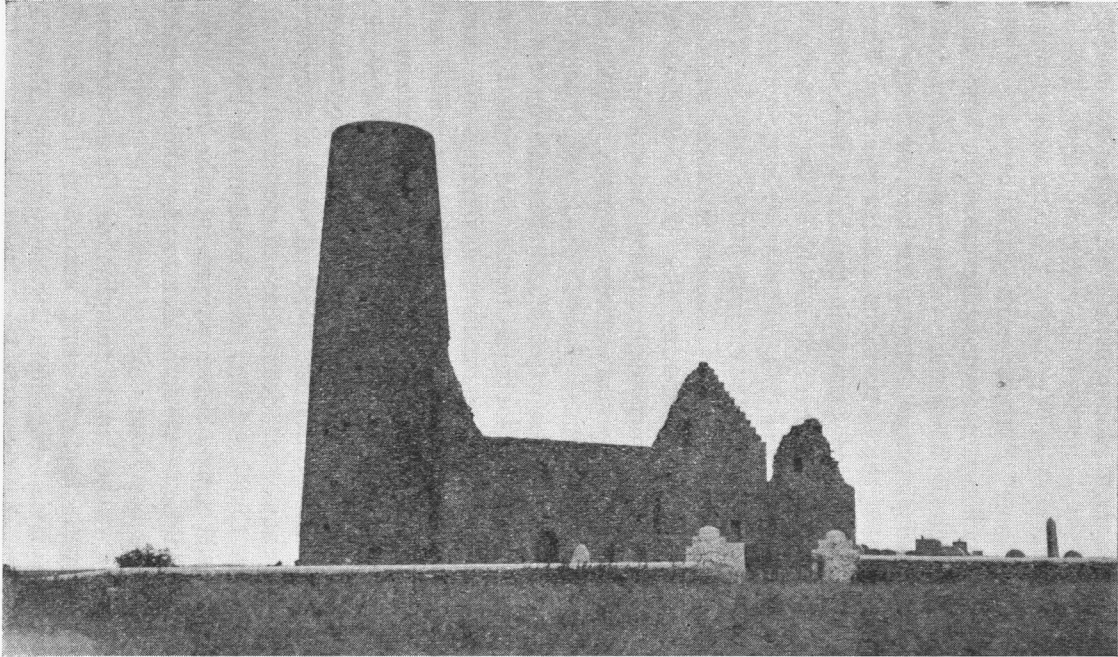
The Council's guests were entertained to lunch in the Stenness Hotel. They were taken for a motor tour to the principal places of antiquarian interest in the West Mainland. On the same night a large party of players and others attended a dance in the Town Hall, given by the Council.

SATURDAY, 31ST JULY.

An excursion to Egilsay, the scene of the murder of Earl Magnus, was organised by the Cathedral Kirk Session. In this pilgrimage a great number of people took part, including visitors from Norway, Iceland and the United Kingdom.

The roofless church of S. Magnus stands on a ridge, visible from Westray on the north, and from Kirkwall on the south. The excursionists, pilgrims we should perhaps say, landed at Egilsay Pier, and proceeded, under the guidance of Mr. Hugh Robertson, a farmer aged 90 years, to the spot where, tradition says, the Good Earl was killed by his cousin and co-earl. Mr. Robertson was born and bred within a few hundred yards of the church, and less than that from the tragic site. He told the visitors that his father, who lived to the age of 95, remembered seeing a flat stone sunk into the little mound, and that children were forbidden to play there where the saint's blood had been shed.

A service was held in the churchyard. On an improvised platform with the officiating ministers, the Rev. Dr. Campbell, Evie, the Rev. Mr. Fryer, the Rev. Mr. Davidson, moderator of the Presbytery, were also the Rev. Dr. Marshall B. Lang, the Rev. W. Pitcairn Craig, the Rev.



S. MAGNUS CHURCH, EGILSAY

*John M. Archer.*

W. Barclay and Mr. D. Turner, missionary in Egilsay. Before the singing of the opening psalm, Mr. Fryer expressed the thanks of his Kirk Session to those who co-operated in making possible the excursion, with special reference to Mr. Alfred Baikie, proprietor of the island, and to the Office of Works for permission to hold the service at the church, which was under their care.

The singing was led by the Kirkwall Town Band under the bandmaster, R. S. Spence. Dr. Campbell delivered an address, and made an appeal for the restoration of the Egilsay Church as a place of worship. It had been so used down to the beginning of last century. He said: "I cannot close without asking whether some of you will some day take a hand to bring back to life and use this ancient Church of Egilsay."

The Rev. H. I. Fynes-Clinton, rector of the Church of S. Magnus the Martyr, London, who was present at the Egilsay service, expressed the desirability of erecting a permanent memorial on the traditional spot where Magnus was murdered, and it is understood he offered, through Mr. Fryer, to present a suitable stone from his own congregation.

Dr. Marwick showed the visitors over the ruined church and drew attention to the many interesting features of the building.

#### SUNDAY, 1ST AUGUST.

There were three services in the cathedral on Sunday, 1st August, organised by Mr. Fryer and Dr. Campbell. The Provost, Magistrates and officials of Kirkwall attended, also sixty-four cadets and officers from the Norwegian Training Ship "Christian Radich" at anchor in the bay.

Professor Dr. Olav Kolsrud then formally made the presentation of the statue of S. Olaf, already referred to. He said, "On behalf of the Bishop of Nidaros, I have the

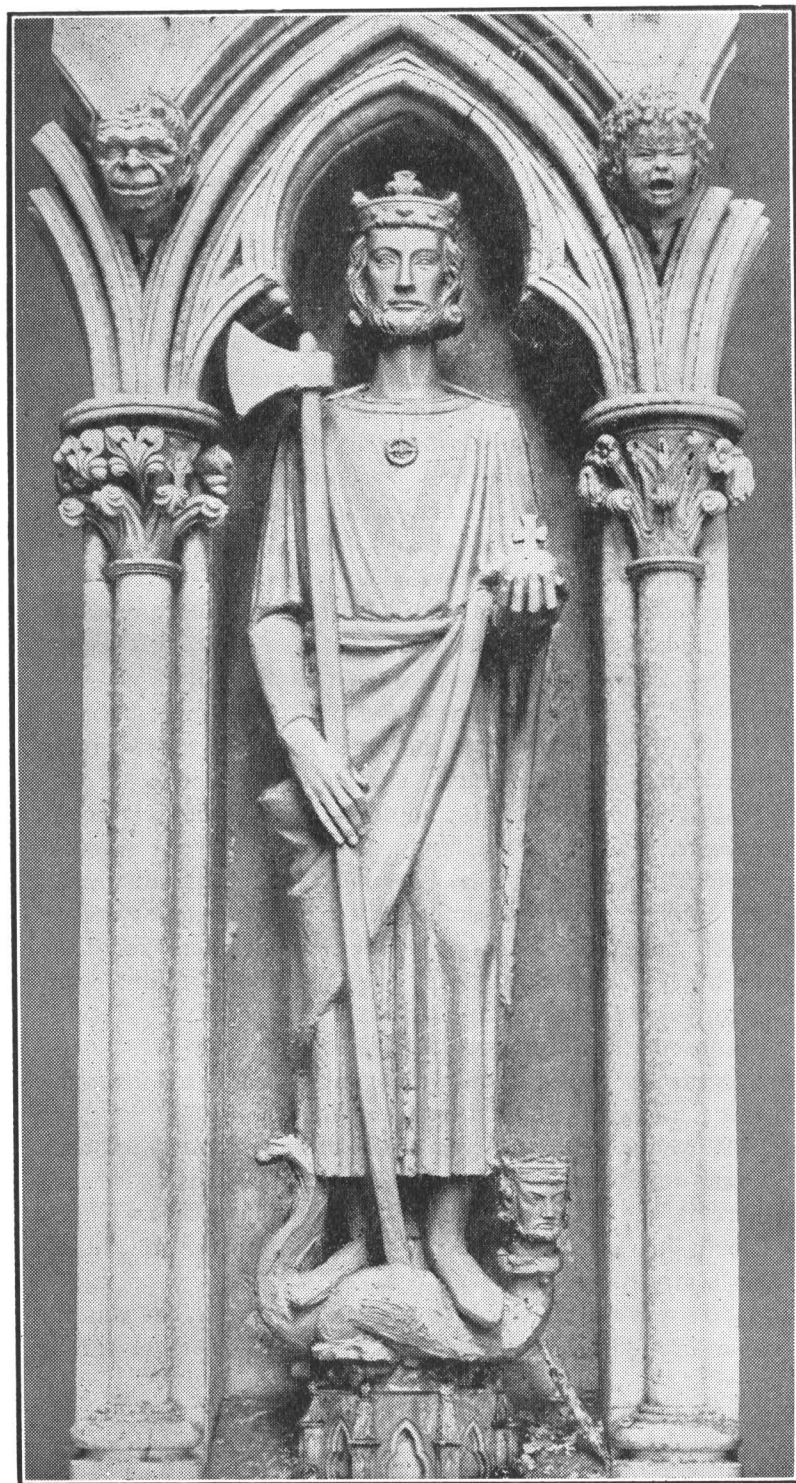
pleasure of handing over to the Magistrates and Council of the City and Royal Burgh of Kirkwall, as custodians of S. Magnus Cathedral, this statue of S. Olaf which you see standing here, and which is offered to this glorious memorial church of S. Magnus as a greeting and a gift from the Church of Norway to the Church in Orkney." The Professor referred to the reasons why the memory of King Olaf the Saint had been cherished in Norway, Orkney and wherever Norsemen settled. To S. Olaf the first Norse church in Orkney, the church built by an earlier Earl Rognvald, at Kirkwall, was dedicated and from that church the parish of S. Ola is named.

The Rev. Mr. Fryer dedicated the various gifts which included the following: Pulpit Psalter and Hymnary, presented by Colonel H. Halcro Johnston, a descendant of the Norse family of Halcro, from which family several of the highest dignitaries of the Church in Orkney were chosen. Bible markers also were presented by the Colonel and his niece, Miss Marie J. Steele.

A Norwegian solo was sung by Reidar Kaas, entitled " Psalm on the Feast Day of S. Olaf " of which the music was by Johan Halvorsen, and the words by the poet, Bjørnsterne Bjørnsen. The sermon was preached by the Right Rev. Dr. Macfarlane. He conveyed the brotherly and apostolic greetings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

The others who took part in the service were the Rev. Dr. Crouther Gordon, Clackmannan, the Rev. W. Pitcairn Craig, Torryburn, and the Rev. W. Barclay. Mr. Jas. S. Williamson was organist at this and the services later in the day.

When the forenoon service was over the Norwegian cadets were drawn up in lines in front of the cathedral. Karl Holter delivered an address to them in their own language in which he told the story of events in Orkney and Norway in the period relating to Earl Magnus and



STATUE OF S. CLAUDE

Earl Rognvald, and leading up to the building of the cathedral.

The minister of the congregation officiated at a Communion Service in the afternoon, when his father, the Rev. George R. Fryer, read the lesson, and the Rev. W. Pitcairn Craig preached the sermon.

The evening service was specially arranged for young people who were present in large numbers—Boys' Brigade, Life Boys, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Rangers and Brownies. Those who took part in the service were the minister of the cathedral, his father, Mr. Barclay and the ex-Moderator Marshall B. Lang. The address was by Dr. Lang whose text was "Called to be Saints." With the benediction by Dr. Marshall Lang the Octocentenary celebrations came to an end.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES.

"The Orcadian" of the 5th August, 1937, gives particulars of the arrangements that had been made by leading journals at home and abroad for obtaining special accounts of the proceedings. In addition to the photographs of the week's activities, including rehearsals, which Mr. James Ferguson supplied to 84 journals, various other newspapers sent special photographers for the events of Thursday, 29th July. A cinema film was recorded on that day at the expense of Mr. D. B. Peace, the proprietor of the Albert Kinema, Kirkwall. Press telegrams of thousands of words and cables passed through the Kirkwall Post Office during the day.

It would be interesting to include here some of the Press opinions of the Pageant, but all there is space for here is the following from an article "Islands of the North," by Mr. Ferguson, which appeared in "The Spectator":

"It was incontestably a notable event. What was it that brought the representatives of the rulers of three

countries and of two national churches to this small and remote city?—for Kirkwall prides itself on being a city, as well as a royal burgh with a charter more than 450 years old. They came to pay homage to an ancient culture, and to a building which is its greatest monument in the four kingdoms . . . . There has been nothing like it within living memory in Scotland . . . . The ‘book’ was the work of two distinguished Orkney writers, J. Storer Clouston and Eric Linklater, the latter of whom spoke the prologue to each scene—noble prose, nobly delivered.”

The financial statement showed a deficit of £151. 13s. 8d. Additional donations were however received, including £20 from the Kirk Session of S. Magnus, the proceeds of the trip to Egilsay, and £25 from Mr. Gilbert Archer of Leith. The total income now amounted to £1,122. 15s. 9d. and the expenditure to £1,219. 5s. 5½d.; the debit balance of £96. 9s. 8½d. was met by a levy of 2/9d. in the £ on the guarantors.

Readers are again referred to the Handbook on sale at the Orcadian office and at booksellers in Kirkwall and Stromness, the proceeds of which go to the funds of the Balfour Hospital.

#### NOTE.

This account of the Octocentenary of S. Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, Orkney, has been specially compiled for *Old-Lore Miscellany*, by John Mooney, author of *St. Magnus, Earl of Orkney*.

The Society is indebted to the proprietor of the *Orkney Herald*, Kirkwall, for the loan of the blocks of the Frontispiece and plates X-XXII; to Mr. John Mooney for the blocks of plates II, III and XXIII; to David Spence (James Flett), Stationers, 42, Broad Street, Kirkwall, for the blocks of plates IV-IX; and to the proprietor of the *Orcadian*, Kirkwall, for the block of plate XXIV.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

St. MAGNUS EARL OF ORKNEY. By John Mooney, F.S.A.Scot. *Kirkwall: W. R. Mackintosh*, 1935. Pp. xv. + 324, 8½in. × 5½in., 17 full-page illustrations. 10s. 6d. net.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF St. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL, KIRKWALL, FOR THE USE OF VISITORS. By George Walker, D.D., minister-emeritus of the East Parish of S. Nicholas, Aberdeen. *Aberdeen: D. Wyllie & Son*, 1937. 5in. × 7½in., 37 pp., 8 illustrations. 1s. 6d.

An interesting and useful historical and architectural account of the church by one who was conversant with every stone in the building.

St. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL, KIRKWALL. An Octocentenary Souvenir. *Kirkwall: David Spence (James Flett) [1937]*. 5½in. × 8in., 51 pp., including 34 illustrations. 1s.

An indispensable handbook to the visitor, with an historical and descriptive account, and elaborately illustrated from excellent photographs.

HANDBOOK OF THE St. MAGNUS CATHEDRAL OCTOCENTENARY CELEBRATIONS. City and Royal Burgh of Kirkwall, July, 1937. *Printed at the Kirkwall Press, "The Orcadian" Office, Victoria Street, Kirkwall*. 6in × 10in., 40 pp., 5 illustrations. 1s.

This, the official handbook of the pageant, gives lists of magistrates of Kirkwall, Octocentenary Committee, names of 29 hosts and hostesses who entertained the official guests, local societies, commemorative services and full programme of pageant and other events.

## ADDITION.

p. 92, in the Provost's procession add: *The Earl of Caithness, and Colonel John C. Macrae, Deputy Lieutenant for Orkney.*

p. 94, line 12, after *Mr. A. Horne*, add: *and Mr. J. M. Drever.*

# JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION TO SHETLAND IN 1834.

BY EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.

EDITED BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

## VI.

*(Continued from p. 71.)*

Monday, June 23rd(*continued*). A large and perfect brough was situated in this loch,<sup>1</sup> but the causeway of broad flat stones that lead to it had disappeared beneath the surface of the water. I was afterwards informed that some of the natives, who are well acquainted with their submerged position, still pass over by means of them to the brough to obtain, in the breeding season, the eggs and young of the herring-gulls, etc., that have here taken refuge. The walls of the building are still at least fifteen feet perpendicular above the level of this lake, but the interior, I am told, is a mass of ruins. I saw but little more as I returned over the dreary moors, and about 8 p.m. I came down pretty exactly upon Vailey Sound, where Cholmely and Proctor had arrived about an hour before me. It was about half-past eleven when we retired to rest, the wind was due south and the Foulah boatmen, expecting a change on the morrow, talked of embarking at midday for their lonely isle. We therefore went late to rest and, wearied as we were, left much of our luggage to be packed up on the following morning.

Tuesday, June 24th. At one this morning, having been scarce two hours in bed, we were roused by the Foulah men thundering at our door, with the intelligence that the wind had changed and that they waited for us on the beach. We hurried on our clothes, packed up our luggage

<sup>1</sup> Burga Water.

as hastily and as well as our own time would permit, and in a short half hour everything was stowed away in the boat.

Mr. Scott was already awake and had prepared for us a large stock of sugar, tea and good oatmeal, none of which articles, said he, were to be found in Foulah; and, in addition to all this he stowed away an entire bed with its accompanying sheets and blankets, which we should have sorely missed upon that desert isle. We parted in sorrow from this kind-hearted man whose benevolence has rendered him universally beloved, and whose house no one ever left without regret.

In Vailey Sound, bounded, as it is, by high hills on the west, all was smooth and quiet, and I observed, with some surprise, that Mr. Scott at this early hour of the morning followed us along the shore to the farthest promontory of his island. But we soon saw good cause for his fears, in the tremendous sea that we encountered upon entering the open Atlantic.

As we rounded the point that projected on the western side of the Sound, the sea struck us all at once, so that the one half of the boat seemed to be, for an instant, in smooth water while the prow was lashed by the foaming waves. In a very short time the tossing of the waves had its usual distressing effect upon Chalmers and even I, who had for years ceased to think of sea-sickness, felt for a few minutes giddy and somewhat squeamish, until the old medicine of a hard ship-biscuit revived me. Proctor, of course, was as well as could be, he is an excellent sailor, and for a landsman quite bold and venturesome upon the water. The sea, indeed, was high enough to cause some anxiety among our boatmen, for the white-crested waves constantly discharged a portion of their summits into our boat, and soon rendered us as wet and uncomfortable as we could wish to be.

The wind, which for some time had been a point or two to the east of south, now wore round to the westward and blew right off the island of Foulah. All now wished to return to Vailey, save the skipper, Lawrence Ratter, one of the best seamen on the island, who thought that "wi blessin" we might "yet make him out." It was now 3 a.m.; we made a long tack to the eastward, not without danger, as the seas curled heavily over our deeply laden boat. One of the crew, seated at the head of the boat, kept his eye upon the waves and warned the skipper of their near approach.

Having run to the eastward for near an hour, we put about and bore up for Foulah, but alas we soon found that we had lost way instead of making any progress by our last tack. Another consultation was held, but the skipper, though not adverse to returning, prevailed upon the crew to persevere, and these five men sate cheerfully down to their oars, to pull a deeply laden boat against wind and tide, for a distance of eight miles in a raging sea.

For nearly three hours we made little or no progress, and just held our own, for the Stacks of Foulah, the landmarks by which we were guided, remained in the same relative position to each other, and I almost despaired of reaching the island. At length, overpowered by the fatigues of the preceding day, I laid myself down to sleep on a wet sack which contained our bedding and provisions. On awakening, almost powerless with the cold, I found to my great joy that we were within a gunshot of the shore, and that I had enjoyed a good sound sleep of three hours as it was now near nine a.m., and we had left Vailey Sound at 1 in the morning. With a fair wind the voyage from Vailey to Foulah is often accomplished in three hours.

We landed at the inlet of Ham,<sup>1</sup> the only harbour even for boats on this iron-bound coast, and so narrow is it that two boats cannot pass, or can hardly do so upon its waters.

<sup>1</sup> Illustrated, Vol. I, 211.

As soon as we touched the shore we were welcomed with great joy and cordiality by all the inhabitants and in particular by the poor woman who kept the "buith," or store, close to the landing-place. I soon found that she had mistaken me for Mr. Hewitson, of Newcastle, who had visited the island two years before.

As soon as our luggage was landed, some of our boat's crew, without staying to rest after such severe labours, set off to the cliffs to procure birds and their eggs, and in half an hour's time, one fourth of the population of Foulah was hanging over the cliffs, and adventuring their lives for a few pence. Their frail tenure of existence depended solely upon the support of a rope of hair or of bristles and hemp mixed together, which latter is by the rockmen considered much less liable to be cut by the sharp projecting stones, than when the "tow" is composed exclusively of either material.

We were ushered by the woman, who had so kindly welcomed us, into the only building on the island which could be dignified with the name of house. By way of distinction it was named the "buith," or in old Norse *búð*, Norse *bud*, because Mr. Scott's factor, Mr. Petersen, resided therein, and kept a small store of tobacco, spirits and fishing lines for the use of the inhabitants of Foulah. The house had been formerly constructed for Mr. Scott of Vailey, the proprietor of the island, and it must have been to the inhabitants an architectural wonder, for it consisted of two stories and of four rooms, two of which at least if not a third had been painted and the ceilings whitewashed. The lower rooms were now occupied by the woman and her family, who, to our great joy, never slept upstairs in the bedroom of which we took possession.

We mounted to our abode with no small difficulty, for many of the stairs were broken or rotted away. On entering our chamber we rejoiced to observe that the roof was in most places entire; and that, indeed, was no small

comfort in this rainy island. In a recess behind the door was a bedstead on which Mr. Petersen slept when he was upon the island. We soon made up a comfortable peat fire, and proceeded to dry our bedding; and Cholmely, who was, no doubt, greatly exhausted by his sufferings during the voyage, lay down to rest on the bedstead, while Proctor and I prepared a hasty breakfast. There was an old broken tea-pot in the house, and moreover exactly three tea-cups, so that we were enabled to enjoy the luxury of the China leaf. I may add, however, that there was but one teaspoon in the house, and perhaps not another on the whole island.

While the tea was “maskin,” the housekeeper brought upstairs a large bicker of porridge, made with Foulah oatmeal; but this dish is always most savoury when the meal is coarse. Besides I must add, in justice to the Foulah miller, that his meal smacks less of the grindstone than any that I tasted in Shetland. There was an abundance of milk, and two gloriously large horn spoons, with the aid of which Proctor and I soon saw the bottom of the bicker.

Shortly after, whilst Proctor was drying our soaked garments, and Cholmely was still resting on the bed, I left the house and proceeded on a survey of the island. I directed my steps towards the southern extremity winding through a great many small patches of corn which appeared healthy enough, but like the grass around it was extremely short in the straws, and the potatoes that I saw did not look promising. Corn is, however, in a good year very abundant, but the crops are liable, when nearly ripe, to be shaken out and destroyed by the gales of the September equinox.

There are two or three fresh water lochs upon the island of no great extent and their surface is at all times covered with great numbers of herring gulls, kittiwakes, etc. The

island consists mainly of three large hills, Liorafield,<sup>1</sup> Hamrifiel<sup>2</sup> and the Sneug,<sup>3</sup> with a smaller eminence to the southward called the Noup.<sup>4</sup> Between this and the three former there is a deep valley,<sup>5</sup> nearly on a level with the ocean, and running east and west, while the sides of the hills that bound it are extraordinary steep without being absolutely perpendicular and are covered to the very summit with short coarse herbage. I passed a freshwater loch and the south-eastern shoulder of Hamrifiel, and was walking along the deep valley before-mentioned, when I was accosted by one of the natives. He said that he had been over the rocks for birds, and wished particularly to know the species which I most wanted. I had taken care beforehand to make myself acquainted with the Foulah names of the different birds, so I told him that I wanted *lyra* (or Manx puffin), the *tystie* (black guillemot) and the *mootis* (or stormy petrel), along with *bonxies* (skua) and their eggs and that I did not wish for either *lomwies* [ON. *langve*], *tamienories*, *brongies* or *laarquhidins* [*lorhvidins*]; in plain English for guillemots, puffins, cormorants or shags. Hearing this he drew forth a *lyra* [ON. *líri*] from beneath his jacket, and with it shewed me its egg, a rarity indeed, he had taken it he said, upon the Noup about 50 yards below the top of the precipice, the bird was dreadfully savage, and bit his horny fingers most unmercifully. I ordered him to follow me, and retraced

<sup>1</sup> "Lōrafel, a hill from the top of which a long, narrow opening formerly ran down: \**ljóra-fell*: this opening has long ago been filled up." (Jakobsen) From ON. *ljóri*, a louver, and *fell*, mountain. On the Ordnance maps *-fell* is rendered *-feld*.

<sup>2</sup> Not noted by Jakobsen. On Ord. map it is 'Hamnafield,' ON. \**hafnar-fell*, haven hill; it adjoins Ham, ON. *høfn*. The name 'Hamrifiel' occurs elsewhere in Shetland and is ON. \**hamra-fell*, rock-ledge hill, which describes this hill. It might well have been called Hamnafell from the east and Hamrifiel from the south where the side of the hill is called 'Hamar.'

<sup>3</sup> ON. *knjúkr*, high, steep, conical hill. In Shetland *knjú* > *snjú*. (Jak.).

<sup>4</sup> ON. *gnúpr* high, steep mountain with overhanging top, high mountain top with steep face (Jak.).

<sup>5</sup> De Dal, (Jak.), The Daal, Ord. map, ON. *dalr*, or *dalrinn*, The dale.

my steps with exultation towards the "buith" for Proctor had utterly despaired of obtaining a single specimen of the Manx puffin in Shetland. Right wondrously, then was he rejoiced when I brought to him the living bird and its egg. I found too on my return that some of the eggs of the tystie [ON. *þeisti*] and of Richardson's gull had been already offered for sale during my absence, and that for these he had given the extravagant sum of 3d. each, and at this rate we should very soon have been ruined. Soon after a man came down from the hills with six eggs of the skua gull, and for these we did not object to give the sum just mentioned. However, I told him that I did not wish any more of them, being anxious to preserve that noble bird from destruction. And now eggs and birds of all kinds poured in upon us, and we were constantly in treaty for more. The poor people were anxious enough for money, but received thankfully the small sums that we gave to them for having risked their lives, and only in one instance did we meet with anything like discontent. I was informed, too, afterwards, that unsatisfied individual was a man remarkable in the island for his covetous habits and rude manners.

One little boy brought me a quantity of the *Cypræa Europea*, or common cowrie from the shore, and another a still more extraordinary merchandise, nothing less than a quantity of rounded quartz pebbles from the beach. But a penny made these little dealers perfectly happy. Fortunately I had brought with me from Lerwick a large assortment of Danish four-, ten- and two-penny pieces. These I found to be of very great use in Foulah, and indeed the coins of all nations appear to pass current in Shetland, for I received some French five-franc pieces at the bank at Lerwick.

A short time before we arrived, a French smuggler had visited the western coast of Shetland and had landed some excellent Hollands in Foulah, of which we were able to



procure as much as we wished for at eighteen pence a bottle.

During this day Proctor was busily engaged in blowing the eggs we had purchased and in packing them in sawdust, of which fortunately he had brought a most ample supply from the south. We obtained, ere we left the island, above a dozen of the Manx puffins and their eggs, besides a great many of the cormorants, black and " Foolish " Guillemot and of Richardson's gull.

Peat is luckily abundant in Foulah, and is dried and stacked with great dexterity and neatness by the inhabitants. Without this most necessary article how comfortless would be their winters. But during that period there is occasionally another cause of high excitable profit to the Shetlanders, in the shape of a wrecked vessel. It is a melancholy fact that the people of Foulah, along with those of the Mainland, can never understand that a vessel cast on their iron-bound coast, *does not* by that very misfortune become their property, but still appertains to the original owners. Before the time of Earl Patrick Stewart the Shetlanders are said to have been celebrated for their attention to mariners in distress, but this tyrant is said to have promulgated a law by which it was rendered penal for any one to assist a shipwrecked mariner or to help them in any way towards the saving of their vessel. The original law, I suspect, cannot be found, and some strong circumstances have lately been brought forward to prove that the law of Lord Patrick Stewart was made with quite a different intention, namely, to prevent the natives from plundering the wrecked vessels under pretence of rendering assistance.<sup>1</sup> Be this as it may, the Shetlander, like the wrecker of Cornwall, is never sorry for a shipwreck, and it is always enumerated among his godsend, with a boat's fare and a drove of whales. I

<sup>1</sup> See *Notes on Orkney and Zetland*, by Alexander Peterkins, App. p. 86, and *Description of the Shetland Islands*, by S. Hibbert, pp. 542, 589.

never could make them comprehend the total immorality of these practices.

A French schooner was stranded in Vailey Sound during the winter of 1833; for some time, however, hopes were entertained that she would be got off and would proceed on her voyage to Iceland; and on Mr. Petersen's expressing a cordial concurrence with such expectations, the man coolly replied: "deed dat wid ha dune ma guid to da kintra om shi had gan to pieces on da shuir."

Another of their superstitions obviously connected with this, is the repugnance they have to assist a drowning man, under the idea that he will afterwards do them some deadly harm. Of this revolting belief a melancholy example occurred during the course of the year 1834. A boat, containing four men had left Quarf on the eastern coast of Shetland, about 6 in the evening; while near Gulberwick, a *flann* or blast of wind from the land upset the frail craft and precipitated them all into the deep. At this time it was only dusk, and they were so near the land that their cries were distinctly heard. Not a single individual moved hand or foot to their relief; the people all able-bodied men, collected in a cottage near the beach where they sat looking in each other's faces till the morning dawn. Long ere that time the voices of the sufferers were hushed in the waves, but in the commencement of the night their cries for two hours broke upon the panic-struck groups upon the shore and were, alas, unheeded. However, it is to be hoped that few or none would now do what was perpetrated in the island of Yell many years ago. During a tremendous gale of wind a Dutch brig ran for shelter into the bay of Houland, and casting anchor attached herself, for greater security, by a strong cable to the rocks. During the night the cable was cut by the natives, the vessel totally wrecked, the crew drowned and the spoils divided by the murderers.

One more tale of shipwreck and I have done. In the

month of April, 1834, a vessel from Belfast, bound for Leith, was driven by a storm out of her course and struck during the night upon the western side of Foulah at the foot of the rock called the Noup. The darkness prevented the wretched crew from judging of their situation. The mate and a young man named Robert Black jumped from the vessel, when she struck upon the rocks, but the latter alone made good his footing. The unfortunate mate was crushed to pieces between the ship's hull and the shore, and in a few minutes the rest of the crew were swallowed up in the waves. For some time the poor lad remained on the ledge of rock upon which he had alighted, but despair roused him to exertion and he at length reached the top of the cliff. How he accomplished this in the dark, a height of at least two hundred feet perpendicular, it is impossible to say, but no Foulah man would attempt it in daylight and in his sober senses. It was just at the first morning's dawn of a cold wintry day that he gained the summit of the cliff, and the reader may imagine perhaps his feelings as he gazed upon this most inhospitable looking land. He descended into the deep valley [da dal] between the Noup and Liorafield of which I have before spoken, and there by good fortune fell in with a man who at that early hour was returning from his peat-stack with a load of fuel. The superstitious Foulah man was terrified by the apparition of a human figure advancing towards him all clothed in white, for the shipwrecked boy had nothing on but his shirt and trousers; his superstition warned him to flee, but ere he could escape he was accosted by the sprite imploring his assistance and asking in piteous tones if he were in a Christian land. "For" said my informant, "tonight he might be mang da cannibals." Is it a trow or a Christian man that speaks to me, replied the cautious Shetlander; but ere he could well conclude his address a hearty sailor-like grasp of the hand convinced him that he held converse with real flesh and blood. The poor lad was

nursed with great care during his stay upon the island and left it full of gratitude to the hospitable natives.

In the evening, after a hearty meal of fresh tusk and chickens, we walked out to the fishermen's huts on the opposite side of the little inlet of Ham. Of the numerous fishing lodges that I had entered in different parts of Shetland none equalled these for comfort and convenience. The huts, which would barely hold six people, were partly sunk in the ground, I suppose to prevent their being overturned by the violence of the wind. In the centre, of course, was the fire, and around were ranged couches of green turf, soft and pleasant whereon the tired fishermen reposed at night and sat on during the day when not employed at sea. Their attention was greatly attracted by our double-barrelled guns, which they had never before seen and one man came actually from the other side of the island to see the guns which fired twice without reloading. A large circle of the islanders gathered around us in the immediate vicinity of the lodges, and just at the right moment a pigeon flew over our heads and was brought down in style by Cholmely. It was the rock-dove, *Columba ænas*, and we wanted to preserve the specimen, but the man who picked it up instantly twisted off the head, because, said he: "you may then with safety eat the bird, if you pull off his head and let him bleed well." Had this any reference to the old Jewish prohibition of eating blood? I assured them however, in order to save my specimens for the future, that I had eaten many pigeons with the heads on, during my former visits, and had experienced no ill effects from such dangerous diet. But what pleased them most was the manner in which the bird was brought down upon the wing, for such as have guns upon the island never attempt anything beyond a sitting shot.

We then returned home to supper, and after that prepared for bed. Cholmely and myself slept on the only

couch which he had brought from Mr. Scott's, while poor Proctor extended his length upon the floor, with some boat-cloaks and straw beneath. In the morning he said, however, that he had slept well, but added significantly rubbing himself, I think it is a little hard. As soon as we had got to bed I expressed a hope that it would not rain during the night. Why? asked Cholmely; I did not speak, but pointed to the bed top and to the clear blue sky that looked through many a rent in the roof. Fortunately no clouds obscured the "blue expanse" during the still night.

Wednesday, June 25th. All this morning we were busily engaged in stuffing birds, cleaning guns, blowing eggs and the rest of the business of the travelling naturalist. The day was really warm, the thermometer at 12 a.m. stood at 70 in the shade, and the heat in our little low-roofed chamber was terribly oppressive. Looking through the one small window which lighted our apartment, I espied some pigeons feeding within gunshot of the door. I quietly took my gun, stole down stairs, astonished Proctor by the report of a right and left shot close beneath him and still more so when I brought him up a fine brace of pigeons for dinner.

To-day Mr. Petersen, the factor or steward of Mr. Scott, for Foulah, came over from Vailey Sound, he assured us that Mr. Scott had felt great alarm for our safety on the preceeding morning. In the evening Cholmely and I went out towards Guttorm and we shot a few pigeons, but the rain coming on I returned to the buith whilst he climbed to the top of the Kaim,<sup>1</sup> and having seen nothing but the mist and rain driving round the edge of the precipice, he returned, thoroughly drenched, to the house.

During my stay in Foulah, several people hearing that I was a doctor, came to consult me about their various

See illustration vol. III, 192.

complaints. The chief disorders to which they appeared to be liable were skin diseases and affections of the chest, the former caused, no doubt, in a great measure by their fish diet and by the filth and dirt of their habitations, the latter from their exposure at sea in all weathers and to the damp fogs of the Atlantic.

Among the instruments that I had brought with me to Shetland was a compound microscope, which I exhibited one day to Lawrence Ratter and his crew, and never shall I forget the surprise that it occasioned. They looked through it and then burst into a fit of laughter, they examined every part of it again and again and at length Lawrence Ratter asked me if it was not "one of those play-acting things" that they had read about in books. It was long ere I could convince them that there was no deception in the whole affair, and that the insect, a flea, with which, I can answer feelingly, they were well acquainted, was beneath the glasses and only increased in size by their operation. The *camera lucida*, the telescope, the clinometer and the rifle were all by turns most carefully examined, and excited their share of wonder, whilst they exhibited a great degree of intelligence in comprehending my descriptions of them.

Thursday, June 26th. After remaining in the house to clean guns, skin birds and order the dinner, we all marched out to ascend the summit of Liorafield and the Sneug. Our object in going thither was chiefly to make war upon the Skua gulls, of which as yet we had obtained no specimens. This noble bird is now decreasing fast in numbers. Foulah and Roeness Hill in Shetland are the only British localities in which it breeds, and if not carefully protected it will soon be totally banished from thence. Many fall a prey to the naturalist, but it is not in this way that the race will be exterminated, the Foulah men themselves are to blame, as they annually take,

without remorse the eggs of this noble bird from the heath on which it breeds.

We wound round the southern shoulder of the mountain of Hamrifield, which rises about 1300 feet above the sea; and then, turning towards the north, we ascended its steep sides, and by the time that I reached the top I observed my companions, far below engaged in the pursuit of some Richardson's gulls, snipes, etc., and quite forgetful of the noble game that awaited them above. Reclining, at my ease on the smooth turf I watched for a while their ardour in the sport, but was soon aroused by a large bird wheeling and swooping silently just above my head. It was the Skua gull, "the eagle of his tribe," and this was the very first time that I had seen him. In my first surprise I fired hastily at him with buckshot, but nowise discomfited by so unceremonious a reception this magnificent bird continued to sail above me unharmed, and as if to reconnoitre his enemy. I did not fire again, but was amply repaid for my forbearance by the pleasure of watching this noble gull in his native haunts. The flight of the Skua is extremely graceful, as is that of the whole of this genus, and their strength of wing is absolutely wonderful. They are much beloved by the inhabitants of Foulah, as they protect the lambs when feeding on the hills, from the attacks of the eagle. Whenever the tyrant of the air passes near their nests they attack him with the utmost fury, rising above him into the air, and then pouncing down like a hawk upon his back with their beaks and sharp crooked talons. Poor Proctor can testify by experience as to the severity of the latter. My companions toiled but slowly up the steep and grassy mountain, and not wishing to await their coming up, I moved on towards the summits of Liorafeld and of the Sneug. The latter is the highest point of the island, rising 1792 feet [1373 Ord. Map] above the level of the sea. According to the late trigonometrical survey, it is 50 feet

higher than the summit of Roeness Hill in Northmavine, and is consequently the highest land in all the Shetland archipelago. [Roeness Hill is 1475 feet high on Ord. Map, and so 102 feet higher than the Sneug]. A small moss, within a few yards of the summit of the hill, forms the principal breeding place of the Skua gull. Here, from 16 to 20 pair of these noble birds were flying about, and, as I approached, three or four separated from the rest to drive off the intruder. On they came straight towards me, at the height of two or three yards above the ground. Not wishing, even for natural history's sake, to endure any rough blows upon my head from their pinions, I raised my gun when they were close to me, and though almost within reach of the barrel these birds darted instantly upwards, almost in a perpendicular direction, to evade the threatened blow. On the preceding day they had attacked with the utmost fury the man who had brought their eggs to us, and his head bore testimony of the violence of the blows he had received.

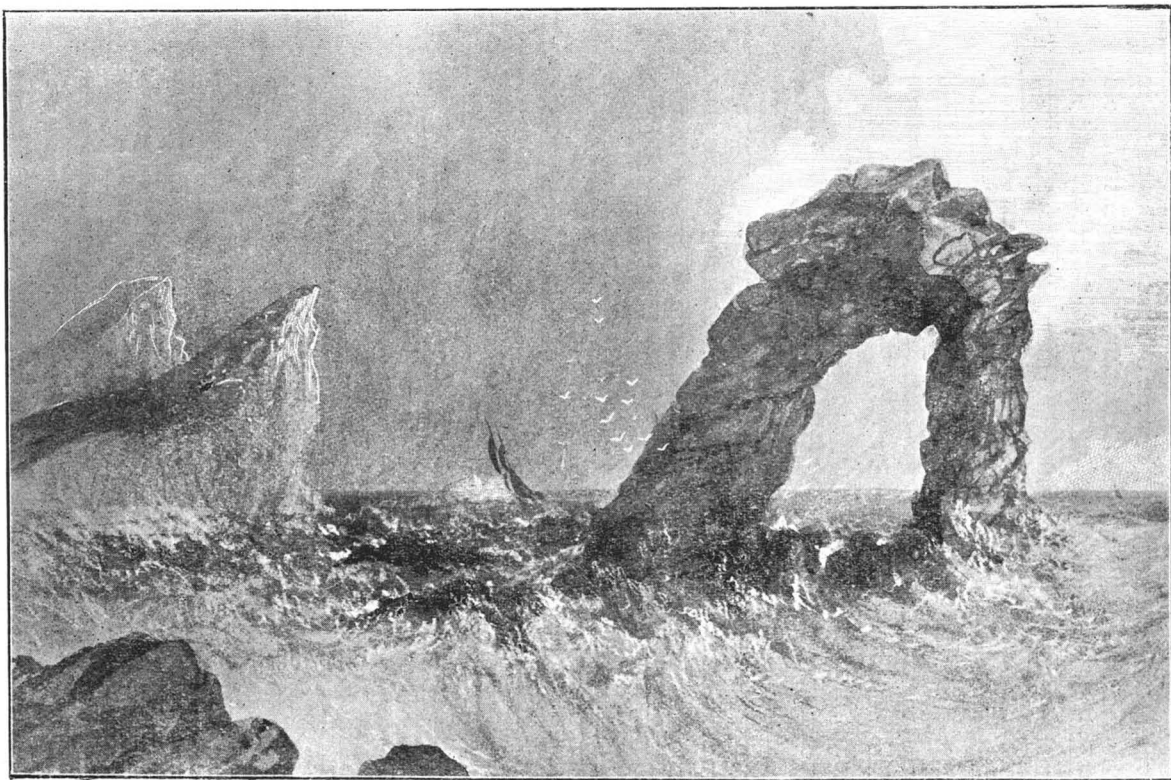
After wheeling round me for some time, one of the Skuas alighted at a short distance from me, and was very soon killed by a discharge of small shot, for I have never found shot of large size of any use for seabirds. Number five is good for almost everything. But this did not at all check the boldness of the rest, they still pounced upon us, the moment our eyes were averted from their movements. Proctor and Chalmers had now come up, and we remained long upon the summit of the highest hill in Shetland to contemplate the flight and habits of these rare and graceful birds. We descended at length by the north side which is excessively steep and much more rugged, and arrived at the buith to enjoy a true Shetland dinner. Some fresh tusk had been brought in this morning, and while the body of the fish was boiled, the head was converted into "ane crappit head," a savoury Shetland dish prepared by stuffing that part with oatmeal, and then



toasting it with abundance of butter before the fire. The liver too was chopped up into small pieces, and by a peculiar process dressed much to my taste, constituting another Shetland dish, the "livered moggie." Two fat chickens and a brace of pigeons were likewise soon demolished, and Mr. Petersen brought out a bottle of Shetland ale clear as amber and sweet though not with the heavy luscious flavour of the ale of Edinburgh. It was moreover very brisk so that we could almost believe it to have been seasoned with the tops of heather as was done by the Pictish nations of old.

After dinner I walked out to visit Lawrence Ratter, who lived about a mile and a half from the buith. Calling at the house of one of his crew, I was forced to partake of some milk and Hollands, and then proceeding on my way I was met at the door of his mansion by the worthy skipper himself and conducted into the interior of his habitation. We entered, of course, in true old Norse fashion, through the offices, or rather the "outhouses," and from thence passed through one door after another to the chamber of dais, where I found seated his wife and children. Everything around bore witness of a superior style to most of the cottages I had seen in Shetland. The whole walls were panelled in woodwork as clean as in Switzerland, and numerous cupboards of good workmanship were ranged around and well-filled to all appearance, with good warm clothing of wadmal and with carpenter's tools and fishing apparatus. It was indeed a remarkable fact to meet with so clean a house amidst the poor inhabitants of Foulah. Satiated, as I already was, the good woman forced me to partake of a "burstin broonie" with a huge bowl of rich, thick milk.

Lawrence Ratter informed me that an old man of the name of William Hendrie, who lived in the adjoining "toon," was the only individual yet remaining in Shetland, who retained any remnants of the Norse language,



GADA STAKK, FULA.

From the original water-colour drawing by T. M. Richardson.

which 100 years ago was almost universally prevalent in the islands. William Hendrie can still repeat the old ballad of the strife between the king of Norway and an earl of Orkney, on account of the marriage of the latter to his daughter in his absence and, without his consent. But I was not able this evening to visit the old man, nor was I able to do so before I left the island. The ballad with the translation as it was taken down by Mr. Low from the mouth of William Hendrie's father in 1774, is to be found in Barry's *History of Orkney* and the resumé of its meaning at page 561 of Dr. Hibbert's "Shetland Islands."<sup>1</sup>

From the house of Lawrence Ratter at Guttorm [?]<sup>2</sup> we walked down to the sea to view a magnificent perforated rock [Gada Stack], the arch of which cannot be less than 100 feet in height, though still inferior in size to that of Doreholm in Northmavine.<sup>3</sup> There is a rough sketch of this rock in Hibbert's *Shetland Islands*, but neither this nor the engraving of the Fryars of Foula, in the same work, give the slightest representation of this remarkable coast.

(To be continued).

<sup>1</sup> See translation by W. G. Collingwood in *Miscellany*, I, 211. "It was 'William Henry of Guttorm' who dictated the Hildina ballad (the only preserved Norn ballad in Shetland) to Low in 1774" (Jakobsen). Guttorm, now written 'Guttern,' 'Guttorn,' is the name of two houses in de Hametoon, in the south end of Foula. Jakobsen derives it from *Gaut*, f., gen. *gautar*, from *gjóta*, to spawn, so \**Gautarheimr*, the abode on the spawning stream. The stem of the stream name is *Gaut-*, from *gjóta*, to pour, to shed, and, in the case of fish, to spawn. But, 'spawning,' is a characteristic of all rivers, and Sophus Bugge suggests the more probable explanation, a stream which at times overflows its banks. The original name was probably *Gaut-á*, gen. *Gaut-ár*, and so, *Gaut-ár-heimr*. There are two other interesting names, which Jakobsen does not explain: Harrier and Fandale. Harrier is on the bank of the longest stream in Foula, about 2½ miles, adjoining a cairn, the site of a chapel and a burying-ground, which is suggestive of a derivation from *hørrgr*, a cairn (which in its OE. form *hearg*, gives Harrow), hence the Norse river name 'Horja'; or the river-name *Har-a*, with *gerði* or *jadarr*, both of which > *jær* (Rygh), hence, *Horju-*, or *Haru-gerði* or *-jadarr* > *Har-jær*. Fandale is a wide dale facing north-west, through which passes a branch of the above-mentioned stream, which may well have been the Norse river name *Fan* probably from Norse *faan*, also *fan*, a layer of dust (Aasen), which Rygh states required an ON. *fön*, gen. *fanar*, snow, a stream covered by dust-scum, or snow-river.

<sup>2</sup> Guttorm is in Hametun at south end of island while Gada Stack is at the extreme north coast.

<sup>3</sup> *Miscellany*, VIII, illustration 65, description, 124.

## REVIEWS.

THE ISLE OF FOULA. A series of articles on Britain's loneliest inhabited isle. By the late Professor Ian B. Stoughton Holbourn, laird of Foula for thirty-five years. Edited, with Memoir, by M. C. Stoughton Holbourn. *Lerwick: Johnson & Greig*, 1938, pp. viii + 256. 8vo, Cloth, 14 full-page illustrations. 7/6.

The author has lectured and written on some ten different subjects ranging from archæology to music and social questions, and now we have his posthumous and unfinished work on Foula.

Before the scientific study of place-names began, Pennant suggested that *Foula* was *Thule*. Dr. Jakobsen has shewn that the old Norse name was, *fugl*, fowl, a name applied in Norway to similar small islands having the appearance of swimming birds. In a document of 1490, the dative or locative case is given as 'i Fugle' = ON. 'i Fugli.' This probably gave rise to the present *Foula*, in which the dative suffix *-e*, *-i*, was mistaken for *-a* = ON. *øy*, island. So that the derivation of *Foula* is really (*i*) *Fugli*, corresponding with Gifford's "Fouilly" of 1716.

The island consisted of 57 marks of cultivated land, and paid to the earl the skatt of a half øyrisland (urisland). Two-thirds of the island, viz. 39 marks, belonged to the old earldom estate, for which rent and skatt was paid to the earl; leaving only 18 marks of óðal land, which paid skatt to the earl. Between 1628 and 1716, probably in 1666, the earldom estate was sold or feued. If the feu-duty and skatt are not now paid, they must have been bought up after 1812, when a private Act of Parliament allowed the owner of the earldom to sell these duties, most of which have now been bought up by the landowners.

The island formed part of the united parishes of Walls, Sandness, Papa and Foula, and paid parsonage and vicarage tithes.

The chief value of this book is the collection of folklore, topographical description and the detailed account of the inhabitants; more especially as it provides exceedingly interesting cases of folklore in the making, such as 'lambo teinde.' This is ON. *lamba-tiund*, which, in Shetland, was a technical term for the vicarage tithe of 10 lambs, viz. 1 lamb, and the tithe of 30 marks of wool produced by 30 ewes in one year, viz. 3 marks weight of wool, so that the average wool produced by one ewe was calculated as 1 mark weight of wool. Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century this was an annual payment as real and as grievous as the modern rates and taxes. After its cessation it was soon forgotten and gave rise to the folk-tale, p. 29.

The place Goterem, now Goteren, is derived by Jakobsen from *Gautarheimr*, the homestead on the banks of the burn *Gaut*, derived from *gjóta*, to shed, pour, to spawn. The stem of the river-name is *Gaut-*, and the river-name is *Gaut-a*, *-á*, etc.; the old name was probably *Gaut-ár-heimr*. Sophus Bugge explains the river-name as meaning one that at times, is liable to overflow its banks, e.g. during a spate. The popular imagination explained this as a personal name, Guttorm, who was taken to be the first settler in the island. When Low visited the island *Gautarheimr* had developed to *Goterem*, which he called 'Guttorm'; so that the folk-tale had probably originated in his time, or shortly before. Uncompounded personal names are not used as place-names. A quotation regarding the *godi* is given from *Grágás*, which

is described as the 'Norwegian Law-Book,' instead of the 'Icelandic Law-Book.' The Norse *Grágás* exists only in name and was old Frostathing Law, whereas Orkney and Shetland were under Gulathing Law. The term *goði* is exclusively Icelandic and is unknown in Norway and elsewhere.

P. 6 (*Old Lore Miscellany of Orkney and Shetland, Pightland Firth and Caithness Saga Book of the Viking Club*), should read: *Old-Lore Miscellany of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Sutherland, and Saga-Book of the Viking Club.*

The book is exquisitely illustrated and printed and is a credit to the printer who is also the publisher.

As "the proceeds of the sale of this book will be devoted to the endowment of equipment in the Gilbert Bain Hospital, Lerwick, in memory of the writer," it should find a place in the home of every patriotic Hjaltingur, and of everyone who is interested in "The Edge of the World."

A. W. JOHNSTON.

"PATEAS AMICIS." The Story of the House of Græmeshall in Orkney. (By Patrick Sutherland Græme). *Kirkwall: The Proprietor of the "Orkney Herald,"* 1936. Foreword, genealogical tree, 64 pp. 8vo, 11 full page illustrations. 3s.

This is an account of a branch of a leading Orkney family and its home.

In addition to the genealogical tree, the following information may be of interest. The family was founded by George Graham, Bishop of Orkney, great-grandson of the 1st Earl of Montrose, and grandson of Patrick Graham of Inchbraikie and his wife Margaret Stewart, great-granddaughter of William Sinclair, the last Norse Earl of Orkney. The bishop's wife, Marion Crichton, was a sister of 'the Admirable Crichton.'

The architecture and gradual enlargement of the house are described in detail, with excellent illustrations, and the book is a model for further monographs of Orkney houses.

"A Note on the heraldry at Græmeshall," is contributed by Mr. J. Storer Clouston.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY. Edited by William Grant, M.A., LL.D. Vol. II, Part II (Box to Bunker). *Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association, Ltd.*

Dr. Grant and his collaborators are, if slowly, surely working towards their goal in their monumental work. It is an education to read through each part as it is issued. The folk-lorist, antiquary, the student of Scottish history and literature and the philologist will come across items that appeal to him. The thoroughness with which the work is done calls forth admiration and impels one to pay a tribute to Dr. Grant and his helpers. It is to be hoped that stringency of funds will not retard the progress of a work which reflects the largest credit on Scottish philological study.

On p. 271, column 1, line 14 from top of page, "Johnson" should read 'Johnston.'

D.B.



## BUCHOLLIE CASTLE, CAITHNESS.

BY JOHN MOWAT, F.S.A.ScOT.

OLD Buchollie Castle, near Freswick in Caithness, is one of the most interesting ancient buildings in the county both from an architectural and historical standpoint. The Keep, which is one of the oldest lime built structures in the north of Scotland, is of the small, square, almost windowless type, built on the landward end of a precipitous rock or headland, jutting out into the sea, and with a cluster of rude clay built buildings on the protected ground behind. Girnigoe and Old Wick Castles are others of this class. It took its name from the Barony of Balquholly in Aberdeenshire, now Hatton, the former seat of the Mowats, a branch of the family who acquired the lands of Freswick from King Robert the Bruce and confirmed by charter of the Duke of Albany in 1406. The name is variably spelled, sometimes Bucholly or Bucholie, and in some old maps and prints "Freswick Castle," or "Old Freswick Castle."

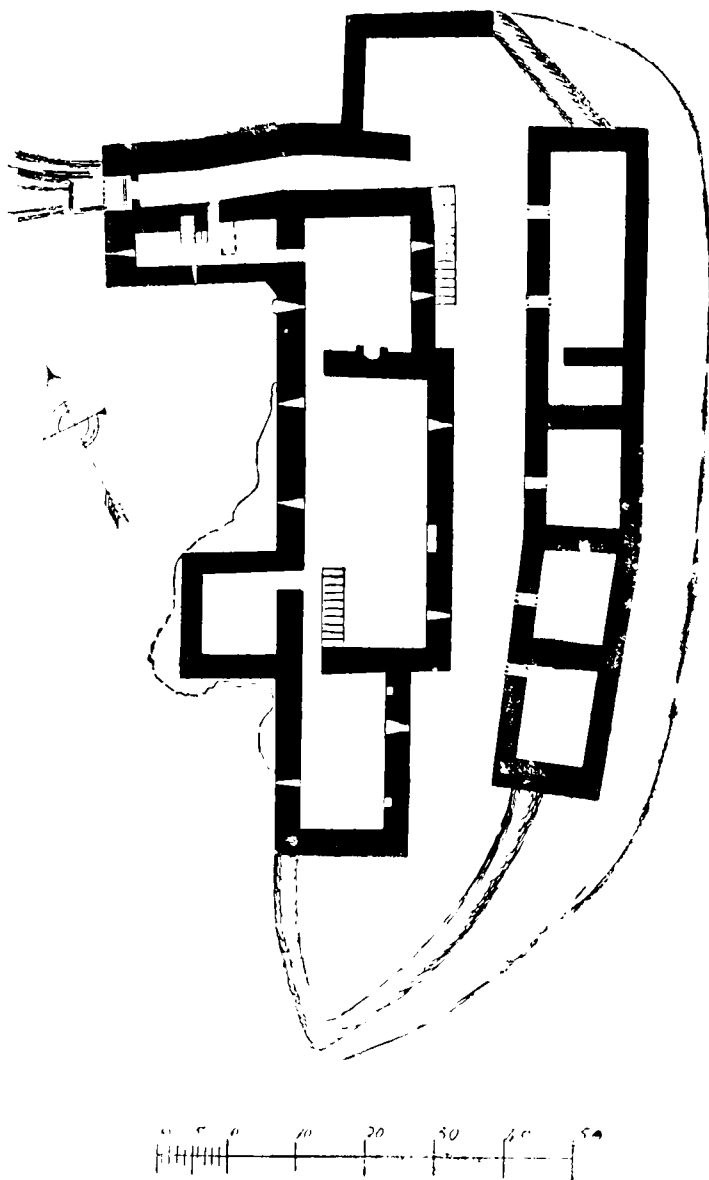
As to the definite age of the structure, authorities differ. The Rev. Alexander Pope, T. Pennant, P. A. Munch, Dr. Joseph Anderson, and John Nicolson, well known antiquarian authorities, have identified the site with the Lambaborg of the Sagas, the stronghold of the daring Viking, Sweyn the son of Asleif. This brings it back to the middle of the 12th century, when, about 1148, Sweyn fortified the building, and in an historic siege withstood the combined forces of Earl Rognvald and Thorbjorn, and only gave in to save his garrison from starvation. Even then there was an existing building which he strengthened and fortified. True, an alternate site has been suggested. Mr. A. B. Taylor in his new translation

of the "Orkneyinga Saga" gives an illustration of the Ness broch, in the south side of Freswick Bay, and identifies that structure with Lambaborg. This is not a new suggestion. But, after having examined both sites, not once, but many times, from various points of view, and the author now writes in sight of both positions, he is still of the opinion that the evidence is in favour of the Buchollie site. There is a similarity in the situations, and the Ness broch ruins are probably of the Viking period, while the medieval Keep of Buchollie Castle is probably a 15th century superstructure, erected on an older site, by the Mowats of Balquholly, when they acquired the lands of Freswick about 1400.

But, while the square Keep may be of this later period, there is conclusive evidence of an earlier building in the substructure. The covered passage, which led from the arched entrance to the buildings, was roofed by an arch of flat overlapping stones which betokens a much earlier period and is characteristic of the entrance passages of the early brochs. This passage is described by Dr. Anderson in "Archæologia Scotia," vol. v, and by MacGibbon & Ross in "Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland" where it is stated: "At the inner end of the passage there occurs an archway with a second gate so that assailants penetrating through the first or outer gate would be stopped by the inner one and being caught in the narrow passage would be easily disposed of from the battlements on each side." This may well be the passage of the Sweyn stronghold, reconstructed and built upon by the lairds of Buchollie two centuries later. The geographical position seems to fit with Torfæus' description of the historic siege better than that of the Broch of Ness.<sup>1</sup> Both Torfæus and the Saga account tell

<sup>1</sup> The isthmuses of the peninsulas of the Ness broch and Buchollie Castle are 60 feet and 10 feet wide, respectively, of which the latter, alone, could have been successfully held by a few men.



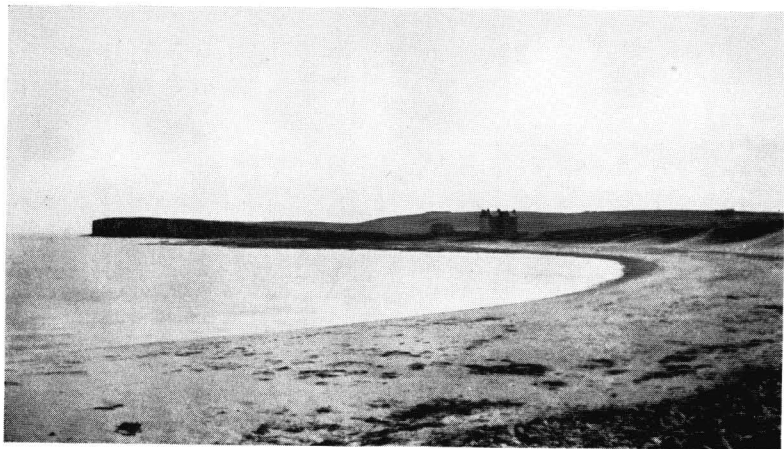


BUCHOLIE CASTLE ; Ground-plan.

The Castle peninsula is parallel with East Coast, in which are Castle Geo at north end, and Kingans Geo opposite south end of peninsula.

*This Plan and View from S.W. (overleaf), are from the "Third Report and Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the County of Caithness," by permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office.*





FRESWICK BAY FROM THE NORTH.  
Shewing Freswick House and Ness Head.

*J. Mowat.*

*To face p. 145.*

us that Sweyn and his companion Margad were let down over the cliffs to the beach below by ropes knotted together, and that, in their armour, they swam along the shore to the low land to the south. To anyone surveying the position carefully such a feat would be improbable, if not impossible, from the Broch of Ness. It would first of all entail a swim seaward, then round the Ruff of Freswick with its deep water and strong tidal currents, and then south, double the distance that it would be from Buchollie. From the latter site the feat could be accomplished within reason, and there are several places where the swimmers could make a possible landing.

In a later visit of the Norsemen, made about 1153, and described in Chapter XCIII of the "*Orkneyinga Saga*," when Anakol and Thorstein sailed over to Caithness, they arrived during the night and pulled up their boat into a hidden cove under some cliffs. The translator suggests that these cliffs were on the north side of Freswick Bay. Might not that landing place and "hidden cove" and "cliffs" be on the *south* side of the Bay, in the vicinity of the Broch of Ness and not on the *north* side where there are no cliffs. Such a landing place would be near to Lambaborg and to the "thicket" which is most likely to have been in the valley south of the burn of Freswick and the old house of Freswick where there is mossy ground with the remains of brushwood. As to the Hall of Freswick, it is more likely to have been further inland than the site of Freswick House at the Burn Mouth. The House of Freswick was built by the Sinclairs of Freswick towards the end of the 17th century, and there might be an earlier building other than the pre-Reformation chapel of St. Moddan on the other side of the burn, but local tradition lends to the suggestion that the Halls of the Freswick Vikings were at Tofts, half a mile inland from the recently excavated Viking settlements at the Links of Freswick. This situation is still locally known as "The Haas" and,

until about one hundred years ago, there were considerable stone structures which formed the quarry ground for a number of houses erected by the proprietor of the estate about that period. Wherever situated, there is little doubt but that there were more pretentious Viking settlements on Freswick Bay than those recently excavated, where the crews of the Viking ships wintered and feasted after the close of their summer and autumn cruises in the West, something that would fit the description of the house of Skeggi mentioned in the *Burnt Njal Saga*.

The ruins of Buchollie Castle are fully described in the "Inventory of Monuments and Constructions in the County of Caithness," 1911, and the late John Nicolson made a careful survey and measurement of the buildings. The front Keep, which measures 14 ft. by 20 ft., rose to a height of 30 ft. and, until a generation ago, the front west wall remained the full height. In "The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland," by MacGibbon & Ross, there is a plan and drawing supplied by the late Rev. Alex. Miller, D.D., of Buckie, which shows this wall complete with battlemented cornice and supporting corbels of sandstone now almost gone. All the stonework of the main building has been quarried out of the adjoining cliff, except for a narrow facing of hewn red sandstone which surrounds the doorway and the upper windows, now much decayed and mostly fallen away. The mortar consists of a strong mixture of lime and sea-shell sand which, from its composition, has evidence of having been taken from the beach at Duncansby. The foundations about four feet in thickness are grafted on to the solid rock.

The ground floor contains the four feet six inches arched entrance and one arched compartment on the right with one slit window towards the drawbridge entrance. The mid storey chamber, with two small windows facing the



*J. Mowat.*

BUCHOLLIE CASTLE.  
S.W. Corner.



*J. Mowat.*

BUCHOLLIE CASTLE.  
Interior of West Wall of Keep.

(facing p. 146).

land, seems to have been carried on wooden joists the holes of which can still be seen. The upper chamber, of which only one small window remains, had the appearance of being vaulted. The rock on which the castle stands is about 100 feet high at the cliff edge and is connected to the main precipice by a narrow neck of land, eight to ten feet wide, level with the height of the rock. Through this narrow isthmus there has been cut a trench six or seven feet wide and down to some eight or nine feet below the threshold of the entrance door. This entrance must have been at some time spanned by a wooden lifting bridge similar to that used at Girnigoe Castle.

It is difficult to imagine a more dreary or desolate situation for a homestead. And yet it must have been the home and rallying point of many generations of the Mowat family, whose early history is so interlinked between Balquholly in Aberdeen and Buchollie in Caithness, that it is now difficult to unravel. That they were a leading family, with various branches in both Counties, during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, is evident from the very scanty records available. The lairds are so often styled sometimes of Balquhollie, sometimes of Buchollie and Freswick and sometimes of Freswick only that it is a problem for the most expert genealogist. They were linked in marriage with the prominent families in Aberdeen and Caithness as well as later in Orkney and Shetland. A daughter of the laird of Buchollie was the mother of the first Sinclair of Ulbster.

The walls of the old Castle, that betoken a turbulent race in turbulent times, are fast crumbling to decay. Yet bound up in its grey ruins, on which must have battered five or six centuries of North Sea wind and spray, are chapters of thrilling history, and we would fain think that not the least of these episodes were the escapades of Sweyn the Viking.

BAUTA-STEINN  
MAGNÚSS HELGA EYJA-JARLS.

CENOTAPH  
TO S. MAGNUS EARL OF ORKNEY.

BY THE REV. H. J. FYNES-CLINTON M.A.,  
Rector of the Church of S. Magnus the Martyr  
by London Bridge.

ON the bosom of Scapa Flow, where S. Magnus sailed with the Viking rulers of their island empire, lies to-day the mighty fleet defending the shores, the commerce, the life of Great Britain and the Commonwealth of free peoples.

In London Pool, the ancient harbour between the Royal Tower and the City's historic Bridge, is the birth-place of England's commerce, the spring of world-wide empire. Over both these harbours stands sentinel a shrine of S. Magnus, the seafaring saint of gentleness, piety and justice in rule, ready to give himself to die to save his friends from fruitless death.

*There* the blood-hued stone enshrines the body of Orkney's Earl, built up in fair beauty and dignity, watching through the centuries the homes and the strifes of men; the very stones crying out in appeal to those who have ears to hear.

*Here* has stood for a thousand years a Church as guardian to that Bridge, Saxon, medieval and of to-day, pointing to something beyond the daily chaffering of the Fishmarket and business of great London City.

A Church of S. Magnus stood here indeed in Saxon times before, perhaps long before, the Conquest and the death of S. Magnus of Orkney; but to which S. Magnus it





CENOTAPH TO S. MAGNUS.  
Designed and Built by Mr. John Firth of Kirkwall.

*From photograph by Mr. James Flett of Kirkwall.*

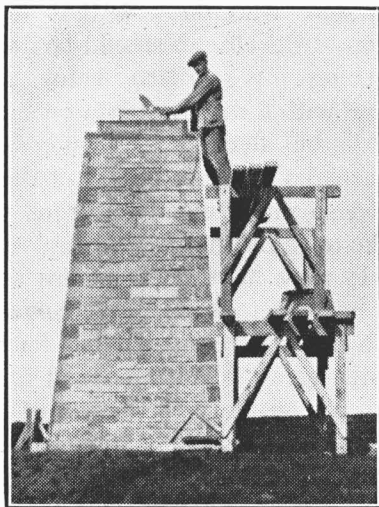
*To face p. 148.*

was dedicated is uncertain; it was to one whose feast was on August 19th as that of the Church of S. Magnus at Moreton in Dorset, whereas the feast of the Earl is on April 16th. A later tradition however pointed to the martyr of Orkney, strengthened probably by the existence of a Church of S. Olaf at the other end of London Bridge. In this uncertainty the inspiration of his virtues and of his manly religion led the parochial Council to petition the Bishop of London, who decreed that henceforth the principal patron of the church should be deemed to be S. Magnus of Orkney. We greatly value this link with far-off times and with a race that still persists not only in the Northern isles but all down the East coast of England; a race that, gathered into the bosom of the motherland, has contributed so much of adventurous vigour to our blood. We like to think that S. Magnus, when he visited King Henry I, may have gone ashore at the natural landing-place near the Bridge and have entered the Church of his own name to give thanks for his voyage.

So it was with great expectation and interest that in 1936 I went on a pilgrimage to the site of his death and learned to admire and love his cathedral church, one of the most unspoiled Norman buildings in Great Britain. With some difficulty on the Sabbath I secured a boat for Egilsay and here an old farmer, Mr. Hugh Robertson, showed me the traditional site of the martyrdom and told me that when he was a boy his mother bade the children never to play on the spot as it was "marked with blood."

In 1937, as Rector of one of the three churches dedicated in honour of a S. Magnus in England, I was honoured with an invitation from the Provost and Town Council of Kirkwall to take part in the Octocentenary celebration of the foundation of the Cathedral and went with two members representing my congregation. I enjoyed the kind hospitality of Mrs. and Mr. Sutherland-Græme and

attended the crowded service in the Cathedral at which the Norwegian Bishop of Nidaros preached, and the next day the simple service on Egilsay under the walls of the old church of S. Magnus. Feeling that there was a danger, in the rapid changes of these modern times, of the traditional site of the martyrdom being lost, I spoke of my desire to offer to place a commemorative stone on the



CAIRN TO S. MAGNUS

12 ft. high, 6 ft. broad at base.

Designed and Built by Mr. John Firth of Kirkwall.

From block kindly lent by *The Orkney Herald*.

spot. The idea was warmly welcomed by Mr. Fryer, the Minister of the Cathedral, by Dr. Marshall B. Lang and others, with the consequence that it was agreed that the two congregations in Kirkwall and London should unite in erecting a worthy cairn as an enduring memorial.

The magnificent Pageant of the life and death of the saint will always be a vivid memory; and the remarkable gift by the King of Norway of a statue of S. Olaf for the

cathedral gives birth to the hope that before long a similar figure of S. Magnus will also grace his own church.

The next year, 1938, sees the cairn built of local stone, twelve feet high and in style suited to its wild surroundings, strong and dignified and like to stand for many centuries. The site is on the highest point of the island and about 250 yards from the ancient roofless church of S. Magnus with its round tower, where stood the primitive Culdee chapel in which the martyr made his last confession and communion before he went to meet his foes:—if indeed the low chancel be not itself the Culdee chapel.

I had the further privilege of being asked to take part in the dedication of the cairn on Sept. 7th. A party of more than 200 gathered on Egilsay, some by steamer, some by boats from other islands, and after a service conducted by several leading ministers, the Rev. G. A. Fryer, the Minister of the cathedral, drew off the Union flag and pronounced: “As I now unveil this monument as a lasting memorial to Magnus of saintly memory, I dedicate it to the glory of God in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” He expressed his thanks to the people of Kirkwall and to the Rector and congregation of S. Magnus’ in London, to the people of Egilsay and to Mr. Alfred Baikie, the superior of the island and Lord Lieutenant who had all joined in making the memorial possible.

By invitation I gave an address emphasizing the significance of the event and the importance of tradition both in our social and national life to which it gives a sense of reverence for the past and a stability for future development; and likewise in our religion, the handing down of the sacred truths from generation to generation. A growth of realization of our solidarity with the past through such a link as the life of S. Magnus must establish and enrich our hold on the ancient Faith.

Wreaths were then laid at the foot of the Cairn, by Mr.

J. H. Newman, representative from London, inscribed: "In honour of our Patron S. Magnus the Martyr from the Rector and congregation of S. Magnus' by London Bridge," and by Councillor A. J. G. Maxwell: "A tribute to S. Magnus from the people of Kirkwall."

Miss Baikie undertook to lay annually a wreath in memory at the Cairn on his feast day, April 16th.

We shall have the happiest and most grateful memories of the kind reception and hospitality given to us.

The bronze inscription on the Cairn is:—"Erected by the Rector and congregation of S. Magnus' the Martyr by London Bridge and the Minister and congregation of S. Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall, to commemorate the traditional spot where Earl Magnus was slain A.D. circa 1116, and to commemorate the Octocentenary of S. Magnus Cathedral, 1937."

# JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION TO SHETLAND IN 1834.

By EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.  
EDITED By A. W. JOHNSTON.

## VII.

(*Continued from p. 140.*)

Thursday, June 26th (*continued*). Cholmely here joined us, and Lawrence Ratter related to us a melancholy accident which occurred about two years before to his brother at this spot. He was stepping, or rather springing, from one rock to another to reach a large stack on which were the ruins of an ancient brough now tenanted by seagulls, when his foot slipped and he fell into the sea. As he rose a tremendous wave swept him from the rock and he disappeared for ever. Accidents of this kind are rare in Foulah, and I was told that few lose their lives upon the cliffs, though on the other hand several respectable natives assured me that many had left their homes for the Sneug and never from thence returned.

Leaving Lawrence Ratter conversing with his crew as to the possibility of our getting out of Foulah on the ensuing morning, I approached along the brink of the precipice, when he loudly called to me to keep off as the banks frequently gave way beneath the slightest additional weight. Under his guidance we walked cautiously out upon a small promontory which commanded a view of the ranges of precipices, extending from the point where we stood to the Kaim, and facing, as an enormous wall, the whole of the western side of the island. The spot from whence we viewed this magnificent scene was not more than 200 feet above the sea, but immediately beyond it rose the Bank of Sorbarlie [*Sobergli*, from ON. *Sauðberg-líð*,

sheep-rock slope, Jak.] to the height of at least 900 feet [700 Ord.] perpendicular. At this measurement [700] the cliffs continue to the Kaim where the rock suddenly attains its utmost altitude and forms a sheer perpendicular precipice of 1600 [1220, Ord.] feet, being not more than 100 or 190 [153] feet lower than the summit of the island. Lawrence Ratter pointed out to me several ledges a long way down the face of the cliff, upon which he had been in search of eggs and birds, and what seemed odd enough to me at the time, he never calculated the entire height, but only how low down he had descended from the summit.

Many of his most daring feats had thus been accomplished on cliffs much lower than the Kaim. A year or two ago two ponies were playing on the top of Sorbarlie, while Lawrence Ratter and his boat's crew were sailing past the cliff. One of them, by some accident or other, slipped its footing and rolled over the edge of the precipice. He fell at first perpendicularly, but soon began to turn over, striking and rebounding from the face of the cliff till his shattered fragments arrived at the bottom. The boat rowed to the spot, the rocks around were bespattered with pieces of flesh, and a small portion of his lungs was all that could be found upon the water. True the heavier portions of his carcase may have gone to the bottom.

But, alas, it is not the brute creature alone which has met with destruction on these precipices. A considerable number of years ago, a father and his two sons went to the Kaim for the purpose of procuring eggs. There was but one rope for the whole party. The father being the more experienced went down first, and the sons followed according to seniority. In a short time the youngest son perceived the strands of the rope to be separating from their combined weight, and thinking it expedient that one life should be sacrificed to save two more, he whispered coolly to his brother beneath "Robie cuit awa Da" Poor Robie looked up and saw in a moment the sad state of the

case, but being endowed with more filial piety than his brother absolutely refused to disencumber the rope of his honoured parent. “Dann,” quoth Magnus “I maa sney da tombe upon Robie and Da tooe.” It was no sooner said than done, and Magnus with a sorrowing heart regained the summit while the mangled corpses of Da and his dutiful Robie splashed into the Atlantic.

Another Foulah man was not so happy, however, as Magnus in getting rid of his relations. He and his wife were upon the same rope and the gudewife was farthest down, when their thread of life shewed evident signs of holding out no longer. Without delay he sacrificed his rib—away she flew whirling and screaming like a wounded seagull, and her husband returned home to mourn for his departed spouse. Great indeed was his affliction, and the neighbours had, as usual, assembled to offer all the consolation in their power, when the door burst open and in rushed the gudewife herself dripping from the salt sea, and giving convincing proof by means of her fists and tongue, that she was no disembodied sprite, but true flesh and blood. How matters were made up with her now, perhaps, still more disconsolate husband, history does not inform us; but she escaped from supposed certain destruction by the wind having caught her petticoats in the descent, and thus held her supported by a parachute, till she sank gracefully into the ocean’s bosom, where by good chance a passing boat picked her up, and she was restored to her ‘ain fireside.’

I now ascended with Cholmely to the summit of the Kamm or Kaim [ON. *kambr*, comb or crest]. We scrambled up the steep and slippery bank grasping closely the long tufts of grass which occasionally presented themselves, and casting a fearful glance at the precipice on our right-hand over which a false step might have precipitated us into the Atlantic. The sun was just setting in the ocean, and flung his broad red glare upon the



face of this mighty cliff, but we could not contemplate in solemn stillness the grandeur of nature, for thousands and thousands of seabirds clothed the rocks and screamed beneath us their discordant notes.

The different genera of sea-fowl occupied here nearly the same relative positions as upon the Noup of Noss, but the puffins on the Kaim congregated chiefly about the summit of the rock. We remained long on our elevated position, though of view there was little but the broad expanse of ocean illumined by the western sun, which serenely seemed as if about to sink into the waters, but edged gradually away to the northward till its rays were partially interrupted by the hill of Northmavine, on which it seemed to rest for the night. But the hoarse cries of the sea-fowl continued unabated and we saw the eagle-like Skua following us down as we descended in the dusk towards the buith. During the whole night, or rather dusk, for night at this season there is none, the scream of the kittiwake and hoarse wild cackle of the large gull are occasionally heard, but custom soon reconciles the traveller to these interruptions, and though we could view the blue sky above our heads from our pillows, we slept sounder than on a bed of down.

Friday, June 27th. To hold our additional luggage, which had much increased in bulk during our sojourn on the island, I purchased, this morning, a straw basket, or cassie, which answered all our purposes. We took leave of Mr. Petersen (who is here factor, schoolmaster and parson) and getting into our boat we sailed away, with a fair wind, for Papa Stour.

Nothing material occurred during our voyage; Chalmers was not even squeamish, and I amused myself with exhibiting to the wondering crew the power of my knife over the compass. Before I left Scotland I had made it into a magnet, and they were so much pleased with it that they would have bought it from me at any price. They

were a lively, merry set of fishermen, but no great geographers, for they regarded Papa Stour as being twice the distance from Foulah that the latter island is from Vailey Sound. Both places, I believe, are about 18 miles distant from the island we had just left. I was surprised to find that only one of them had even been in Papa, as they always shape their course for Vailey Sound.

As we neared the island its rocks rose majestically out of the blue sea; and, though the island is of no great height, its cliffs are cut and shaped into the most fantastic forms. The Sound between Papa and the mainland is at all times a dangerous passage, but to us and to our boatmen it was particularly so, from the fact of only one being in the least acquainted with its hidden rocks and furious currents. The day was bright and sunny, the wind fair and long heavy waves dashed on the western shore of Papa and on the skerries still farther out in the Atlantic [Ve Skerries] while in the Sound itself all was tranquil and we glided on safely and securely to the little harbour [Housa Voe], on the east side of the island. We landed in all haste about 2 p.m., having accomplished the 18 miles from Foulah in somewhat less than three hours. Our boatmen were anxious to avail themselves of the fair wind to return to their much loved island, and having carried our luggage up to the "Ha' House," the residence of Mr. Gideon Henderson,<sup>1</sup> they left us and we soon saw their sails careering through the Sound on their homeward voyage.

The Ha' House of Papa Stour was a large edifice strongly built in the plainest style and roofed with heavy grey slate. It is the only building of any consideration in the island, the rest are wretched hovels, and worse here, perhaps, than in any other part of Shetland.

Mr. Henderson had crossed over to the mainland, but we were most hospitably received by his sisters, and in the evening he himself returned to give us a hearty welcome

<sup>1</sup> *b.* 1776, *d.* 1853, *m.* 1873, Margaret Gray who d. 25 January, 1835. (Grant.)

to his sea-girt domain. Here we also met the Honble. Mr. Lindsay Balcarres,<sup>1</sup> about whom so much since has been written and declaimed, and on whose account Gideon Henderson has been so unjustly and so illiberally abused. It would be here out of place to enter upon the merits of the case; my own opinion founded upon actual acquaintance with all the parties, is, that Mr. Henderson is a deeply injured man, and that the Honble. Lindsay Balcarres is a most dangerous lunatic, and that Miss Watson, the lady who was the cause of all the mischief, is not a whit more sane than the man in whose behalf she exerted herself so much.

After dinner I walked round the island with Mr. Henderson, and about nine o'clock p.m. I was sent for in great haste to bleed a man who had just fallen down in a fit. I bled him, but was afterwards sorry that I had done so, as I discovered him to be labouring under the symptoms of influenza, which at that time was very prevalent in the west of Shetland. Two of Mr. Henderson's children were now also attacked by the same disease. As I was returning from the cottage I began myself to feel very unwell, and from that hour I may date the commencement of the illness which so effectually put an end to all my enterprise in Shetland. And connected with this unfortunate malady, the symptoms and course of which I by no means intend to inflict upon my readers, I have to show how "coming events cast their shadows before." During the night I slept but little, and towards morning I dreamed that I was laid up with a severe fever in the west of Shetland, and that I was obliged to return to Leith without visiting Hillswick Ness. How true this afterwards proved will be shewn by the sequel of my narrative.

<sup>1</sup> The Hon. Edwin Lindsay, 4th son of Alexander 23rd Earl of Crawford and 6th Earl of Balcarres and Elizabeth daughter of Charles Dalrymple, born 9 March, 1786 (a twin with his brother Richard), was in military service in Madras and died 20th October, 1865. See also Manson's *Handbook and Guide to Shetland*, 1938, p. 196, and John Nicolson's *The Prisoner of Papa Stour*.

For three weeks I lay ill of fever within eight miles of that wished for point, which I was never again destined to see. The cause of this dream is, however, obvious. Before I had lain down to rest, the idea of not accomplishing all that I had intended weighed heavy on my mind, and above all I had feared that I might not reach Hillswick Ness, which is by far the best point for mineralogy in Shetland.

Saturday, June 28th. The herring season was now at its height in Shetland, and some magnificent fish of that species, taken from the sea but half an hour before, graced the breakfast table of Mr. Henderson. The day was beautiful and our kind host had a boat in waiting for us on the beach to convey us to the rocks on the western side of Papa. Mr. Nicol, in Edinburgh, had assured me that the rocks of Papa were by far the most extraordinary that he had met with in Shetland, and with this opinion I fully coincide. The island is certainly of no great elevation, no part probably rising above 400 feet [Virda Field 288 ft., Ord. Map] from the ocean's surface, but the amygdaloidal claystone, of which the greater part of it is composed, is cut and carved by the action of the waves into the most fantastic figures. The rock yields in huge rhomboidal blocks to the force of the waves which are gradually, and by no means very slowly, encroaching upon the land.

As soon as we had stepped into the boat Mr. Henderson gave the signal to his three stout boatmen, and we glided out of the little cove towards the rocks on its eastern side. Here we entered suddenly a vast cave, or "helyer," [in Brei, or Breis Holm], through which the sea at all times flowed. For a few minutes we were enveloped in darkness, then on a sudden a bright luminous ray broke in upon us from above, from a perforation in the rock, and revealed the variegated corallines and tangled seaweed which clothed the rocky bottom a fathom or two beneath our boat. To the right and to the left branched off

various helyers, some totally dark, others partially illumined at some distance from above, but too narrow for our boat to enter. No wonder the Papa men are considered to be the most superstitious of all the Shetlanders, for who could traverse these marine abodes without a hope of coming, at every turn, upon some merman, old and grey. An ancient seal or two, to be sure, did occasionally shew his head in the Sound of Papa, but the sea to-day was much too rough to think of shooting him. Opposite to the Ha' House there are some extremely curious rocks, which are nearly inaccessible. One, upon which are still to be seen the ruins of an ancient brough, is termed the Froe-a-Stack [Fru or Maiden Stack], and the legend closely resembles that of the rock near Catfirth which bears the same name [Fru Stack, at Moul of Eswick, Ord. map]. Upon some low rocks, in the immediate vicinity of the Fröken Stack, we observed, for the first time in Shetland, a fine crested cormorant on a low rock nearly within gunshot. I was very anxious to secure him for my own collection, as I did not possess a specimen with the white marked rump which gives to it the expressive Norse appellation of Laarqvitu. [Norse, Kvitlaaring.] But he was too wary, although we several times approached pretty near him by pushing our boat through low caverns and bringing sharply round a promontory or point of rock; yet, the moment that he espied our boat's prow shooting out of the cave, he gathered up his wings, which he before had suffered to droop idly at his side half outstretched to rid them of their accumulated moisture, and after a few odd twists of his head from side to side, sailed quietly away upon the deep. In general the cormorants fly when frightened in this manner, unless danger be perceived when it is as yet far distant. Baffled in our hopes of obtaining this fine bird, we rowed away through the Sound of Papa towards the western side of the island, and on our passage thither, the tide running through the Sound caused such a sea as to

prevent us from shooting at, or at least from picking up any specimens of seabirds.

We pulled past the mouth of several small inlets and landed upon some long low rocks about half a mile from the shore. Here we observed some large flocks of the green cormorants, all of which, one by one, dropped into the water at our approach, and the last left the island just as we came within gunshot of the rocks. At a distance, too, we saw several eider-ducks upon the reef, but long ere we arrived there they were gracefully making their way over the swelling waves towards the numerous caves and helyers of the coast. Thither we now pursued them; but, though awkward and heavy upon the land, they swim extremely fast, and when hard pressed will take to the wing, or dive to elude pursuit. The common gull also, which is rare in Shetland, breeds in considerable numbers upon this islet. Several seals, too, sported around us, but we fired at them in vain, and Mr. Henderson advised us to pull in for the shore, as the seals and eiders might, at this time of the day, be reposing in the bays and caverns of that broken coast. We accordingly did so and were soon amid the caves of Papa, which, even by the Shetlanders, are regarded as some of the greatest wonders of the north islands. The whole shore was here cut by the action of the waves into helyers and gios, some for a time running up under an archway into the land, and then in consequence of the top having fallen in they are again exposed to day. We entered several of them, but though disappointed in obtaining the objects of our search, we were amply repaid by the wonders that we saw.

The sea beyond the outer barrier of cliffs was so turbulent and heavy that it was very difficult to shoot, but in the helyers it was smooth as glass and so clear that we saw the smallest object at the depth of three or four fathoms. In general the entrance to the caverns was extremely narrow, and we had often to pull up a narrow gio of ten or fifteen feet in breadth, till it opened into a

wide expanse of water, beyond which lay the mouth of the present cave though it had no doubt formerly been much nearer the ocean.

The rocks here, though not high, were yet absolutely perpendicular, which added much to the grandeur of the whole scene. We entered the cavern which is represented in the opposite sketch. At first we rowed between two high walls of rock and pushed with difficulty, by means of our hands, past the high pinnacle which almost blocked up the passage. Still, though thus separated from the land, the relentless ocean had continued to assault this sturdy sentinel of the cave, and had pierced, through its very centre, a beautiful pointed arch or window which descended almost to its base. Beyond this we passed under the first arch which is of inconsiderable height, rising not more than 20 feet from the surface of the water and extending eight or ten yards inland. Beyond this dark passage we again saw the blue sky and driving clouds above us, for we had passed into an amphitheatre of huge perpendicular rocks, and quarried from the solid stone by the mighty element upon which we floated. Here the water seemed of almost unfathomable depth, deep dark blue, smooth and still as glass, and reflecting on its surface the hideous precipices by which it was surrounded.

Immediately opposite to the rock by which we had entered, the real cavern yawned in the rifted rock, and extended inwards for about one hundred yards, terminating in a sandy beach on which the seals love to repose at midday. To understand the rough sketch here given, the reader will remember that it is taken about two yards within the mouth of the true cavern, looking through the archway to seaward, while the view of the ocean is almost entirely obstructed by the perforated pinnacle in the centre of the gulf. The local name for this extraordinary cavern and gulf is Kirsty's Hole, from a tradition of ancient date, that a damsel, hight Christina, drowned herself here, like another Sappho, by leaping into its dark waters.



KIRSTY'S CAVE, PAPA STOUR.

Looking out from entrance to inner cave.  
From the original sepia drawing by Edward Charlton.



# DERIVATION OF SOME ORKNEY PLANT-NAMES

WITH REFERENCES FROM GLOSSARIES  
ETC., AND OTHER NAMES.

BY ALFRED WINTLE JOHNSTON.

The Plant-names are taken from *Flora Orcadensis*, 1914, by Magnus Spence, and from the Herbarium of the late Colonel Henry Halcro Johnston, C.B., C.B.E., D.L. of Orkney, M.D., D.Sc., F.L.S., etc., by whom the descriptions of the Orkney plants were written, but who did not have an opportunity of revising the proof-sheets.

(1) “Runshuk,” by M. Spence and H. H. Johnston, for Charlock (*Brassica arvensis*, Kuntz).

Glossaries: EDD Eng and Sc *runsh*, *runch*, (a) ‘wild mustard’ (*Sinapis arvensis*), (b) ‘white mustard’ (*S. alba*). CTCD *runch* ‘charlock, wild radish’; *runch-balls* ‘dried charlock.’ Cai *runchag* (JM), Sh *runchie*, *runshig* (RWT).

Other names for Charlock: OE *cerlic*. ON and Icel *akr-kál* (*Brassica campestris*). Norw *aaker-kaal*. Dan *ager-kaal* (*Sinapis arvensis*). Gael *cusag* ‘wild mustard’; *sgeallag*, id., from MÍr *scell* ‘a grain.’ Cai *sgoolag* (JM). Gael *marag-bhuidhe* (*S. arv.*); *praiseach-gharbh*, id.; *carran-buidhe*.

Derivation: Charlock, like scabious, was an antiscorbutic, a remedy for scurvy. Obs. ME *roynish* ‘mangy, scabby,’ *runnion* ‘a mangy, scabby person,’ from Fr *royne* ‘mange, scab, itch’; hence *roinish* > \**runish* > *runsh*, as the name of an antiscorbutic herb. Herbs are sometimes called by the name of the disease for which they are used as a cure, e.g. *stitch-wort*, a remedy for ‘stitch in the side,’ etc. *Runsh* is therefore der. from ME \**runish* from Fr *royne*. Ork *runshuk* is Eng *runsh* with Ork dim. *-uk*, *-ak* = Gael *-ag*. With the other Ork dim. *-ow*, *-o* cf. Sc *-ie*, Eng *-y*, ON *-i*, m., *-a*, f., in pet-names, and Gael *-aidh* pronounced as Sc *-ie*, Eng *-y*.

(2) “Reuth,” by M. Spence and H. H. Johnston, for the little black seeds of Spurrey (*Spergula sativa*, Bænn.), growing in agricultural land in Orkney as weeds among crops of oats, bere, turnips and potatoes.

Glossaries: EDD Sc *reuth* ‘wild mustard seed’ (*Sinapis arvensis*); also *reuthy-bread*, Ork (quoting Ellis *Pronun.* 1887), ‘bread from seeds of wild mustard.’ JJ *røda*, *røða*, *røþa* ‘weed-seeds among corn, seed of charlock,’

from ON *hroði*, 'offal.' HM *rue*, *ruithe*, 'small seeds of certain weeds among grain crops' e.g. wild mustard, corn-spurrey; *ruithy-girs* 'corn-spurrey,' der. ON *hroði*. In Sh corn-spurrey (*Spergula sativa* or *arvensis*) is called *meldie* (RWT); *meldi*, name of plant (*S. arv.*), also name of seed of chickweed or of *runchie* 'wild mustard' (JJ). Norw *melde* 'seed of weeds among corn,' also *melle*, *mell*. Norw *meldestokk*, *frøstokk* 'white goose-foot,' a weed among corn (*Chenopodium album*). Dan *melde*; Ger *melde* (*Atriplex*); OHG *malta*, *melda*; OE *melde*, *tūn-melde* 'orach' (*Atriplex hortensis*).

Derivation: Norw *ro*, *roe*, *ryd* 'small seeds of grass or of weeds among corn,' from ON *hroði* 'offal'; hence Norw *ro-trog* 'a fine sieve' also called *meldesaald*.

(3) "Smerrows," by M. Spence; "to find a four-partite clover leaf was considered a good omen. It was used as one of the most common Orcadian charms"; and "look for a 'smerrow' and put it in his boot till market was over, for then the 'cheap Johns' would not be able to cheat him." The common wild white clover in Orkney is *Trifolium repens*, Linn.

Glossaries: EDD *smere* (in north of England), also *smear*, from Norw dial. *smære* 'clover.' JJ *smōra* 'clover,' *smōragirs* 'thick luxuriant grass'; Norw *smære*, Icel *smári*. HM *smero* 'natural clover' (der. as above). In Orphir *smeraks* (AWJ). Cf. also Ork *smuiro* (HM, MS. note).

Other names for clover: EDD *curldoddy*, various species of clover, etc.; in Sh also called 'Johnsma's floers' in Sandwick; this name or, preferably, 'Johnsma's Pairs,' is applied through most of Sh to the *lesser plantain*. (RWT). OE *clāfer* (*Trifolium pratense*); *clāfer-wyrt* (*T. minus*); *hwitte-clāfer* 'white clover.' ON *kveisugras* (*T. fibrinum*) good for colic and *hysterica passio* (Grimm), from ON *kveisa* 'colic' etc. Cf. Ork *Wheisogirs* (HM, MS. note). Vigfusson, in Icel ED, explains this plant as *entiana* 'gentian' for which the Icel is *Máriu-vöndr*. Sw *våpling*, dial. *smäre* (Aasen). Gael *seamrag* 'shamrock'; *s.-bhán* 'white or Dutch clover' (*T. repens*); *s.-chapuill* 'red clover' (*T. pratense*); *s.-nam-buadh* and *-nan-each* 'four- or five-leaved clover'; (*-nam-buadh* 'of the virtues'; *-chapuill* and *-nan-each* 'of the horse').

Derivation: Norw *smære*, m., *smæra*, f., Icel *smári*. Cf. OE *smeoru* 'fat, butter,' in place-names applied to good grazing, e.g. Smardale (Ekwall).

(4) "Yule-girse," by M. Spence and H. H. Johnston, for the Meadow-sweet (*Spiræa Ulmaria*, Linn.).

Glossaries: ON *njóli* 'hollow stem of plant,' in *hvann-njóli* 'stem of angelica' } Norw *njole*, *jole* (Fritzner); *jul-gras* 'angelica' (Ross quoted by JJ). Norw *jöl* (for *njöl*) *Angelica sylvestris*; also *geit-jöl*, *julstut*, *kvannjöl*. HM *yule-girs* 'meadow-sweet' etc., Norw *jöl*, ON *jóll* and *jóli* (*Ny-Norsk Ety-mologisk Ordbog* by A. Torp, 1919). JJ *jöl-girs* 'meadow-sweet' etc. (*S. Ul.*), used formerly in Sh to dye 'vadmél' black and so called 'blackin' girs' or 'black-girs.'

Other names: Norw *stut*, *geitkvann*, *korsgras*=*mjødurt*, *sløkja*, (Sw dial. *sköke*), *skogstut*, etc.; *skvetta*, because the *njóli* 'hollow stem' was used as a *skvetta* 'squirt' by children; in Sh *switiks* or *water-spoons* (*A. syl.*), also applied

to other hollow-stemmed plants such as [common cow parsnip] *Heracleum sphondylium* etc. (RWT). JJ *swettek*, *switek*. OE *medu-wyrt* 'meadow-sweet.' Dan *mjødurt*. ON *hvönn*, pl. *hvannir* (*Angelica archangelica*) "found in north of Norway and in Færoes but not in Sh" (Ed Fl). ON *hvannjólí* for *hvannjólí* (Cod.) 'a stem of angelica,' from ON *njólí* 'a thick hollow plant-stalk' (Fritzner). Gael and Ir *contran* 'wild angelica,' *galluran* 'wood angelica' = *gal* + *flúran* (Macbain); Gael *gleòrann* 'wild angelica' (Macbain); *lus-nam-buadha* 'wood angelica' (*An. syl.*).

Derivation: Norw *njole*, *jole*, *jul-gras*, of which *jul* (*jol*) is a contraction of ON *njólí*, a short form of ON *hvannjólí*, *hvann-njólí*: *jul*, *jol* being used as the dial. word for the original ON *hvönn*. In ON periphrasis the name of a part can be used for that of the whole, so that *jól* = *njólí* = *hvann-njólí* = *hvönn* 'angelica.' *Girs* is OE *gærs*, *gers* > LSc *girse*; ON *gras*.

Note: In Icel ED *jóll* 'angelica' is an emendation of Lokasenna 3, *joll ok áfu* which it is suggested is in error for *jóll ok áfr* 'angelica and ale'; whereas ON *joll* 'noise, clamour' (cf. Sw *joller* 'chatter, idle talk'), and *áfu*, nom. *áfa* 'insulting, provocative talk' (Fritzner), is translated by Bray 'mockery and strife.' 'Angelica and ale' (spiced ale) was the opposite of Loki's recipe!

(5) "Bark," or "Hill-bark," by M. Spence and H. H. Johnston, for the rootstalk of the Tormentil (*Potentilla sylvestris*, Neck), boiled to make a decoction for curing diarrhoea, or a medium for tanning skins in Orkney.

Glossaries: JJ *bark* (Fær *börka*) 'root of tormentil' (*börkuvisa*) used in tanning skins and hides for sea-boots and clothes. HM *bark* 'tormentil' (*Potentilla erecta*, Hampe) generally called *hill-bark* etc. Ed Gl *earth-bark*; also in Orphir (AWJ). Sh *eart-bark*, root used (a) medicinally, (b) for tanning leather and (c) as a mordant in dyeing (RWT).

Other names for tormentil: Norw *blödrot*. Dan *tormentil* (*T. erecta*); *blodrod* 'septfoil, tormentil.' Gael *leamnacht*; Ir *neamhain*; Gael *cara-mhíl-a'-choin*, *braonan-fraoich*, etc. For bark of a tree and tan: Dan *bark*, Gael *cairt*.

Derivation: ON *börka*, gen. *barka*, 'bark of a tree, tan.' Norw *bork* id. With the meaning of 'tan' the term *bark* was used in Ork and Sh for the root of tormentil which was used for tanning.

(6) "Camavine flowers," by M. Spence for Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*, Linn.).

Derivation: EDD Sc and Eng *Camomine*, *Camovine*, etc., 'camomile' (*An. nob.*). The *v* sound is also found in Gael 'camomhail' (see below).

Other names: OE *mægþa*, m., 'maithen, may-weed' (*An. cotula*) stinking chamomile; *mægeþe*, *mageþe*, f., 'maythe, chamomile, ox-eye': in one ref. "wildre magpanwyrtruman (*Matricaria chamomilla*)"; *ge-scádwyrt* 'ox-eye'; *buoptalmon* [Gk *bouphthalmon* = *bous* 'ox,' *ophthalmos* 'eye'] 'ox-eye, chamomile,' *Anthemis nobilis*; "it has yellow blossoms all like an eye, whence it took its name." ON *Baldrsbrá* 'Balder's eye-brow' (i.e. the fringe of hair over the eye) described in Snorra Edda as: "allra grasa hvítast" 'the

whitest of all flowers'; in Icel ED described as *cotula foetida* [*Anthemis cotula* 'stinking chamomile' as identified by Grimm]; it is now generally identified as the ox-eye daisy, marguerite (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*). Norw *Balderbraa* 'wild feverfew' (*Pyrethrum inodorum*), also called *Barbraa*, *Barbraagull*, *Balderblom*, *Krageblom* (including *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* 'ox-eye daisy'), *skjæreblom*, *prestekrage*, *prestegull*, *munkekrone*, *blindeblom*, *blindekjuka* of which *kjuka* 'a clump' = *kokul*, *kokla*, *kongul*, *kogla*, *kokkelure* (also applied to a snail shell), which latter is the Sh name, detached from an original *blinde-see* below. Cf. OE *coccel* 'cockle, darnel, tares, zizania.' Dan *Baldersbraa* 'dog-gowan, may-weed' (*Matricaria inodora*), 'dog-fennel' (*Anthemis cotula*); *munkekrone*, *kamelblomst*, *Romerske kamilla* (*Anthemis nobilis*). Gael *camomhail*, *lus-nan-cam-bile*, *luibh-leighis* (*Anth. nob.*); the 'ox-eye' is *bréinean-brothach* and *neòinean mór* 'the big daisy' (cf. Sh *mikil kokkeluri* id.) in contradistinction to *neòinean* 'daisy,' Ir *nóinin* 'noon-flower' from *nòin* 'noon' (Macbain). RWT, Sh (1) wild chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*); (2) may-weed ['corn feverfew' Ed Fl] (*Mat. inodora*); (3) ox-eye daisy (*Chrys. leuc.*) rare in Sh: these three plants are usually called *muckle cockaloorie* [*mukil kokkeluri* JJ] to distinguish them from the *cockaloorie* [*piri kokkeluri* JJ] 'the common daisy' (*Bellis perennis*). *Matricaria* flowers are sometimes called "witchie-floors" in Sh. *Anthemis nobilis* is not found in Sh (RWT). Ed Fl also gives 'stinking chamomile' (*A. cotula*) in Sh. JJ identifies *piri* and *mukil kokkeluri* with the 'daisy' and 'oxeye daisy,' and the 'oxeye daisy' with ON *Baldersbrá*, but omits 'chamomile.'

The Sh *kokkeluri* = Norw *kokkelure* = *kokul* 'a clump' = *kjuka* in *Blindekjuka* 'Balder's eye-brow,' which is the probable deriv. of the Sh name: *blindekjuka* > Sh \**blinde-kokul*, -*kokkeluri* > Sh *kokkeluri*.

It will be noted that the OE, ON, Norw and Sh names include both chamomile and oxe-eye.

#### (7) "Grey bulwand," by Patrick Neill (1904), for Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*, Linn.).

Glossaries: Ed Gl and EDD (a) *bulwand*, a bulrush (*Typha latifolia*); (b) common mugwort of Ork and Sh (*Art. vulg.*). *Bulwand* is also applied in Orphir to the stalk and seeds of the dock (AWJ). HM *grey-bulwand* (*Art. vulg.*); *groby* 'common mugwort'; *bulwand*, (a) common dock (*Rumex*) chiefly applied to its tall stems, (b) common mugwort; in Rousay the latter is called *grey-bulwand*. HM deals with deriv. of *bul-*, *bu-* and the Sc *buneward* applied in Angus to the dock (*Rumex*).

Other names: OE *mucgwyrt* 'mugwort, muggon,' juices used as a cure for consumption (Grimm). Norw *burot*, *bugras*, *bu*, *graabu*, *buje*, *bujerot*, Dan *graa-bynke*, *bynke* (*A. vulg.*). Sw *gråbo* 'grey nest' (Grimm). Gael *an-liath-lus* [the grey herb], *gròban*, borrowed from Norw? RWT, Sh *grey bulwand* or *grey bulmint*; in South Mainland *bulmint* is applied to the flowering stem of the dock, though the leaves and indeed the whole plant is called "docken."

Derivation: Ork *bulwand* is probably borrowed from LSc, for which an Eng deriv. is to be sought. With *bul-*, *bu-* cf. Eng *bull-trout*, etc., OE *bulut* 'ragged robin or cuckoo-flower,' OE *bula* 'a bull' (preserved in place-names), *bulluc* 'bullock,' *bula* 'a stud, boss, brooch' (Ger *bulle*), *bulentse* 'a plant-name,' *buoptalmon*, 'ox-eye' etc.

#### (8) "Tirsics," in East Mainland, and "Tirsoos"

in West Mainland, by M. Spence; and "Tissick" in Orphir, by H. H. Johnston, all for the Marsh Ragwort (*Senecio aquaticus*, Hudson).

Glossaries: HM *tirso*, (a) marsh ragwort, (b) common dock (*Rumex*) applied to its tall stem mainly; *tirsick*, East Mainland for marsh ragwort, also *tusso* in Costa. AWJ, also heard as *tussok* in Orphir.

Other names: Cf. OE *sȳr*, *grundeswelge* 'groundsel' (*Senecio vulgaris*). Dan *brandbæger*, *korsurt*, id. Gael *cuisseag*, *buaghalon* 'ragwort' [lit. 'virtue bearing herb']. RWT, in Sh marsh ragwort is called 'horse-gowan,' and in some places 'wild tansy'; the name 'tirsic' is unknown in Sh.

Derivation: HM suggests a possible deriv. from ON *þurs*, *þuss* 'a giant, goblin,' etc., which is used in plant-names. One might also suggest ON *Týr*, gen. *Týs* and *Týrs*, the war-god who is commemorated in plant-names e.g. Icel *Týs*-, *Týrs-fjóla* 'viola Martis, marsh-violet' (F. Magnusen's Lex. 758-9, Grimm, 1193); Norw *Tyrihjelm* [ON \**Týrs-hjalmr*] (*Aconitum napellus*) 'monk's-hood, wolf's-bane,' also called in Eng 'helmet-flower,' a poisonous plant; Norw *Tys-bast*, *Ty-bast*, *Ty-vid -ved*; Sw *Tibast*; Helsing. dial. *Tis*, *Tis-bast* (*Daphne mezereum*) a poisonous plant (Grimm, 199, 1193, 1671). On the analogy of *Tis* for *Tis-bast*, the Ork *Tirs*, *Tiss* (without dim. ending) may be the remnant of a name such as \**Týrs-auga* (with reference to the flower, cf. Icel *kattar-auga* 'forget-me-not') > \**Tirs*-, \**Tiss*-, \**Tuss-aue* > Ork *Tiss-o*, -*ak*. But the Ork name is a solitary instance, and is probably a misapplication of an existing name such as Gael *tuirseach* 'the greater stitchwort' (*Stellaria holostea*) 'adder's-meat, moonflower, satinfover.' The same plant-names are frequently used for different herbs. Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), OE *grundeswelge*, was one of several herbs called *dolh*-, or *dolg-sealf* 'wound-salve,' including *weg-brædan sæd* 'seed of waybread' [= 'broad-way,' Grimm, 1214-15] the common plantain, and *gréne betonice* 'betony,' which were pounded and laid on the wound.

(9) "Cleg Thistle," the name given by Arthur W. Robertson, Stromness, to H. H. Johnston, for the Burdock (*Arctium nemorosum*, Lej.; but latterly changed to *Arctium vulgare*, Hill, subvariety *pycnocephalum*, Evans).

Other names: OE *foxes-clife* 'the greater burdock' (*Arctium lappa*); *smæle clife* 'small burdock, clivers' (*Galium aparine*). Dan *burre* (*A. lappa*). Norw *borre*, *klaategras*, *klengja* (*A. lappa*). Gael *seircean*, -*mór*, -*suirich*, *suirichean-suirich*, lit. 'foolish wooer' (*A. lappa*), *meachan-dogha*, etc. Ed Fl gives 'goosegrass or cleavers' (*Galium aparine*) in Sh. RWT states that burdock (*A. lappa*) is rather uncommon in Sh, but it is generally called 'bar-dog.'

Derivation: EDD s.v. *clag* and *thistle*; Sc, Ir, North Eng, *clag*, 'to stick' and *thistle*=*burdock*. Probably the 'sticking' as compared with the 'pricking' thistle. Cf. Norw *klengja* 'burdock,' from *klengja* 'to cling,' and Ork *cleg* from Sc *clag* 'to stick'.

(10) "Craw-shoe," recorded by M. Spence for Buck-bean or Bog-bean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*, Linn.).

Glossaries: HM *krasho* 'bog-bean' (*Menyanthes trifoliata*, Linn.). In Harray *trefoil* and *krasho* are both used for same plant. Evidently = 'crow-shoe.' In North Ronaldsay *trefole* (trefoil) is used for this plant.

Other names: OE *ram-gealla* 'ram-gall' (*M. trif.*). EDD *bog-bean*, *boag-bane*, *bog-hop*, *bog-trefoil*, also *buck-bean*. CTCD *buck-* and *bog-bean* 'marsh trefoil'; Flemish *bocken boonen* 'goat's beans.' Norw *bukke-blad*, *triblekkja*, etc. Icel *horblaðka*. Gael *tri-bhileach*, (a) common valerian, all-heal or St George's herb, (b) marsh-trefoil, bog-bean; *pònair-chapull* 'bog- or buck-beans, marsh trefoil' (*M. trif.*). In Sh *gulsa girse* or *jaundice-grass* (RWT); der. by JJ from ON *gulu-sótt* 'jaundice.'

Derivation: "craw-shoe" prob. local name. For 'shoe' cf Ger *Frauen-schühli* (*Trifolium melilotus*) whose flower resembles a shoe (Grimm, 1194).

(11) "Trowieglive," as named by Jessy Inkster, Midland, Orphir, to H. H. Johnston, for Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*, Linn.).

Glossaries: HM *traw-glove* 'foxglove' (*D. purp.*), Birsay. EDD *trowie-gloves* 'sponges.'

Other names: OE *foxes-glófa* 'foxglove.' Norw *fingerbølle* (thimble). Dan *rød-fingerbølle*. Gael *lus-nam-ban-sith* (herb of the female fairy); *meuran-a'-bhais* (thimble of death); E Ir *sion*. Welsh *ffuon*—all for foxglove. Known in Sh only as a garden flower and by its English name (RWT).

Derivation: Prob. of local origin. The ON would be *\*troll-glófi*. JJ *trowie* LSc form of Sh *trollet*, Norw *trollut* 'sickly,' etc. With which compare ON *þrái*, and *þrá* in *líkþrá* 'leprosy'; see also Grimm, 1153. 'Troll-glove' corresponds with Gael 'herb of the *bansith*.'

(12) "Dochen," by H. H. Johnston, for the Dock (species of *Rumex obtusifolius*, Linn., *R. crispus*, Linn., and *R. longifolius*, D.C., growing native in Orkney).

Glossaries: EDD Sc, Ir, N. Eng *docken* 'the dock.'

Other names: Dan *skræppe*. Gael *dogha*, *copag*, founded on Eng *cop* 'head' (Macbain). Ir *meacan-dogha*. See also (7) and (8).

Derivation: LSc *docken*, from OE *docce*.

(13) "Sūricks," by H. H. Johnston, in Orphir, for the Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*, Linn.).

Glossaries: EDD Sc, Ir, Ork and Sh *sourock* 'sorrel' (*R. acetosa* and *acetosella*). HM *sooro* 'sorrel, dock' (*R. acetosa*) in N. Isles; *soorick* in E. Mainland and Orphir.

Other names: OE *sūre* 'sorrel' (*R. acetosa*), *cýle-wyrt* 'sour-sorrel.' Icel *heimilis-njóli* (*R. acutus*, Hjalt.). Fær *hömilia*. Gael *sealbhag*, *biadh-eòinein* 'wood sorrel'; *seamrag* (a) 'shamrock', (b) 'wood-sorrel' (*Oxalis acetosella*); *sūrag*, id. (*sūr* is the Gael form of the Sc pronun. of *sour*); *puinneag*, *sabh*,

*glaoran* 'blossom of wood-sorrel' (*R. acetosella*). Dan *syre*, *skovsyre*, *gøgemad* (*Oxalis acetosella*).

Derivation: OE *sûre* 'sorrel,' or ON *súra*, Norw *sura*, *syra* 'sorrel,' with Ork dim. -*ak* and -*o*.

(14) "Warty-girse," by M. Spence, for the Sun-spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*, Linn.), "the white milky-like fluid in the hollow stem was applied to warts to remove them, hence the *local name*, 'warty-girse'." [But see below].

Glossaries: EDD Eng *wartgrass* (a) sun-spurge (*E. hel.*), (b) petty spurge (*E. peplus*).

Other names: Dan *vaarte*-, or *vorte-urt* 'wart wort,' *vorte-mælk* 'wolf's milk.' Gael *foinne-lus* 'spurge,' from Gael *foinne* 'a wart'; *spuirse* 'spurge, milk-weed' (*E. exigua* and *helioscopia*); *neòinean-puinnsean* 'sun-spurge' (Colonsay), lit. 'poison daisy.' There is no Sh name (RWT).

Derivation: Eng *wart-grass*; cf. OE *wearte* 'a wart' and *gærs* 'grass'; and *wen-wyrt* (name of plant not known) from *wenn* 'a wen'; *wen-sealf* 'a salve for wens.' OE *wen-wyrt* was of two kinds: *clufehte* 'bulbous,' and *cneóehhte* 'knotty.'

(15) "Blackberry," by H. H. Johnston, which, he thinks, is also called "Hillberry" in Orphir, for the fruit of the Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*, Linn.).

Other names: *Crowberry*, probably translation of Ger *krähenbeere*; in Yorkshire *crakeberry*, from Norw *krækiber*, Dan *krageber* (OED). Dan *sort krækling*. Gael *fiantag* 'the black heath-berry' (Macbain); *caora-feannaig* ['crow's berry'], *lus-na-feannaig* ['crow's herb']. Sh *hill-berry*; the plant is called *berry-hedder* and *berry-girse* (RWT).

Derivation: Prob. a local use of Eng *blackberry*, OE *blæc-berie*; cf. OE *hæþ-berige* 'heath-berry, bilberry.'

(16) "Rice," by M. Spence, for the larger species of native willows in Orkney. W. A. Irvine Fortescue told H. H. Johnston that he had heard the name "rice" for willows in Orkney, pronounced as *reece* in *Greece*.

Glossaries: HM *rice* (rais), brushwood chiefly of dwarf-willow growing along burns. ON *hris*, n., 'brushwood.' The Orkney island Risa represents an ON *hris-ey* 'brushwood island.' CTCD *rise* 'a twig, a small bush,' *risebush* 'a faggot,' *risel* 'a support for a climbing vine,' *risewood* 'small wood cut for hedging.'

Other names: OE *hris*. Ger *reis*. Gael and Ir *creathach* 'faded underwood firewood,' *spruan* 'brushwood.' There is no Sh name corresponding with *rice* (RWT).

Derivation: ON *hris*, Norw *rīs* 'brushwood, faggots.' OE *hris* occurs in Eng place-names, in one case in the dat. pl. Rysome OE *hrisum* (Ekwall).

(17) “Adam” and “Eve,” by H. H. Johnston, as called in Orphir, and in the Færoes in *Botany of the Færoes* (ed. by J. E. B. Warming, Copenhagen, 3 vols., 1901-8), for the two native species of the Marsh orchises, namely, “Adam,” the dark purple-flowered *Orchis latifolia*, Linn., as formerly named, but now called *Orchis purpurella*, T. & T. A. Stephenson, in Orkney; and [“Eve,”] the pale purple-flowered *Orchis maculata*, Linn., as formerly named, but now called *Orchis elodes*, Grisbech.

Glossary and Derivation: EDD *Adam and Eve*, applied in Eng to (a) *Aconitum napellus*, (b) *Arum maculatum*, cuckoo-pint, (c) *Orchis mascula*, (d) *Pulmonaria officinalis*.

Other names: Norw *Marihand* (*Orchis maculata*); *hugvending*, (‘change of mind from indifference to delight,’ applied to) *Orchis maculata*, which, in accordance with folklore, was used to awaken love; other forms: *hugvandel*, *hauvandel* (Gunnerus, cited by Aasen). Dan *horndrager* ‘orchis’; *gagsurt* ‘cuckoowort.’ Gael *dâ-dhuilleach* ‘tway-blade’ or any bifoliated herb; *moth-ùrach* ‘early orchis’ (*O. mascula*); *ùrach-bhallach* ‘spotted orchis’ (*O. maculata*). OE *hræfnes leác* ‘orchis’ (see also Grimm 1192). Ger *frauentrân* > *Marien-thrâne* ‘orchis mascula’ (Grimm 1194 treating of plant-names referable to goddesses and wise women now given to Mary who replaces the older *frouwa*—cf. Norw *Marihand* above). Sh the whole orchis family is called ‘curldoddie’ which has ousted the old name *baldeerie* or *buldeerie* (RWT). EDD *curl-doddy*, (a) the blue scabious (*Scabiosa succisa*) [in Ed Fl ‘devil’s-bit-scabious’], (b) the cones of a fir or pinetree, (c) curled cabbage (*Brassica oleracea*), (d) various species of clover, esp. *Trifolium medium* [Ed Fl ‘zigzag clover’], and *T. repens* [Ed Fl ‘white clover’]. The Sh *baldeerie* is probably \**balderi[an]*, from Dan Ger *bald[e]rian* “a corruption of *valeriana*, and has nothing to do with Baldr” (Grimm 1207-8). With regard to the aphrodisiac qualities of the orchis, RWT remarks that in Sh and “many parts of Britain the *waxing* tuber of *O. mascula* [cf. Norw. *O. maculata* supra] was used in the preparation of love philtres, and the *waning* tuber in the preparation of what, for want of a better term, might be called the *antidote* for that same.”

(18) “Swine-beads,” by M. Spence, for the grass *Arrhenatherum avenaceum*, Beauv, variety *bulbosum*, Presl.; “in Orkney it is named ‘swine-beads’ probably because pigs *ruttet* [OE *wrót* ‘a snout,’ *wrótan* ‘to turn up with the snout,’ now Eng *rout*, *root* ‘to turn up with the snout’ CTCD] them up and fed on them.”

Glossaries: In Ed Fl it is called ‘false oat.’ EDD *swinarnuts*, tuberous roots of tall oat-grass (*Avena elatior*). HM *swine-beads*, false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum tuberosum*, Gilib.); also in form *swine-butt* (Birsay); *butty* is prob. Norw. *butt*, m., a stump, log, stub, etc.; *bead* is the Eng word; both terms applied on account of the tuberous roots of the plant.



Other names: Cf. OE *eorþ-hnutu* 'earth-nut' (*Bunium flexuosum*); Eng *pig-* and *earth-nut*. Norw *jordnot*. Dan *jord-nød*. OE *slite* 'cyclamen' = sowbread, the tuberous roots of which are eaten by swine. Gael *culuran* 'swinebread, sowbread, cyclamen.' Welsh *cylor* 'earth-nuts.' Breton *coloren*, id. Sh *swine's murricks*; *murrick* an edible root; an earlier claimant of the name is the bulb of the 'vernal squill' (*Scilla verna*), and a later one the 'marsh woundwort' (*Stachys palustris*); *A. tuberosum* is the one most commonly so named. The grass, apart from the root, is often called *okrabung*. Naturally the name is shared by other thick-growing grasses of the false oat type—even *Holcus lanatus* (RWT). JJ *murrek* from ON *mura* 'goosegrass, silver-weed' (*Potentilla anserina*), cf. Ork *moors* (HM, MS note); *okrabung* from *akr* 'field' and Norw *bunk* a kind of grass esp. *Aira cæspitosa*; of the same deriv. as OE *beonet* 'bent' (AWJ, see "Punds" below).

(19) "Punds," by M. Spence; "called 'punds' in Orkney. Tethers and bridle-reins often wrought of long meadow grasses, as *Holcus lanatus*, Linn., says Mr. Pat. Neill," in 1804, with reference to the grass called Yorkshire fog.

Glossaries: EDD *pounce*, *puns*, *pones* 'long meadow grass' esp. the duffel-grass *Holcus lanatus* for making tethers and bridle-reins; *Yorkshire fog* described as meadow soft grass. AWJ *pund* is preserved in Sh *bung* (=Norw *bunk*, *punt*) in *okrabung*—see (18) above. HM *punds*, stout, coarse grass found growing in sandy links (*Elymus arenarius*, Linn.); cf. *fussy-punds*, Yorkshire fog. HM suggests *punds* cogn. with Eng *bents*, coming from ON *puntr*, *pundr*, m., a kind of grass, windle-straw.

Other names: Dan *hestegræs* 'soft grass' (*Holcus lanatus*). Cf. Gael *punnt*, *feur-a-phuint* 'couch grass'; *bru-chorcan*, *bruth-chorcan* 'stool bent, heath rush', said to be deriv. from *brú* 'a hind,' and *corc-an* 'oats,' "deer's oats" (Macbain); *freothainn* 'bent-grass' (Argyll); *mealbhan* 'sea bent' (Sutherland); *muran* 'sea bent,' from *muir* 'the sea,' Ir *muiraineach* 'bent grass'; Gael *meilearach* 'long seaside grass,' from ON *melr* 'bent' (Macbain); *bodan* 'cat's-tail grass, or timothy.' Sh 'pluff-grass' or 'Yorkshire fog' *Holcus lanatus* may be called *okrabung* (see (18) above) or even 'blue-girse' (which is, however, more generally applied to the 'tufted vetch'—*Vicia cracca*) and perhaps 'dog's corn' a name shared with 'tall oat-grass' (*Avena elatior*) and 'hair grass' (*Aira* or *Deschampsia cæspitosa*), etc. (RWT). With 'blue girse' cf. Norw *blaa-ryske* 'blue rush,' a kind of fine, tough hill-grass.

Derivation: Norw *bunt*, *punt*, *puntastraa*, *funt*, *bunk*, *bunke*, a kind of tough grass esp. *Aira cæspitosa*; cf. Icel *puntr*; Eng *bent*; OG *binuz*, *binz* (*Juncus*); also called *smele*, *smele-bunt*, *fræng*, *dagrap*, *aksegras* (Aasen s.v. *bunt*). OE *beonet* 'bent-grass' = OLG *binut*, OHG *binuz* (Ekwall). Icel *puntr*, *pundr*, m., 'a windle-straw' (*Phleum alpinum*, Hjalt.); *punt-hali*, m. (*Aira cæspitosa*, Hjalt.); *punt-strá* = *puntr*. In mod Icel *punt-hali* 'hair-grass'; *puntur*, m., 'rat's-tail, cat's-tail-grass.' *Aira cæspitosa* is included in OE *cassuc* 'hassock, hassock-grass, rushes, sedge or coarse grass,' also *Carex paniculata*.

(20) "Sinnagrass," by H. H. Johnston, in Sanday,

for Couch-grass (*Triticum repens*, Linn.), a very troublesome weed in cultivated land.

Glossaries: JJ (*sin* 'sinew'); *sinna*, *sinna-girs* 'long old tough grass among rocks on the coast.' RWT (description as JJ) specimens shewn to him have been seaside manna-grass (*Glyceria maritima*) and coastal red fescue (*Festuca rubra*, var. *litoralis*); in Sh *sinna* associated with rocky coasts. HM *sinna-girs* 'couch-grass' (*Agropyron repens*, Beauv), in Rousay, Sanday and almost anywhere.

Other names: OE *cwice* 'couch-grass.' Norw *kvika* (*Triticum repens*) Dan *kvikgræs*, *kvikhvede*, id. Mod. Icel *villi-hveiti*.

Derivation: ON (*sin*, n. and f., and *sina*, f., collectively for sinews, 'sinew-thread' i.e. cord made of sinew or muscular fibre); *sina*, f. (sinew' and) 'withered grass which has stood during winter.' Norw *sene-gras*, *sina*, f. id. also called *elja*, *daudelja*, *fjorold*, *forne*, *dausøne* for *daudsina*, etc.; *sinegras*, n., a kind of tough grass, prob. same as *sina*. Norw *sin*, f., 'sinew, muscular fibre' [used as a cord]. In Larsen's Dan-Eng Dictionary, s.v. *senegræs*, for the Danish meaning one is referred to *sandhjælme* 'marram, bent' (*Ammophila arenaria*) and *kvikgræs* 'couch-grass' (*Triticum repens*); and for the Norw meaning is given "bladder sedge" (*Carex vesicaria*). In Icel ED Vigfusson describes "*sin*, n., botan. (*Carex vesicaria*), Norse *sen-gras*, also called *Lap-skó*, from being used by the Lapps for ropes and cords." Whereas Fritzner describes *sin*, n., as 'sinews, sinew-thread' [Dan *sene-traad*] used by the Finns for binding purposes in boat-building. Dr. Jón Stefánsson writes: "Dan *sene-traad* 'sinew-thread' is thread made of sinews; and *Lap-skó* is a Lap shoe sewn with sinews." Vigfusson's and Larsen's descriptions of *sin*, n. and *senegræs* are obviously wrong, as is also Vigfusson's explanation of *Lap-skó*. *Sinna-girs* (ON *sina*) in Shetland still retains its ON meaning of 'long tough grass'; whereas in Orkney the term is now used in the Danish sense of 'couch-grass' (*Triticum* or *Agropyron repens*).

#### ABBREVIATIONS.

Cai, Caithness.

COD, *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, 1929.

CTCD, *Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary*, 1938.

Dan, Danish, A. Larsen, *Dansk-Norsk—Engelsk Ordbog*, 1897.

dim., diminutive.

EDD, J. Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary* (including LSc).

Ed Fl, T. Edmondston, *Flora of Shetland*, 2nd Ed., ed. by C. F. A. Saxby, 1903.

Ed Gl, T. Edmondston (cousin of preceding), *Etymological Glossary of the Shetland and Orkney Dialect*, 1866.

Ekwall, Eilert Ekwall, *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names*, 1936.

Eng, English.

Fær, Færoese.

Fr, French.

Gael, Gaelic, E. MacDonald & Co., *Faclair Gaidhlig*, 3 vols., 1902-1911. Revised edition, *The Illustrated Gaelic Dictionary*, by Edward Dwelly, 3 vols., 1918.

Ger, German.

Gk, Greek.

Grimm, J. Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, transl. 4 vols., 1882-1888.

HM, Hugh Marwick, *The Orkney Norn*, 1929.

Icel, Icel ED, *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1874, ed. by G. Vigfusson.

Ir, Irish.

JJ, Jakob Jakobsen, *Etymologisk Ordbog over det Norrøne Sprog på Shetland*.

JM, communicated by John Mowat of Glasgow.

LSc, Lowland Scots, or northern English dialect.

Macbain, A. Macbain, *An Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language*, 1911.

ME, Middle English.

MIr, Middle Irish.

Norw, Norwegian dialect, Ivar Aasen, *Norsk Ordbog*, 1873.

OE, Old English, Bosworth-Toller *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*, 1882, *Supplement*, 1921.

OHG, Old High German.

OLG, Old Low German.

ON, Old Norse, J. Fritzner, *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*, 3 vols., 1886-1896.

Ork, Orkney, Orcadian.

RWT, R. W. Tait (Sandwick, Sh) MS. notes.

Sc, Lowland Scots in EDD.

Sh, Shetland, Shetlandic.

## REVIEWS.

MERCHANT LAIRDS OF LONG AGO. BEING STUDIES OF ORKNEY LIFE AND CONDITIONS IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY. Edited by Hugh Marwick, O.B.E., D.Litt., with Introduction and Studies of Farming and Trading Conditions.

PART I.—TRAILL FAMILY LETTERS. *Kirkwall: W. R. Mackintosh, 1936; pp. 157, two full-page illustrations, 3s. (see short notice, p. 78 ante).*

PART II.—BEING STUDIES OF FARMING AND TRADING CONDITIONS IN ORKNEY IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY. *Kirkwall: W. R. Mackintosh, 1939; pp. 94, four full-page illustrations, 3s. There is a separate Index for each part.*

These two volumes, issued by *The Kirkwall Press*, "The Orcadian" Office, at the amazingly low price of three shillings each, are of considerable historical, commercial and agricultural interest, bringing to light records previously unpublished and unknown even by experts. They cover the period 1700-1733 in Orkney. The scope of the work is fairly described by the sub-titles: Traill Family Letters and Studies of Farming and Trading conditions in the early 18th century.

It was Dr. Marwick's good fortune to come into possession of a bundle of manuscripts which he describes as: "a vast mass of correspondence and legal documents . . . which, by reason of the light shed on Orkney conditions at the period, are literally invaluable." These could not have come into more competent hands, for his knowledge of the history of leading Orkney families, including the various branches of the Traills from one of whom the correspondence emanated, has enabled him to make effective use of the documents, both as editor and author; and interested readers are sure to acknowledge indebtedness for this his most recent effort, as well as for his historical and philological papers contributed to the *Proceedings* of the Orkney Antiquarian Society and other historical societies.

It is rather difficult to review a work of this nature on recognised lines; every page is packed with items dealing with such a great variety of topics which cannot be understood unless the reader of the review is given some description of the historical background. Available space being restricted it is out of the question to give a summary of the background here; readers must themselves refer to the work. They will find that Dr. Marwick's scholarly handling of his material has so arranged the various divisions of his subject and presented his explanations, comments and conclusions so skilfully that paragraph after paragraph will be followed as eagerly as those of a 'thriller' novel.

Part I consists exclusively of Traill family letters. These have special reference to the management of the larger landed estates in Orkney; and to Orkney exports and imports two hundred years ago, when Orkney vessels and vessels chartered at Leith and other ports carried Orkney oats, bere and other produce to Scandinavian and Dutch ports. Some of the ships were owned by merchant lairds and some of the owners sailed as skippers. They were men of skill and courage.

In his Introduction Dr. Marwick says: "Orkney merchant skippers in the 17th century had risks to run of which we have little conception to-day.

Apart from the ordinary perils of stormy and uncharted seas they were liable almost at any time to be captured and held to ransom by privateers who swarmed in the North Sea—particularly in time of war; and a skipper might see his whole fortune vanish in an hour. But if the risks were great, so were the profits alluring, and many substantial estates were acquired by shrewd and courageous men who were prepared to take the risks involved.”

It is the family of such a merchant laird and sea-captain who produced almost all the letters now published. Bergen was perhaps the principal port with which the Orkney ships traded. Dr. Marwick says it is easy to understand the specially close commercial link between Orkney and that city.

An account of the capture of Gibraltar by the Royal Navy in 1704 is given in one of the letters from a member of the crew of one of the ships.

In Part II the first portion consists of an excellent account of farming in those olden days—farm lands, crops, statistics of yield of grain for four consecutive years, 1684-1687, on a farm in Stronsay; farm workers, primitive implements used; peats and other fuel; barn work, animals; social and economic conditions; tenants and their obligations, etc.

Then follows an unusually interesting section relating to trade and traders. “For the continuance of the trade connection with Norway there were several patent and sufficient reasons. First of all there was the historic link. Then the language question can have presented few difficulties, for, as I have shown elsewhere [in the author’s *Orkney Norn*], Orcadians throughout the seventeenth century must have been largely bilingual . . . . Many Orcadians had settled in Norway for good; Bergen’s *Borgerbok* shows that in the course of the 17th century almost a hundred were enrolled as burgesses in that town alone.”

Accounts are also given of the merchant shipping; of the kind of lighthouse on the eastern and western coasts of the North Sea; leading vessels in Orkney; the system of bounties; details of particular voyages; and profits and losses. The appendices contain invoices showing the prices of commodities two hundred years ago and other trade statistics. There are good illustrations of the ancient weighing instruments of Orkney, the bismer and pundlar, which were also in use in Norway; an old Orkney plough, etc.

These two cheap and most interesting books are really unique, and by their preparation Dr. Marwick has earned the gratitude of everyone interested in Orkney and its literature.

JOHN MOONEY.

THE PLACE-NAMES OF SHETLAND. By Jakob Jakobsen. English translation.

Addenda to Review, p. 73 *ante*.

The following misprints of two phonetic characters obviously must have escaped notice in reading the proofs, as otherwise they would have been corrected, and not repeated, in the *Errata*.

Page VIII, line 7, seventh character: *ḡ*, has been *repeated* here and in the translation, in error for *ḡ*, the stronger form of *ḡ*. It occurs 14 times in pp. 45 and 46.

Page VIII, line 17: *ḡ* has been *repeated* here in error for *ḡ*. With 8 exceptions (*viz.* the 6th and 13th characters in line 21, p. VIII, and six cases in the *Appendix*) *ḡ* has been substituted for *ḡ* throughout the translation in at least 120 cases, including one in the *Appendix*, s.v. “Song.”

Most of these slips can be corrected without consulting the Danish text, thus:—

1. Where "g," in a place-name, is shewn as *ǰ* in the phonetic pronunciation, the latter should be altered to *ǰ*.

2. Similarly where "ng" is shewn as *ŋ*, *ŋg*, *ŋk*, they should be altered to *ŋ*, *ŋg*, *ŋk*. In the last line of the *Errata*, p. XII, and in line 11 up, p. VIII, alter *ŋ* to *g*.

3. Where "nk" is shewn as *ŋk*, alter it to *ŋk*; e.g. p. 69, line 16.

A. W. JOHNSTON.

THE ORKNEYINGA SAGA. A new translation with Introduction and Notes by Alexander Burt Taylor, D.Litt. (Edin.). *Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd*, 1938, demi 8vo., pp. xvii + 445, with nine illustrations and 3 maps. 25s. net., postages, inland 7d., abroad 1s. 1d.

A general review by G. Turville-Petre, is given in the *Saga-Book*, Vol. XII, to which the following notes on place-names, etc. form an appendix.

Nordal's suggestion that the Saga was compiled and edited by Icelanders is supported by the wrong forms of many place-names. In Scotland the Old Norse place-names are preserved best in their Gaelic forms which date from the period when ON. *á* was pronounced as Gaelic *á* (*ā*). In some cases ON. *o*, *ó*, > G. *a*, *ai*; e.g. ON. *ámót* > G. *amat*, *imait*; Port Askaig, in Isla, was Port Escock in 1695 (Martin) a place "full to overflowing with trees," (I. F. Grant: *Lordship of the Isles*), of which the last element is ON. *-skógr* > G. *-scaig*; Aberscross, was Abbirscro in 1518, of which the Gaelic form is now *Abarscaig*, ON. *\*ár-barðs-skógr*, 'river's bank's-wood.' The original form, Ascog, still survives in Bute (also Escock, in 1695) and in Cowal, opposite Tarbert.<sup>1</sup> In Gaelic ON. *skógr* > G. *scogh*, *scobh* as a first element, and to *-scaig*, *-sgaig* as a final element.

A similar change of *o* > *a* took place in Gaelic itself, e.g. Old Gaelic Scon is now Sgàin, of which the original G. form is preserved in the English form Scone. Old Celtic Inse *Orc* is now *Arcaibh* in Gaelic; and the Pentland Firth (ON. *Pétlandsfjörðr*) is G., an Caol *Arcach*. (Watson).

<sup>1</sup> The reviewer is indebted to Dr. Hugh Marwick for the suggestion that *-s(k)oc*, the last element in *Sibyrs(k)oc*, the form of *Skibberscross* in 1360, now Gaelic *Siobarscaig* (Watson), is ON. *skógr*. An examination of place-names in *-scaig* confirms this derivation. A remarkable corroboration is provided by Dune Alliscaig, G. *Dùn Alaisgaig*, in Easter Fearn. The Norse river-name *Ala* is suggested (NE, 313) by Sophus Bugge to be derived from Swedish, *al*, 'the alder tree,' and Fearn is from G. *fearna* 'the alder tree.' The Norse name is thus *\*Alu-skógr*, 'alder-burn clump.' The Norse river *Ala* also occurs in Alladale, G. *Aladal*, in Kincardine, Ross-shire. G. *Siobarscaig* is Norse *\*Sjo(u)-barðs-skógr*, from the river-name *Sjoa* which Bugge derives from a word meaning 'shining, bright,' probably = 'clear,' and so the name means 'clear-river's-bank's-clump,' and there is a 'birch-wood' there. The *\*Sjoa*, 'clear water,' and its twin river Black Water from the Norse river-name *Blakka*, 'unclear-water,' meet lower down before entering Loch Brora. *\*Sjoa* is now called Brora Water from the village Brora, G. *Brùra*, situated at the bridge of the old highroad on the seacoast, a Norse *rað* or *ra* (from ON *röð*, gen. *raðar*), which occurs frequently in Norse seacoast road-names, and suggests a Norse name *\*Brú-ra*, from the Norse river-name *Brúa*, 'bridge river,' and Norse *ra*, 'a seacoast road.' The usual derivation is *\*Brúar-á*, a later form of *Brúa*, in the same way as *Pjórsá* is a later form of *Pjóra* (see below).

The Saga gives: (1) Icel. Kálfadalr for ON. \**Kaladalr*, preserved in the G. form Caladal; (2) Þórsá for \**Þjórsá*, preserved in G. Inbhir Theòrsa; (3) Beruvík for \**Berguvík*, preserved in G. Bearghdal, at the mouth of which is \**Berguvík*; (4) Haugaheiðr for Haugs-eið, preserved in records, now Hoxa; (5) Steins-nes for \**Stein-nes*, preserved in the actual name Sten-ness; (6) Vágaland for Vágar, in Orkney, preserved in records of the identical name in Shetland, now Wās (map, Walls) in both Orkney and Shetland.

(1) Icel. Kálfadalr; G. Caladal=ON. \**Kaladalr*, 'cold dale,' from Icel., *kali*, m., gen. *kala*-; Norse, *kale*, m., 'cold'; it is a notoriously cold dale. Icel. Kálfadalsá should be ON. \**Kaladalsá*, 'cold-dale's burn,' (now called Calder Burn), which Dr. Taylor has identified with a modern channel at its northern end, called in Gaelic Alltan Ghuinne, 'Gunn's burn.' The Saga gives *Kalfadalsá* in error for \**Kalfadalsvatn* (see below).

The English forms of Caladal were Caldell in 1604 and 1683 and now Calder, of which the colloquial form was in 1797 (O.S.A.) and still is, Cathel= *Kaðel*, both for the place- and person-name (J. Mowat).<sup>1</sup>

Icel. Kálfadalr and ON. Kalfadalr would have been rendered in G. as Cálbha- and Calbha-dal, and the ON. becomes Kolvidale in Shetland. The G. form *Calbha*-, in the Hebrides, is for ON. *kalfa*-.

There is always the possibility of a Norse place-name being formed from an older Gaelic one, e.g. Kaladalr could be a Norse form of a Gaelic name in *cala*, 'a damp meadow,' Irish *caladh*=*srath*, 'meadow land or holm along banks of a river or loch, often swampy' (Joyce, quoted by Macbain). In the *Annals of Ulster* (Rolls Series), in 1336, is mentioned: "i caladh na cairrge," translated "at the strath of the rock." See below for der. from Gael. *Caladar*.

The saga is correct in stating that Kálfadalr (\**Kaladalr*) branched off from Þórsdalr (\**Þjórsdalr*), as it actually does at Halkirk, and extended to Forsie, ON. 'at Forsi.' Scotscalder, G. Caladal nan Gall, now Calder Mains, is on the north bank of Calder Burn, with North Calder to the N.E. on the Hill of Sour. 'Gall,' strangers, in Caladal nan Gall, is used either (1) in the sense of 'Lowlanders,' of which the English form 'Scots' would indicate that the place-name dates only from about the beginning of the sixteenth century when the Lowlanders, hitherto called 'Inglis' (English), G. Sasunnach, began to be called Scots; or otherwise (2) 'Gall' may have been used for 'stranger Gaels'; with which compare Galloway, (ON. Gaddgedlar), G. Gall Gàidhealaibh, 'stranger Gaels' (Watson), which is curtailed to 'Gall' in the case of Maol nan Gall, the Mull of Galloway. It is quite possible that Galwegians settled in Caladal nan Gall at an early period when the earls of Orkney were on friendly terms with them. At a later period Malcolm MacHeth, whose daughter

<sup>1</sup> The change to Calder was probably influenced by the name of William of Caldore (Cawdor, G. Caladair) who, in 1464, had land in Caithness. As early as 1538, Scotscaldel appears as Scotscalder in the Register of the Great Seal, but it still remained Skots Caldell in the MS. of the Valued Rent of Caithness in 1683. A similar change in Caithness, of -dal to ðal, in Caldell: Caðel, took place in Scouthal (pronounced *Skūðal*—*skū* for ON. *skógr*, as in Orkney and Shetland); it was Skowdale in 1527, now obsolete, an obvious English form of an obsolete G. \**Scoghdal* for ON. \**Skóg(u)dalr*, in which G. *ogh* is pronounced as *ow* in *how* and as *ou* in *house* in the case of Scourie, the English form of G. Scobhàirigh for ON. \**Skóg(u)erg*. In 1561, it was Scuddail, the English form of ON. \**Skóg(u)dalr*; in 1683, Skuthell, and now Scōuthal=*skūðal*. It is obvious that both Scourie and Scouthal are derived from a river-name \**skóga*, 'wood burn'; there is a long wood on the west bank of the burn of Scouthal.

married earl Haraldr Maddaðarson, was associated with Galloway. If Caladal nan Gall and Scots Caladal are independent translations of an original ON. \**Skota Kaladalr*, then the *Skotar*, Scots, or the *Gall*, strangers, may have hailed from any part of Scotland outside Caithness, and at any period during the Norse occupation.

The old forms of Scots calder and North Calder were in Scotch State records: 1538, Scottis and Norne Calder; and in 1644, Scottis and Northin Calder. Whereas in local county records, they were both called Caldell in 1604; and Skots and North Caldell, in 1683; and now Calder Mains, and North Calder. Hitherto 'Norne' has been assumed to be *Norn* = Norse, ON. *Norrænn*, whereas from its situation and later names, 'Northin' and 'North,' it is more likely to be from ON. *norðan*, '(the place) north of' Calder. There are thus, now, three names for Calder: (1) G. Caladal; (2) English or official name, Calder; and (3) the colloquial Cathel, a form *Ka(l)ðel* of the old form Caldell.

In 1797 (O.S.A., XIX, 1-3) Loch Calder was called (but not now), colloquially, Loch Cathel, and the name of the church of Halkirk (Icel. Hákirkja; G. Hàcraig; colloquially 'Haukrig,' which P. A. Munch derived from *Haukahrygg*)<sup>1</sup> is given as Teaumpul Harlogan, which stood on a rising ground called Tore Harlogan, i.e. G. \**Teampull* (*T*)harlogan and \**Törr* (*T*)harlogan, from the Pictish Saint's name Talorgan. A similar metathesis of *Talor-* to *Tarlo-* took place elsewhere in Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

It is assumed that Gaelic place-names and Gaelic forms of Norse place-names in Caithness were given by the Gaels in Caithness, called Katnesingar in the Saga, by whom they have been perpetuated; and that the term 'Gallaibh' for Caithness and its inhabitants (descriptive of the Norse ruling class 'strangers') originated with the Gaels outside Caithness.

(2) Icel. Þórsá, 'Thor's river': G. Inbhir Theòrsa = Icel. \**Þjórsá*, 'bull's river,' now Thurso, colloquially, Thirsa (D. Beaton). The Norwegian form is Tjura, pronounced Kjūra, from \**Þjóra*, 'bull river' (O. Rygh.). With 'bull river' compare Ptolemy's Tarvedūnum, 'bull fort,' which Watson has identified as Holborn Head (P.A. Munch's "Hoburnhead, probably *Hábjarnarhöfði* or *Hallbjarnarhöfði*"), the west headland of Thurso Bay, at the extreme point of which the *Inventory of Monuments* records an 'undoubted example' of a 'promontory fort.'

The various names for 'bull' are: ON. *þjórr*, No. dial. *tjor*, Dan. *tyr*, Swedish *tjur*; ON. *tarfr*, a poetic word in Snorra Edda, with which Fritzner compares Gaelic *tarbh* from which it is undoubtedly derived. Possibly ON. *Þjórsá*, "bull's river," is a translation of an old Gaelic \**Tarbhaidh* 'bull river,' on the analogy of the forms in 'Tarvie Burn' mentioned by Watson. In Gaelic place-names, the bull is associated with rivers, pools, water-falls, etc.

(3) Icel. Beruvík, at the mouth of Berriedale Water. The G. form of

<sup>1</sup> Munch neither mentions nor locates Hákirkja, 'high church: cathedral' of the Saga. The old forms since 1500 vary between Hakirk and Hakrik, of which the latter is apparently the English form of the Gaelic form Hàcraig. With G. *craig* for *kirk* compare G. *tarlo-* for *talor-*. Other Norse names in *kirk* were translated into Gaelic, such as Baile na h-eaglais, instead of \**Camas na h-eaglais*, Kirkwall, colloquial, Kirkwā, ON. Kirkju-vágr.

<sup>2</sup> A. Macbain: *Place-Names Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, 155, 161, Talorgan > Tarlogan. W. J. Watson: *Place-Names of Ross and Cromarty*, 33, 58, Tallarky > Tarlogie, G. Tàrlogaidh; Cilltalorgain > Kiltarlity, G. Cill-Taraghlain. J. M. Mackinlay: *Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland*, 213-214, Ceill-Tarraglan, in Skye.



Berriedale is Bearghdal=ON. *\*Bergudalr*, the dale of the river Berga, a Norse river-name derived by O. Rygh from *berg*, 'rock,'; in this case the 'berg' is "a tongue of rock projecting across the mouth of the Berriedale River" (*Inventory of Monuments*), on which are "the remains of Berriedale Castle." Hence *\*Berguvik*, not Beruvík of the Saga. Icelandic *vik* is used here in the sense of 'a small creek,' formed by the estuary.

p. 354. "There is no isthmus near Tarbatness." Gaelic *tairbeart*, 'cross bringing, portage; an isthmus, peninsula' (Macbain). This 'portage' was between the east coast of the peninsula and Port ma Cholmaig on the west side, near Tarbat Kirk, which locates the original *tairbeart* or portage. *Port*, on the west coast of Scotland, means a 'harbour,' and on the east coast, a 'ferry' (Watson). Here on the east coast, it indicates the ferry for 'portage' on Tarbat. The Gaelic names are: an Tairbeart, Tarbat, and Rudha Thairbeirt, Tarbat Ness. Similarly, in ON. *eið* is applied to a portage where there is no isthmus. (*Miscellany*, X, 18).

p. 380. *Unustaðir*. 'Ungesta,' Unst, is Jakobsen's Ongersta, Unst, which he does not explain. In 1628, Ungersta; 1716, Ungasta; Ord. Map, Ungirsta. The first element of this name corresponds with the Norwegian place-name Ungers-nes, which in 1452 was Aungulsnes, explained by K. Rygh and Sophus Bugge as derived from *ǫngull*, 'fish-hook,' descriptive of the form of the ness, and not from the man's name, Ǫngull. On this analogy Ungersta in Unst is ON. *\*Ǫnguls-staðir*, of which the first element is obviously the man's name, although the area on which the farm stands is a hook-formed semicircular projection on the slope of Housi Field, ON. *\*Húsafell*.

p. 168. 'Hjalta dróttin,' is translated 'Shetland's lord,' but should read, literally, 'Shetlanders' lord.' ON. Hjaltar, plural, 'Shetlanders,' shews that it was a tribal name. Inse C(h)at 'islands of the Cat tribe,' Shetland (Watson), G. Cataibh, now restricted to Sutherland. It was given a Norse form by the addition of *l*, *Chat-*, > *Hjalt-*, to represent Norse *hjalt* 'a hilt'; in the same way as Inse Orc, 'the islands of the boar tribe' Orkney, (Watson) > ON., Orkn-eyjar, with added *n* to give it a Norse form, *orkn*, 'a seal.' The original name was probably *\*Hjalt-eyjar*, with Hjaltland as the name of the Mainland, later extended to include the whole group. Jakobsen suggested that Hjaltland was originally the name of "the Westside" of the mainland. There is evidence on record that the *l* in *Hjalt-* was not pronounced, because the name was written *Shet*, *Hjet*-, etc. from circa 1289 to about 1500, when the *l* reappeared in writing (Munch, quoted by Jakobsen). The Gaelic form of the Norse name is Sealtainn, obviously a metathesis of *\*Seatlainn*, as the Gaelic form of English *-land* is *-lainn*, as in Sunderland, Islay, Gaelic, Sionar-lainn, etc. That the Cataibh continued in Shetland is proved by the survival of Celtic place-names, e.g. the best preserved examples of the Celtic river-name Clōta (from which the Clyde is derived, G. Cluaidh) are found in some seven place-names in Shetland called Clōdi and Clōði, and in the definite forms Clōdin, Clōðin. To take one example, Lang Clodi Wick on the west coast of North Roe, with a long stream, *\*Lang Clōda*, draining a number of lakes, including Lang Clodi Loch, into Lang Clodi Wick, where the water-fall is 300 feet high. This long stream has its source 1000 feet up on the slope of Ronas Hill (1475 ft.). The surface of the ground is bare rock, and consequently Hibbert dilates on the clean limpid water, a veritable Clōta, 'clean water river,' the meaning suggested by Ekwall. In three compound names the (English?) possessive case *s* is used, viz., Clodis Water, for *\*Clodu-vatn*, clear proof of a river *\*Cloda*, as is also Clodisdale in Bressay and in Wās (Walls), which correspond with Cludesdale, the form, in 1250, of Clydesdale (J. B. Johnston).

The Norwegian example of this derivation is the Norse river-name (H)ljóð (M. Olsen), and assumably the Viking lair, Ljóð-hús, on the Gotha River, and its namesake in the Hebrides, now Lewis; which latter was undoubtedly situated at Stornoway, on the River Creed, Gaelic, Gríde=ON., \*Grýta, a river with a stony bed and clean water, of which there are at least 50 examples in Norway. The River Creed was probably originally called G. \*Clódh, rendered in ON., as \*Hljóð, > Ljóð, as in Norway, and then changed to the equally appropriate but more popular \*Grýta. The Gaelic form of ON., Ljóð-hús, plural, in 1150, was Leódús, now Leòdhas, Lewis, or popularly, Leòdh's, Lews (Watson). The English example is Clyst, in Devon (Ekwall).

The following items have already been dealt with by the reviewer in the works cited.

p. 379. The same derivation and explanation of Orphir were given in 1902, *Saga-Book*, III, 192.

p. 368. An explanation of the 'gœðingar' as feoffees of the earldom boardlands was given in 1914, *Old-Lore Miscellany*, VII, 84; reprinted with additions in *Saga-Book*, IX, 372.

p. 387. An explanation of *plógsland* as the Norse rendering of the Scotch 'ploughland' (English, 'hide')=ON., øyrisland was given in 1931 in *Miscellany*, IX, 134, 138, 139, 237. In 1914, it had been previously suggested that *plógsland* might have been an extension of a MS. contraction *pgsland*, for *penningsland*; *Orkney and Shetland Records*, I, 282; the improbability of which is shewn in *Miscellany*, IX, 134.

p. 398. The derivation of Maeshow and How-Mae is given in *Miscellany*, X, 24.

p. 407. Sveinn was identified, for the first time, with 'Eoin (=Sean) mear' in the review of Nordal's text, 1916, in *Year-Book*, VI-XVI (in 1 vol., 1914-24), pp. 58-60, in which Gilla Odran was also identified with Malcolm MacHeth, (the Gillandrys of Wyntoun), in the same way as Maelduin MacAndrias (Makgillandrys, of Wyntoun) is called Maelduin Mac Gille Odran, in Tighernac—the only two instances of 'Gille Odran' on record. Odran was Columba's kinsman and follower and his name is preserved in place-names in Iona, Colonsay and Tiree (Watson).

p. 377. The chronology of the Magnus Sagas and the date of his death in 1116 (Annals), are given in *Miscellany*, X, 77, in which all the errors (mis-scripts) in dates have been explained and corrected.

pp. 206, 375 (*Dufnjall*) *firnare en bræðrungr ialla*, has been translated: "who was second cousin to the Earls," which should read: "who was a first agnatic cousin once removed of the earls"; i.e. Dufnjall was a great grandson, and the two earls were grandsons, in the *male line*, of earl Thorfinn. As there are numerous kinds of *cousins*, the saga-man explicitly states that Dufnjall was, in effect, the great grandson of earl Thorfinn, and not *firnari en halfbræðrungr sammæðra* the great grandson of Ingibjörg and King Malcolm III, which, of course, would have been a physical impossibility. See *Miscellany*, VII, 192; reprinted with amendments and a genealogical table in *Saga-Book*, IX, 405-408.

Dasent translated the above text, which is identical in the three Sagas, in the following three different ways, none of which is correct.

*Orkneyinga Saga*: "one step further off than the earls' brother's son," footnote: "that is he was their second cousin." 'brother's son' is a nephew and should have read 'fathers' brother's son,' and 'second cousin' should have read 'first agnatic cousin once removed.'

*Longer Magnus Saga*: "one degree further off than the earl's [should be, earls'] first [agnatic] cousin."

*Short Magnus Saga*: "the earl's [for earls'] first [agnatic] cousin once removed."

Damsay, *passim*. *Saga*: Damis-ey, Damins-ey; Dan. translation: Damnis-ø; from Old Celtic, \**Dam-innis*, 'ox island' (= Gaelic, *Innis nan damh*, 'island of the oxen'), which the Norse altered to \**Dam-innis-ey* > Damins-ey > Damsey. This corresponds with the Shetland Oxn-a, Icelandic, Öxn-ey, 'oxen island.' Both Damsey and Oxna were grazing islands. Celtic *innis* survives in Shetland in Ins-holm and the obsolete Innis-müg (Jakobsen). Cf. O.Ir., *Dam-innis*, 'ox island,' > *Damh-innis*, of which the English form is Davinish. This derivation was given by the reviewer in the *Scotsman* of 2nd and 5th July, 1921, see also the *Scotsman* of 25th June, 1921.

pp. 336, 406, 'to make for the woods' (*leiti a skoga*) is used, in its forensic sense: 'to seek refuge from justice.' Cf. Eng. 'take to the woods.'

A. W. JOHNSTON.

#### Bibliography.

*Norske Elvenavne*, (NE) by O. Rygh, with notes by Sophus Bugge, 1904, is cited for Norse river-names. Jakobsen does not quote it.

*Gamle Personnavne i Norske Stedsnavne*, by O. Rygh, edited by K. Rygh and Sophus Bugge, 1901, is cited for Qngull, pp. 286, 297, which apparently escaped Jakobsen's notice.

*Norsk Ordbog*, by Ivar Aasen, 1873, is cited for Norse dialect.

*The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names*, by Eilert Ekwall, 1936, is cited for English place-names.

Watson: W. J. Watson, *Place-names of Ross and Cromarty*, and *Celtic Place-names of Scotland* (CPNS).

Macbain: A. Macbain, *Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language*, 1911, etc.

Note. Professor Magnus Olsen writes: "*Ljóðhús* is a very difficult name. It is considerably widespread in Norway. See *Norske Gaardnavne*, VI, p. 117." If *Ljóð-hús* is der. from the Norse river-name *ljóð*, f., it should have been \**Ljóðar-hús*. The second element *-hús*, n., pl. 'houses,' is a fully equipped homestead, corresponding with, but of a higher grade than, the more numerous names in *-staðir* 'steads.' (Cf. M. Olsen: *Farms and Fanes*, p. 176). By the 12th cent. the name of the homestead was applied to the island. With regard to the river *Sjoa* he cites Bugge's long discussion in *Norske Gaardnavne*, IV, 2, p. 234. He calls attention to "The Norse alder-tree-river *Alra* (NE, 4), gen. *Alru* or *Qlru*, derived from ON. *qlr* 'alder-tree,' in which *r* is radical and not case-ending." With regard to the Norse river *Ala* (NE, 3), cited in footnote<sup>1</sup> *ante*, Rygh suggests the deriv. *ala*, 'to feed, nourish, pointing to an abundance of fish,' whereas Bugge (NE, 313) notes: "the Swedish lake-name *Alen* derived by Hellquist from the [Swedish] tree-name *al*, 'the alder-tree'."

Professor Eilert Ekwall writes: "I think your views of Shetland-Hjaltland and *Clodi* are sound. . . . In view of the Icel. *Kalfadalr* in the Saga, I should prefer to think that that was the genuine Norse name, and that the present Gaelic *Caladal* either represents, as you suggest alternatively, the earlier Gaelic name, or else, if that is phonetically possible, an alteration of Icel. *Kalfadalr*."

"*North Calder*, if *North* is from ON. *norðan*, as seems probable in view of the forms adduced, might be better explained as a name of the elliptical type, i.e. an ON. *Norðan Kal(f)adal* ' (the place) north of Calder.' This is a common type, of course, which Rygh exemplifies fully in his Introduction."

Phonetically "ON. *Kalf-ey* is always *Calbha* in Gaelic" (Watson, CPNS., 455). If *Kalfadalr* is a genuine name it could be explained as an adaptation of an old Gaelic name, on the analogy of Gael. *orc* > ON. *orkn*, etc. For example, the oldest form *Calder*, of 1538, is the Eng. form of the Gaelic river-name *Caladar*, occurring in the form *Kelder* as early as 1170 in England (Ekwall), derived from the old British *Caleto-dubron*, 'hard water' (Watson, CPNS., 456), or 'hard, violent' as suggested by Ekwall. This river-name is widespread throughout England, Wales and Scotland (see Watson and Ekwall). Professor Watson suggests (CPNS., 455) that Gaelic *Caladar* > Gael. *Caladal*, "final *l* of *Caladal* may therefore be modern, by assimilation." In this way possibly G. *Caladar* > ON. *Kalfadalr*, i.e. G. *cala-* > ON. *kalfa-*, and G. *-dar* > ON. *-dalr*, 'dale,' which it is. *Kalfadalr* is obsolete. *Calder* occurs 1538, 1644, and apparently survived along with *Caldel*, 1604, 1683, now obsolete; which overlapping sequence agrees with Watson's suggested *Caladar* > *Caladal*. So that OG. *Caladar* > Eng. *Calder*, and the later G. *Caladal* > Eng. *Caldel* (obsolete) > Eng. colloq: *Cathel* (*Ca(l)ðel*), which survives, and of which the earliest record is in 1797. The change from *-del* to *-thel* (*-ðel*) took place between 1561 and 1683 in the case of Sküddail: Sküthel.

The modern estate of Scotscalder (including Calder Mains and North Calder) was called: in 1538, Scottiscalder and Norne Calder; in 1604, *Caldel*; in 1644, Scottiscalder and Northin Calder; in 1683, Skotscaledel and North *Caldel*; and in 1771 and 1785, Scotscalder, also the 'estate of Cathel' including the 'Mill of Cathel,' i.e. the mill of Calder Mains (J. Mowat); which clearly proves that Scotscalder is identical with *Caldel* of 1604, and *Calder* of 1840 (N.S.A.), later called South Calder, and then Calder Mains, which is now broken up into small holdings (A. Innes). Bartholomew's reduced Ord. map has 'Scotscalder' for Calder Mains.

Calder and its mill are on the north bank of Calder Burn. North Calder is about 1½ miles N.E. of Calder. Scotscalder Railway Station takes its name from that of the estate which now includes Olgrinmore in which the station is situated, which is a mile north of the district of Calder.

Calder Burn, 8 to 10 feet broad, is the only overflow from Loch Calder, issuing from its east shore and running 2½ miles eastward to River Thurso, at a point a little above Halkirk (A. Innes), and is therefore in the basin of River Thurso.

*Kalfadalr* (\**Kaladalr*) of the Saga, 'geingr af Þorsdal,' branches off from *Þórsdalr* (\**Þjórsdalr*) at the outlet of Calder Burn into River Thurso, and extends 'upp um dalinn,' up the dale of Calder (\**Kaladalr*) to Loch Calder (\**Kaladals-vatn*).

Situated southward of Loch Calder is a small lake, Loch Olginney, which is ¾ mile long (ON. river-name \**Olga*, def. dat. *Olgunni*, 'deep channel river,' or alternatively \**Ulga*, 'tepid water'—Bugge, NE., 329—the lake is apparently fed by surface water), from which a burn (\**Olga*) runs ¼ mile to Loch Calder which is 2¼ miles long; the north end of which is about 1¼ miles from the south bank of Forss Water which forms the northern boundary of the dale.

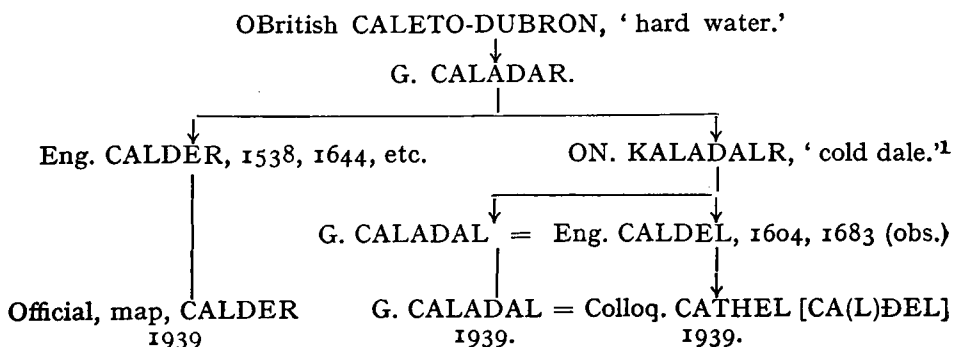
The track by which earls Ronald and Harald went from Thurso to Forsie was up along River Thurso to Calder Burn, then up the dale of Calder Burn to Loch Calder, and then northward along the east side of the loch to Forsie. Earl Harald went from Forsie to the fen which still stretches westward from

*The Bathymetrical Survey of Scotland, 1908*, describes Alltan Ghuinne as the overflow of Loch Calder into Forss Water, and accordingly places the loch in the basin of Forss Water.

The Ordnance Survey Department states that the source of Alltan Ghuinne is "a small marsh about ten chains north from the Loch side" and that a "mistake appears to have arisen in accepting a small drain, shown on the map running south-east from the marsh to the loch, as being part of the burn running north." Mr. A. Innes, of North Calder, also describes the place as above, and states that Alltan Ghuinne (known locally as Assery Burn) is "an artificial channel of which the borings for rock blasting can still be seen." Alltan Ghuinne is not shown on the N.S.A. map, 1840, and was probably made after that, and after the adjoining Loch Lieurary was drained dry for its marl shortly before 1840 (N.S.A.). It is, therefore, quite obvious that *Kalfadalsá* of the Saga is in error for *\*Kalfadalssvatn*, Loch Calder, which exactly answers the description in the Saga: the omission of any reference in the Saga to this important loch, along which the earls had to ride two miles on their way to Forsie, is striking, and appears to show that the compiler did not know the place and mistook a reference to the loch as intended for the burn, in his sources of information. The loch is noted for its size, depth (85 feet) and trout.

As *Kalfadalr* is a solitary instance, only occurring in the Saga in 1158, in connexion with a single incident, it is more likely to be one of the Saga's many errors, *Kal-fadalr* for *Kaladalr*, which latter is preserved and perpetuated in *G. Caladal*. ON. *Kaladalr*, 'cold dale' appears to be a better derivation than ON. *Kaludalr*, 'cold river's dale,' from the Norse river-name *Kala*, 'cold river.'

The following derivations appear to explain all the forms.



So that the original Gaelic *Caladar* has been preserved in its English form *Calder*, and the ON. derivative *Kaladalr* has been preserved in its Gaelic form *Caladal*, and in the colloquial English *Cathel*.

<sup>1</sup> Saga > KAL-F-ADALR, 'calves' dale,' in error.

## Loch Calder.

ON *ofan með Kaladal-sæ*, or < *Kaladals-sæ*.

Earl Harald and Thorbjorn walked from the south to the north side of the *fen*, at its eastern end, along Loch Calder, and then *ofan með Kalfadalsæ* 'down along Loch Calder' (there is a fall of 10½ feet to the mile from the *fen* down along the loch), where Thorbjorn fled to Assery and the earl continued his return journey *down the dale* along the eastern bank of the loch to Calder Burn, and then *down* by Calder Burn to \**Þjórsdalr*, just above Halkirk; he went down from the dale's *botn* 'at Forsi' to the dale's *minni* at \**Þjórsdalr*, down which he went to \**Þjórsá* by the same way as Ronald and he had come from Thurso to Forsie. ON *sær*, m., dat. *sævi*, but *sæ* in prose (Vigfusson) 'sea, also lake or inland sea' (Fritzner, O. Rygh, Aasen, M. Olsen: *Farms and Fanes*, p. 174). *Kalfadalsæ*, locative, may either be a shortened form of \**Kalfadals-sæ*, or otherwise the original form \**Kalfadal-sæ*, with which compare the Norwegian lake-name: Orm-sæ (Aasen). It was an apt and descriptive name for the important, large and deep Loch Calder. *Þórsá* (\**Þjórsá*) is the only river-name in -á mentioned in the Saga, and was so spelt until 1158 when it was written *Þórsæ*; hence *Kalfadalsæ* has been read as *Kalfadalsá*; but the -sæ reading is the only one which suits the case. This absolves the Sagaman from an otherwise inexplicable ignorance of the existence of the loch, and from an equally inexplicable misplacement of *Kalfadalsá* 'Calder Burn' at the north end of the loch instead of two miles further south at the SE end of the loch.

## Scotscalders.

Records in H.M. General Register House, Edinburgh. Mr. Henry M. Paton, Curator of Historical Records, gives the following references. Great Seal Register: Crown Charter (superiority title) to William [Keith], Earl Marischal, of Lands in Caithness, etc. including half of Scottis-caldar and mill, and half of Norne-caldar; there are later references to the same superiors and afterwards to the Earls of Caithness. Retours: 1644, George [Sinclair], Earl of Caithness served heir in the lands of Scottiscalders and Northincalders, etc. Inventory of Caithness charters (presented by A. W. Johnston): 1663, contract of wadset by George [Sinclair], Earl of Caithness to John Murray of Pennyland of the town and lands of Scots Cathell and mill, and the 18 pennyland [= an *eyris-land*] of Norncathell and mill, and commonty of both sides of the burn of Scotscathell [now Calder Burn], redeemable for 19375 merks 6s. 8d. [= £1,076 8s. 4d. stg.]; 1700, contract of sale by John [Campbell], Earl of Breadalban [who had acquired the earldom estate] and his son to Mr. Patrick Murray of Pennyland of the lands of South and North Cathells, of old called Scotscathell and Norn Cathell.

Mr. John Mowat suggests that Scotscalders was probably one of the estates quitclaimed for the slaughter of Bishop Adam in 1222. Mr. Mowat's apt suggestion is supported by the fact that the slayers were *bændr* and landowners, their necessary qualification as members of the *Thing* which was being held on the *fjall* above the bishop's house at Halkirk adjoining Calder on the day of the slaughter. The *fjall* was obviously *Törr* [T]harlogan, the rising ground on which S. Talorgan's Church, afterwards the *Hákkirkja* 'Cathedral,' was built, now the parish church, about 32 feet higher than and, therefore, *yfir* 'over or above' the adjoining site of the Bishop's Palace.

After the slaughter the King of Scots with an army marched into Caithness and punished the slayers by mutilation and by the forfeiture of their lands. That Scotsclader was one of the estates confiscated by the King of Scots is supported by the fact that his successor, in 1538, granted a Crown Charter of superiority, as noted above. These transactions may explain the Caithness-Gaelic alteration of the name from *Caladal* to *Caladal nan Gall* 'Calder of the strangers or Scots.' (See J. Dowden: *Bishops of Scotland*, p. 234, citing Acts Parl. i, 100; *Records of Caithness and Sutherland*, I, pp. 24-27; J. Anderson's note to *Orkneyinga Saga*, p. 201).

The reviewer is deeply indebted and grateful to the Director General of the Ordnance Survey; Mr. Henry M. Paton, Curator of the Historical Records, H.M. General Register House, Edinburgh; Mr. E. W. Lynam, Map Room, British Museum; Mr. John Mowat of Glasgow and Mr. Andrew Innes of North Calder.

#### The Earldom Estate of Caithness.

In Orkney the earldom estate was crown property held in fief of the king of Norway and could not be acquired by a female. Whereas, in Caithness the earldom estate was the private property of the earl who could, and did, dispose of it at pleasure; and when an earl died leaving a daughter only, she inherited half of the estate and the other half, with the earl's seat of government at Braal, went to his nearest heir-male, the succeeding earl.

The above-cited charter of 1538 was granted to the Earl Marischal and his wife Margaret Keith co-heiress of the northern half of the old earldom estate (including Akerhill, Scotsclader, Skaill etc. in Reay, Murkle, Thurso, Dunnet, Ratter, Brabstermyre, etc.) which she inherited, through the Keiths and Cheynes, from Johanna [daughter and] heiress of earl John. The Cheynes acquired Berriedale, etc. in 'South Caithness' from earl Malise in the 14th century. On the death of earl John, in 1231, Sutherland was detached from the earldom of Caithness and erected into an earldom which was conferred on William (son of Hugh Freskin) the first earl of Sutherland, whose nephew, Freskin of Duffus, afterwards married Johanna. The reduced earldom of Caithness consisted of the district north of a line stretching from the Ord, westward, to the south side of Eddrachillis; roughly, the present county of Caithness and the northern half of the present county of Sutherland which butts between Caithness and the west coast, including Strathnaver which was part of the earldom estate inherited by Johanna and which she gave to the church.

Earl John was the third son of earl Harald by his second wife; born ca. 1175, at the earliest; married ca. [1207, after his father's death]; his son Harald born ca. 1208, drowned 1226; his daughter [Johanna] born ca. 1209, taken as a hostage by the Scots king, in 1214, when she was about five years old; and ca. 1245, when she was 36 years old, she married (or was given in marriage by the Scots king to) Freskin of Duffus; he was born ca. 1225 and was about 16 years her junior—but he acquired the half of the earldom estate of Caithness with her. They left two co-heiresses. Johanna, the sole heiress of an earl (equivalent to a countess in her own right) was appropriately styled 'the noblewoman the lady Johanna.'

Earl John was succeeded in the title by his nearest heir-male [his grand-nephew] Malcolm, earl of Angus (son of Duncan, earl of Angus) who was styled 'earl of Angus and Caithness' in 1232. But, on the king of Norway creating

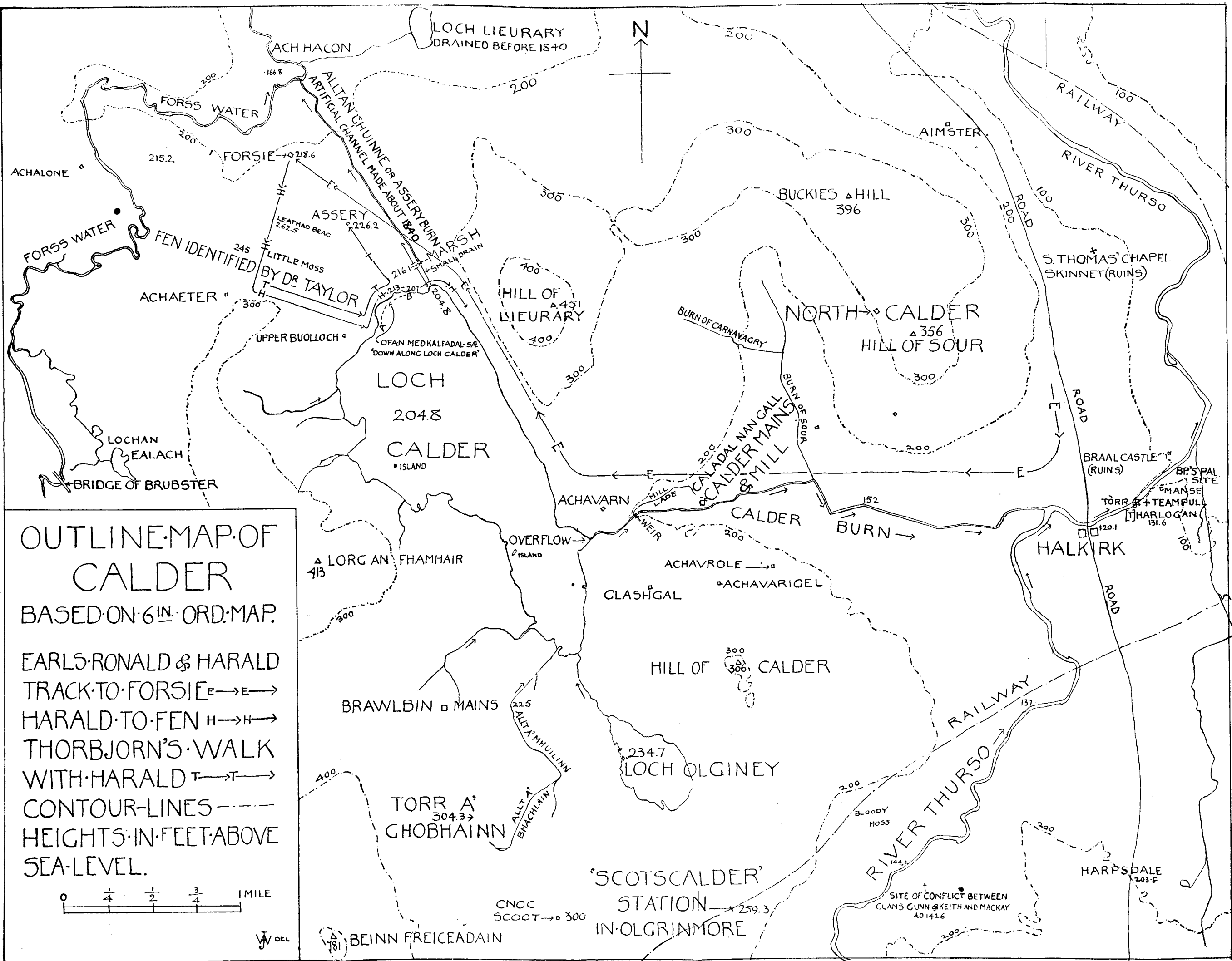
Malcolm's uncle, Magnus, earl of Orkney (obviously because it would not be in the interests of the Norse earldom of Orkney to be ruled by the absentee earl of the distant Scotch earldom of Angus), the Scotch crown (in pursuance of its policy in having unity of rule over Caithness and Orkney), at once created Magnus earl of Caithness as well, and granted him a crown charter, 1232-5, of the southern half of the earldom estate [together with the earl's seat of government at Braal (situated in the northern half of the earldom and appropriately adjoining the thing-stead and cathedral), which descended from him to earl Malise].

Duncan, earl of Angus and his younger brother Magnus II, earl of Orkney and Caithness, were sons of Gilchrist, earl of Angus. Duncan, who was at least of age in 1198, when he appears in charters, was born ca. 1177 at the latest; and his mother, then aged about 22, would have been born ca. 1155, so that she must have been earl John's eldest sister Helena, daughter of earl Harald by his first wife Afreka, daughter of Duncan, earl of Fife (d. 1154). Earl Harald married Afreka ca. 1152, when he, at the age of 18 went on a visit to his relatives in Scotland. By Afreka he had Heinrek, born ca. 1153, d.s.p.; Hakon, b. ca. 1154, killed along with Sveinn in 1171, aged 17 at most; Helena, b. ca. 1153 [m. ca. 1175, Gilchrist of Angus, b. ca. 1144]; and Margret, b. ca. 1156, who probably married ca. 1176, Olaf, *jarls-mágr* 'earl's relative-in-law,' who fell at Floruvøe in 1194. The grandchildren of earl Harald mentioned by Hoveden in 1196 [for 1198] may have been Olaf's sons.

Afreka, when she was divorced by Harald, ca. 1171, would return home to Fife with her daughter Helena who married Gilchrist, son of the earl of the adjoining earldom of Angus. Their eldest son Duncan was probably called after Afreka's father, and their second son Magnus was given the name of the patron saint of Orkney—the name of Harald, who had ignominiously divorced Afreka, or of one of his line, would naturally be banned.

The Erlend line of earls came to an end with the death of Harald ungi in 1198. The *last sole heir-male* of the line, Snækoll Gunnason, the instigator of the '9 wounds' slaughter of earl John, is last heard of in Norway in 1239, when he was arrested by the king's men as a rebel in the active service of the rebel duke Skuli, for which he probably paid the same penalty as his companions, after giving vent to a poetic lament, which may be one of the earliest recorded verses of a Caithnessman. With Snækoll, the line of Erlend became extinct so far as records are concerned.





VIKING CLUB  
FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LAW-THING.

Adopted by the Al-Thing  
April 13th, 1893.

(Partly printed in Saga-book, Vol. I, p. 10).

*Foundation of Club.* The Viking Club was founded as a Social and Literary Branch of 'The Orkney and Shetland Society' of London, at its Annual General Meeting held on May 5th, 1892, immediately after which the first General Meeting of the Club was held, when the following Council were elected, viz.: Honorary Secretary, Mr. Alfred W. Johnston; Honorary Treasurer, Mr. J. R. L. Corrigall; with Messrs. J. Corsie, W. Inkster, W. Muir, G. A. G. Robertson, J. B. Smith and J. F. Watters, Councillors.

*The Law-Book.* The second General Meeting was held on June 1st, 1892, when a set of laws prepared by the Council was considered and, after some slight amendment, approved of. The basis on which these laws were adopted was, at the time and also at a later meeting, explained by the Law-Man (Mr. A. W. Johnston), who stated that the Club was founded as a social and literary society in London for persons connected with or specially interested in Orkney or Shetland. In order to maintain and assert a distinctive local character and to keep up the traditions and recollections of the North, the names used for members, officials, meetings, etc., were borrowed, and the constitution in a measure copied, from the Old Norse government and institutions of these Islands. This, he (Mr. Johnston) submitted, would also tend to give some interest and spirit to an otherwise commonplace factor in ordinary Club life. The papers to be read would also

deal largely with Northern subjects. Orkney and Shetland were no mere Scotch counties, but had a distinct social and political history of their own. The Norwegian Jarldom of Orkney and Hjaltland had been founded in the ninth century and endowed with legislative and fiscal independence. The Sovereignty of these islands had been impignorated or pledged to Scotland in 1468 in security for part of the dowry of the Princess Margaret of Norway, afterwards the Queen of James the Third. They had never been redeemed. Their Home Rule, partially overturned in 1614, had lingered on till the end of the last century, when the Islands were finally absorbed in the Scottish Counties. The title "Viking Club" had been chosen as a short characteristic name, standing for both Orkney and Shetland, these islands having been one of the chief headquarters of the Vikings. The original Vikings had been those malcontents, who, on the union of the petty states of Norway under the kingship of Harold Harfagr in the ninth century, emigrated and settled in the wicks of Orkney and Shetland and kept up constant reprisals on the old country, until these islands themselves had, in their turn, been added to that kingdom and erected into a Norse Jarldom.

*The Thing-Book (List of Meetings and Papers).* With regard to the Thing-Book for the first session, the Law-Thing (Council) decided that it would be best to have combined, social and literary Things, until they saw their way to organise social entertainments and literary Things independently of each other. They also decided that the papers to be read should deal largely with Northern subjects, as well as with other matters of general interest, it being uncertain what would be best appreciated by the members.

In accordance with instructions received from the Law-Thing, the Law-Man procured contributions of papers, etc. and arranged the Thing-Book for the first

session, which was approved of by the Law-Thing. The following evening Things and Foys (concerts) have been held:

1892 Oct. 13th. Herst Foy (Harvest Home and Concert) Mrs. Jessie M. E. Saxby gave the inaugural address on 'Birds of Omen in Shetland,' followed by a social gathering.

Nov. 3rd. 'Some aspects of toleration in the closing years of the nineteenth century,' by Mr. Edward Blair. 'The Laws of the Viking Club,' by Mr. Alfred W. Johnston, Law-Man.

Nov. 17th. 'Norse tales and their Eastern analogues,' by Mr. W. A. Clouston.

Dec. 1st. 'Robert Browning,' by Mr. T. McKinnon Wood, B.A. (Lond.), Jarl.

Dec. 16th. Yule Foy, first Grand Concert.

The Yule Foy was solely got up, and the entire responsibility undertaken by Mr. John Ingram Moar, Lawrightman.

*Notices and Reports.* Notices and reports of meetings have been communicated by the Law-Man to the 'Academy' and to the newspapers in Orkney and Shetland.

*Publications.* The Law-Thing are about to issue, in pamphlet form, at one shilling to subscribers, Mrs. Saxby's inaugural address before the Club, on 'Birds of Omen in Shetland,' with notes by Mr. W. A. Clouston on the Raven and Owl in folklore generally.

*The Law-Thing and Officers.* The Law-Thing have added to their number the following members: Messrs. J. Romilly Allen, F.S.A.Scot., H. A. Moodie Heddle, J. Ingram Moar, W. Sinclair, Junr., Secretary of the Orkney and Shetland Society of London and J. T. Wilson. They have appointed the following officials: Rancelman (Honorary Auditor), Mr. G. A. G. Robertson, C.A.;

Umbothsman (Honorary Udal Secretary), Mr. J. T. Wilson, his duties being to attend to the election of udallers, issue club notices, etc., which matters were transferred from the office of Law-Man; Honorary Solicitor, Mr. J. Balfour Allen.

They have appointed some of their own number to act as a Hus-Thing or Committee of Management.

The following Councillors have resigned office:— Messrs. J. B. Smith and G. A. G. Robertson. The latter, however, remains as Rancelman.

The Law-Thing have elected Honorary Udallers.

They have elected some gentlemen, able to assist in promoting the objects of the Club, as Honorary Thingmen (Skatt-free Associates), allowing them to exercise the ordinary privileges of the Club, but not to vote on any matter affecting its constitution.

They have made provision for the appointment of District Umbothsmen (Local Secretaries).

*Thing-Stead (Meeting-place).* The Law-Thing are deeply indebted to the generous patriotism of the Rev. Alaxander Sandison, Vice-Jarl, and to the Deacons' Court of the King's Weigh House Chapel for the courteous and liberal way in which they have freely placed their rooms at the disposal of the Club for holding its meetings, so that no expenses have been incurred for rent of premises for a Thing-Stead (meeting-place), an item which otherwise the Club would not have had funds to meet, and which would have thereby greatly reduced the number of its meetings. *Skatt.* The half-crown Skatt was just sufficient to pay the ordinary working expenses for the first nominal year, i.e. virtually from October to December, 1892. There was, however, a balance of £4 odd on hand at 31st December, which was derived from a profit of £1 from the Herst Foy and special donations of one guinea from Mr. Alfred W. Johnston, Law-Man, and £2 from Mr. Samuel Laing of Crook, Honorary Udaller.

In order to raise sufficient funds for 1893, the Law-Thing enacted that all members voluntarily subscribing ten shillings and over should be Fouds or Stewards of the Club. This is already producing the desired result.

*Proposed Revision of the Constitution.* As already pointed out, the principle has been accepted that as a Club of Northmen we are met together in London to keep up the traditions and recollections of the Homeland, by social intercourse, and by the reading of papers and the holding of discussions dealing largely with Northern subjects. As was remarked, Orkney and Shetland are no mere Scottish Counties, but have a distinct social and political history and literature of their own apart from that of Scotland and most intimately connected with that of the other kindred Northern states and with Norway the Fatherland.

The study of the history of Orkney and Shetland therefore necessarily includes a general knowledge of the traditions of the North, and seeing that the Club has made a special feature of such a study of the history of these islands, the result has been, as was only natural where an integral portion of a distinct racial area is concerned, that a decided development has taken place on the lines of widening the basis of the Club to include a general examination of the literature of the whole North, its sagas and its 'grand mythological system.'

The Club, under its present Constitution as an avowed and limited Orkney and Shetland Society, ostensibly precludes the admission of students interested in Northern History in a general way. Even if these persons are eligible under the wide law of being 'specially interested in Orkney and Shetland'—a qualification which was added in order to augment what seemed to be an otherwise precarious membership—it must be admitted that the present government does not possess a sufficiently plain object which would appeal to those Northern students.

It is too obvious that by adhering to the present limited qualification of members the Club would never expect to become large enough to ensure its permanent and firm establishment with a workable income. For that reason and on account of the limited membership and consequent limited talents it could never hope to attain a position of any great public utility and credit in the world of literature in the role of a distinctively Northern Society such as it is now virtually becoming.

When it is considered that there is at present in London a much felt want of a Northern Literary Society and, moreover, that increasing interest is now being taken in the Sagas and Literature of the North, it appears that it only remains for this Club boldly to take the initiative by reconstructing its constitution to include all those interested in such studies in order to ensure its complete success as such an Association. Besides, the Club would only be admitting and associating in fellowship with themselves pre-eminently their own kith and kin in spirit if not in blood. The title 'Viking Club' seems somewhat prophetic in that it is especially appropriate to such an extension.

The identity of the Orkney and Shetland members would not be thereby eclipsed, because the membership of the enlarged society, judged by other such associations, would never be likely to increase to such an extent as to swamp the original promoters. But even if such took place, it must be remembered that the Club would nevertheless be one in brotherhood and sympathy.

The Law-Thing therefore propose that such a change should take place in the constitution of the Club, and for that purpose they now bring forward a set of new laws to take the place of the old Law-Book, which, as it stands, was designed as a temporary and elastic scheme for the building up and free development of the Club during its first uncertain efforts.

In laying these proposed laws before the Annual General Meeting, the Law-Thing would point out that they propose that social entertainments should be held independently of the literary meetings, and that the former should include music, recitations, readings, short papers by the younger members, and other kindred entertainments, while the literary meetings should be set apart solely for papers and discussions on Northern subjects. There would be two optional subscriptions:—one admitting to all the ordinary privileges of the Club and another giving right, in addition to the above, to the usual yearly publications.

The proposed constitution provides for the appointment of District Secretaries, who, amongst other matters, would have to collect the folklore of their localities and report the same to the Club. With regard to this office, the Law-Thing have in view a general collection of the folklore of Orkney and Shetland by means of such secretaries being appointed in parishes or other convenient districts, so that what remnants are left of these fast dying customs and old world beliefs may still be rescued from oblivion and permanently preserved as a valuable contribution to the science of folklore.

*Proposed Viking Union.* In the event of the New Constitution being adopted, the Law-Thing would recommend that steps should be taken at an early date to consider the feasibility of a scheme, which had been proposed by Mr. A. W. Johnston as far back as 1886,\* for

\* In 1886 Mr. A. W. Johnston founded the Udal League (afterwards the Udal Rights Association) the first object of which was Viking research, and incidentally, the rectification of certain anomalies which arose after the acquisition in 1468 by Scotland, of the Norse Earldom of Orkney. After these anomalies were brought under public notice by petitions from the inhabitants and memorials from the public authorities of Orkney and Shetland, and in the press, the Association was wound up in 1892 on the foundation of the Viking Club, the object of which was also Viking research.

Bibliography: A. W. Johnston, *Westminster Review*, September, 1887 'The Peasant Nobility of Orkney and Shetland' (delete 'sheriff-substitute of Orkney,' p. 692, l. 16): *Law Magazine and Review*, August, 1888: *ibid.*,



the union of all Orkney and Shetland and Northern Societies throughout the world. The Law-Thing are of opinion that the Viking Club, situated as it is in London, would best form the nucleus of such a grand union of Northmen.

*Concluding Remarks.* In conclusion, the Law-Thing would record their firm conviction that the extension of the basis of the Club in the way proposed would by no means result in its becoming a purely historical and antiquarian society, but rather, by the increase in membership and its consequent firm and permanent establishment, together with the good fellowship which is so thoroughly characteristic of the North, it would thereby most assuredly tend to add energy and spirit to the distinctively social element in the Club.

Adopted by the Al-Thing

13th April, 1893.

Alfred W. Johnston

A. W. Johnston.

Law-Man.

*Note.* The reorganisation of the Club on the lines of this Report was considered at this and several succeeding meetings, and the new constitution was finally adopted at a special Al-Thing held on November 9th, 1893, the Club in the interim having been carried on on its old basis.

February, 1889 (including *Memorial* in the petition to the Secretary for Scotland): David Balfour—'Oppressions of the sixteenth century in the islands of Orkney and Zetland,' 1859. This work was the sole inspiration and *raison d'être* of the above articles.

## VIKING SOCIETY.

Executive Officers, 1892-1943.

*Hon. Presidents.* 1892, Dr. John Rae (the Arctic explorer); 1893, Mr. Samuel Laing; 1898, Prof. Sophus Bugge; 1902, Mr. Gilbert Goudie; 1903, Dr. Hans Hildebrand; 1908, Prof. Sophus Müller; 1913, Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal (*Patron*).

*Presidents.* 1892, Mr. T. McKinnon Wood; 1893, Prof. W. Watson Cheyne; 1895, Rev. A. Sandison; 1898, Dr. Karl Blind; 1899, Mr. Eiríkr Magnusson; 1902, Mr. G. M. Atkinson; 1903, Dr. J. G. Garson; 1905, Mr. W. G. Collingwood; 1907, Prof. W. P. Ker; 1909, Prof. I. Gollancz; 1910, Mr. W. F. Kirby; 1912, Mr. A. W. Johnston; 1914, Mr. J. Gray; 1917 (Silver year), Mr. A. W. Johnston, founder; 1919, Sir Henry Howorth; 1923, Mr. G. A. Hight; 1924, Prof. R. W. Chambers; 1926, Miss N. Smith-Dampier; 1929 Mr. J. Farquharson Sharp; 1932, Dr. A. H. Smith; 1934, Mr. A. Rugg-Gunn; 1936, Mr. G. N. Garmonsway; 1937, Miss E. S. Olszewska; 1938, Prof. Bruce Dickins; 1939, Miss Dorothy Whitelock; 1941 (Jubilee year), Mr. A. W. Johnston, founder; 1942 and for the duration of the War, Mr. G. Turville-Petre.

*Viking Skald.* 1895, Mr. William Morris; 1898, Mr. A. F. Major.

*Chairman of Council.* 1894-1908, Mr. A. W. Johnston. (The President is now Chairman of Council).

*Hon. Editor of Saga-Book.* 1894, Mr. J. Romilly Allen; 1895, Mr. F. T. Norris; 1905, Mr. F. T. Norris and Mr. A. F. Major; 1907, Mr. A. F. Major; 1909, Miss C. M. E. Pochin and Mrs. M. M. Banks; 1910, Mrs. A. W. Johnston (née Leslie); 1913, Prof. Allen Mawer; 1914, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Johnston; 1939, Miss E. S. Olszewska; 1940, Miss Dorothy Whitelock and Mr. G. Turville-Petre.

*Hon. Editor of Old-Lore Series.* 1908, Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Johnston; 1926, Mr. A. W. Johnston.

*Hon. Treasurer.* 1892, Mr. J. R. L. Corrigan; 1894, Mr. V. D'O. Wintle; 1895, Mr. E. M. Warburg; 1902, Mr. A. W. Johnston; 1907, Mr. A. Shaw Mellor; 1917, Mr. W. R.-L. Lowe; 1924, Mr. J. J. Dodgshon; 1926, Mr. N. O. M. Cameron; 1929, Mr. E. M. Lynam; 1936, Com. F. N. Stagg, R.N.; 1936, and for the duration of the War, Mr. Leonard C. Wharton.

*Hon. Secretary.* 1892, Mr. A. W. Johnston; 1894, Mr. A. F. Major; 1905, Miss A. Leslie (afterwards Mrs. A. W. Johnston); 1926, Mr. A. W. Johnston; 1928, Mr. & Mrs. A. W. Johnston (née Dodds); 1930, Mr. A. W. Johnston; 1941, Mr. G. Turville-Petre; 1942, and for the duration of the War, Mr. A. W. Johnston.

*Convener.* 1892, Mr. J. T. Wilson; 1893, Mr. A. W. Johnston; 1894, Mr. J. B. Struthers; 1898, Mr. A. Knox; 1899, Miss A. Leslie. (Now merged with Hon. Sec.).

*Hon. Librarian.* 1902, Mr. A. W. Johnston until the Library was housed in Westfield College, and thereafter removed to University College, when Mr. John Wilks became Hon. Librarian.

*Hon. Solicitor.* 1892, Mr. J. Balfour Allan; 1909, Mr. T. Davies Jones; 1904, England and Wales, Mr. T. Davies Jones; Orkney, Mr. W. J. Heddle; Shetland, Mr. John Small.

## STEWART FAMILY RECORD.

Neil Stewart of Botuarnie and Tulloch in Glen Lochy, afterwards of Edravinoch in Glendochart, great-grandfather of General Stewart, married, first, Jean, daughter of William Stewart, of Drumchary, in Fortingall, Athole. Issue:—John (who succeeded him), Donald, who resided in Caithness.

In an invasion by Ian Glass, the first earl of Breadalbane, against the Sinclairs of Caithness, in 1680, Neil was in command of the western division of the Breadalbane men; and at the battle of Allt-nam-meirleach, near Wick, where the Sinclairs were defeated and many of them slain, he fought with such prowess, at Ian's right hand that it became a legend. The sword carried by Neil on this occasion is still intimately associated with the same division of the Breadalbane Highlanders and worn by one of their descendants at their parades.

Neil Stewart being a person possessed of considerable property, gave his son Donald a liberal education for those times. Donald was a good classical scholar but much more famous for his strength and valour. In his youth he was celebrated as a famous wielder of that terrible weapon the two-handed sword.

In 1745 Donald<sup>1</sup> who at this period acted as principal factor for Lady Janet Sinclair, mother of the distinguished Sir John Sinclair warmly espoused the cause of Prince Charles Edward.

Having raised with Sinclair of Scotscalder and Sinclair of Southdun a body of 300 men, they hastened to join their prince, but while on the march, Culloden was fought and lost. This contingent from Caithness got as far as

<sup>1</sup> Donald married Elizabeth Horne.

the Little Ferry, in Sutherlandshire, and joined the Earl of Cromarty and his son Lord Macleod with their party. They were suddenly attacked by the Mackays and the Earl of Sutherland's Militia and repulsed. The Earl and his son several officers and 153 private men were taken prisoners and landed at Inverness, and the Earl of Cromarty was executed in London. Donald succeeded in returning to his native county, a broken and proscribed man and to find everything belonging to him forfeited to the Crown, and he was hunted for three years from glen to mountain.

Donald used to relate when George Sinclair and his wife, Lady Janet, parents of the celebrated Sir John Sinclair, were upset from a coble, while crossing the river of Thurso in a flood, he plunged into the torrent and rescued both.

An Act of Indemnity was passed in June, 1747, granting a pardon, with certain exceptions, to all persons who had been engaged in the rebellion, when Donald returned home.

Donald Stewart died at Downreay, where his eldest son William lived, at the advanced age of 93. He left several sons and one daughter, the ancestress of the Ryries. He was buried at Halkirk, in the family ground. The stone over the grave is thus inscribed:—" This Stone is erected by Lieut.-Colonel Stewart, of H.M. 3rd Regiment of Foot, or Buffs, in memory of his relation, viz., his grandfather Donald Stewart, who died in April, 1793, aged 93 years; also his uncle, Neil Stewart, of Carsgoe, who died in May, 1782, aged 40 years."

Donald's son William married Anne Gunn, was the father of William and John, born at " Strath," Caithnessshire.

William Stewart was born in 1769, entered the service as ensign, by purchase in the 101st Regiment, in 1794 and the following year was promoted to a lieutenancy.

Later he was transferred to the Buffs and remained with that regiment for 35 years.

He saw service in the West Indies under Sir Ralph Abercromby; under Lord Cathcart in Hanover; under Wellington in Spain, where he fought at Busaco, Albuera, and other battles during the Peninsular War.

He commanded the 1st Battalion of his Regiment, in 1814, then serving in Quebec and upon their return, joined the army of occupation in Paris for three years.

In about 1822 Lt.-Col. Stewart embarked with his regiment for New South Wales. He was appointed Lt.-Governor of that colony, which office he held for two years and full governor between the departure of Sir Thomas Brisbane and arrival of Sir Ralph Darling.

During this period he organised an efficient and well disciplined body of men, now called the Mounted Police, better known at that time as Stewart's Police.

In 1827 Colonel Stewart proceeded with his regiment to India and was soon after appointed to the command of a Brigade in the Presidency of Bengal where he was Commandant of Meerut.

In 1830 he received the Brevet of Major General, when he retired to New South Wales to reside on his property near Bathurst.

Major General William Stewart died at Bathurst in 1854 at the age of 85 years. He was survived by his widow (née Anne Sylvia Wolfe, second cousin of General Wolfe of Quebec) and a son James Horne Stewart, and three daughters, named Caroline, Letitia and Eliza.

James Horne Stewart inherited the family estates in Bathurst, N.S.W. He married Harriet Eliza Boyce, daughter of the Rev. William Boyce of Sydney and had issue of three sons, Athol William Wolfe, Albyn Athol, Morven Athol, and two daughters, Anne Athol, who married Dr. Rivers Pollock, of London, and later at his death, Dr. Cecil Hughes of London, and Roslyn Athol, who married Dr. Sydney Jamieson of Sydney.

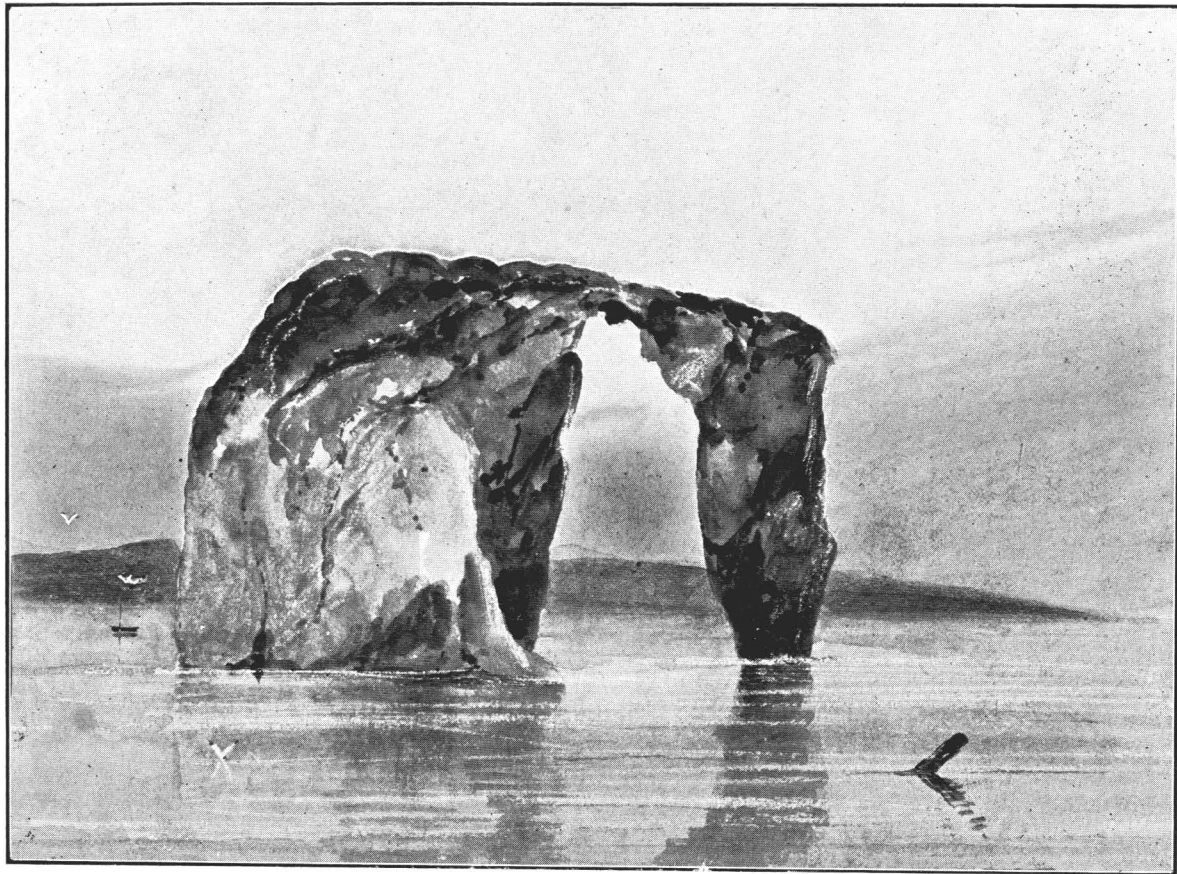
James Horne Stewart died at his home "The Mount," Bathurst, N.S.W., 1919, at the age of 94, when his son Athol Stewart succeeded to the family estates in Bathurst.

His daughter Mrs. Sydney Jamieson retains as her country home the original homestead of "Strath" built near Bathurst by General William Stewart, in 1825.

Her son Stewart Wolfe Jamieson is a life member of the Stewart Society. His aunt, Mrs. Cecil Hughes of London is also a member of the Stewart Society.

Extract copied from family records by Roslyn Athol Jamieson, "Strath," Bathurst, New South Wales, January 30th, 1937. Communicated by Mrs. F. Murray Buttrose, Lyceum Club, Adelaide.

NOTE: Botuarnie is now spelt Bothtuarney.



DOREHOLM, NORTHMAVINE, SHETLAND.

From the original water-colour drawing by George Richardson, in Dr. Edward Charlton's *Visit to Shetland* in 1832.

Compare illustration of Virdibreck, facing p. 1, *supra*.



# JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION TO SHETLAND IN 1834.

BY EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D.

EDITED BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

## VIII.

(*Concluded from p. 162*).

Saturday, June 28th (*continued*). As we were returning from one of these gioes, which we had entered in search of seals, we chanced, at a sudden sharp corner of the rock, to come upon an eider-duck so closely that we raised our oars to fell it, and it would certainly have fallen either to these weapons or to our guns, had not our boat at that moment run upon a “baa”<sup>1</sup> or sunken rock, over which though quite still before, [the sea] broke with tremendous fury, as our frail boat passed over it. In an instant all was confusion, but Mr. Henderson’s presence of mind saved us from a thorough wetting if not from greater danger, as he watched his opportunity and pushed off the boat into smooth water. When we had got clear of this perilous spot, our skipper shook his head and observing that this was a dangerous [place], he steered away for the Horn of Papa.<sup>2</sup> This remarkable rock is visible at a great distance from the sea, we had seen it on our voyage from Foulah, and were now gratified by sailing under the magnificent archway. One pillar of the arch stands boldly out into the Atlantic, while on the other side it abuts against the land, at the height of at least one

<sup>1</sup> ON. *boði* ‘breakers on a shoal; a sunken rock.’ Colloquially a sunken rock is called *bā*, while the sea breaking over it is called *bod*. (Jakobsen).

<sup>2</sup> ON. *horn* ‘a horn, a corner,’ de Horn o’ Papa, a point of land projecting from a steep coast. *Horn* is a northern anglicised form as ON. *rn* has changed in Shetland Norn to *n*, *nn*, *nj*, hence de easter and de wester Hond in Unst. (Jakobsen).

hundred feet from the surface of the water. In the neighbourhood of The Horn the whole coast appears to be undermined, the ground rings hollow beneath your feet, and far inland you come suddenly upon some pit or gulf at the bottom of which you can see tiny waves rippling on the sand, or you disturb some idle seal who has been basking quietly in the noonday sun and imagined himself safe from all danger in this sequestered spot.

Every year some portion of the soil is carried away by these insidious approaches of the ocean, the claystone cliffs give way before the waves and the hollowed ground bursts at length during some violent gale with a noise like thunder, and discloses the fearful gulf that has been in the course of ages formed beneath. Lyra and Fugle skerries<sup>1</sup> lie out at a short distance from the land, and indeed are nearly joined to it by a succession of pinnacles and arches. Lyra Skerry, the smaller of the two, is accessible only to the boldest rock men, and few even of these will venture upon the ascent. The sides are hideously perpendicular, frowning darkly upon the untiring waves which perforate its base into a hundred caverns. Some of these excavations traverse the whole extent of the rock and give to it the appearance of some vast fabric supported upon pillars. Mr. Henderson pointed out several through which in calm weather he had sailed, but the sea was too rough to-day to allow us to approach the rock.

On the summit of Lyra Skerry the beautiful green sward, almost untrodden by the foot of man, was variegated by an enormous profusion of the pink flowered *statice armoria*. The lyra or Manx puffin breeds in its perpendicular sides, but the great black-backed gull holds undisputed possession of the summit. Not another gull is to be seen upon the rock, though on the neighbouring

<sup>1</sup> ON. *lira-sker*, from *liri* 'Shearwater' (Jakobsen), and ON. *fugla-sker*, from *fugl* 'fowl, bird.'

Fugle Skerry the swabie shares the ground with the lesser black-backed [gull], and herring gulls and cormorants.

The cliffs of Fugle Skerry are perpendicular on the south, west and north, while its eastern side is comparatively low. Here we landed without difficulty, and finding an abundance of nests, we dispersed ourselves over the island and I marched straight across it to its western shore. Here I shot with my rifle two or three cormorants, but unluckily they fell into the sea and were borne away by the waves. Presently a most furious cannonade was heard to the north on the side of Lyra Skerry. I hastened back and on coming over the hill I beheld Cholmely standing near the edge of the precipice, surrounded by thousands of gulls which flew around him without fear as if to ascertain the nature of so unlooked for an apparition. On the ground at his feet lay two or three swabies, huge creatures nearly six feet from tip to tip of the wings, and their companions screamed a hideous death-song as they floated and wheeled close around us. We had soon collected an ample supply both of birds and eggs, and as the day was now pretty far advanced we turned our boat homewards, taking nearly the same route as that by which we arrived at the skerry. On landing I felt the two well-known indications of fever upon me, but I hoped that a day of rest, the next morning was Sunday, would at least in some degree restore me.

Sunday, June 29th. This day was nearly all spent in bed, but in the afternoon I was able to sit up. Cholmely and Proctor went in the morning to the Methodist meeting-house, for even into this distant land have these zealous men extended their labours. There is, however, in Papa Stour a small parish church, but the majority of the population belong to the Methodists, as the established minister's visits are few and far between. My companions reported the Meeting-house to be one of the rudest edifices on the island, and, to their dismay on entering it,

not a seat of any kind was to be seen. But this nowise troubled the zealous congregation who seemed to take it as a matter of course that they must provide accommodation for themselves. Around the door were scattered abundance of large stones, and much were the southrons astonished when every man, woman and child as they came in lifted a stone of a size proportioned to their strength, and forthwith carried it into the house of prayer. Their behaviour during divine service was quiet and orderly, and at the conclusion each in like manner, lifted the stone they had sat upon and carried it beyond the door of the meeting house. Not content with once a day's church, Cholmeley and Proctor went in the evening to the Sunday school, but the singing there, they said, was execrable, and the church bitterly cold, as most of the windows were destitute of glass.

Monday, 30th June. During the whole of this day the rain fell heavily, but had it been the finest weather possible, I was too weak and ill to venture out. Here in this far distant island no medicines were to be procured, nor could medical assistance easily be obtained, even if when got it were of any great worth from the rude followers of Esculapius in Shetland. We therefore packed up all our luggage which had now grown to an overwhelming bulk, and resolved, should the wind be fair, to start for Ollaberry in Northmavine on the morrow.

Tuesday, July 1st. After breakfast we engaged a boat with four men to convey us to Olaberry, but at the time we left Papa, we were undecided as to whether we should draw the boat over the Glus of Air, or take the longer circuit though shorter overland journey, by Mavis Grind.

Mr. Henderson and his ward Lindsay accompanied us to the boat, and the latter, as we were warned, shewed no small anxiety to accompany us. Passing Frau a Stack on the left we bore right away for the Glus of Air, discussing, as we sailed along with a fair but light breeze, the state of

the tides, and the opposing currents we should meet with in our progress. The day was warm and fine, the sea too was smooth, which is but rarely the case in the stormy bay of St. Magnus. Our old skipper, a Papa-man of most lugubrious aspect, entertained us as he sat at the helm, with a dismal history of a ferocious giant who formerly inhabited the island of Vementry. He solemnly assured me that he had seen the cave where the monster dwelt, and had seen there hundreds of bones of the sheep and oxen wherewith he had filled his rapacious maw. I did not doubt that he had seen some bones in a cave upon that island, but was little disposed to refer them to the giant, as their presence could easily be otherwise accounted for. Sheep-stealing was in former times but too common in Shetland, and in the ancient records of the country there exist many savage enactments against the perpetrators of the crime. Thus in the Court Book for Zetland of Earl Patrick Stuart the original of which is still preserved in the Register Office in Edinburgh, we find the following case, which proves that even the fair sex in former times were not exempt from this failing. It is dated the tenth day of July 1602.<sup>1</sup> “Anent the accusation of Margaret Petersdochter, for the theftous steiling of ane scheip of hir neighbours, having nae scheip of hir awin, comperit the said Margerit in judgement and confest the stouth of the said sheip, not knowing quha aucht the samen, confessing the samen to be done in plain hunger and necessity; quilk being considerit by the assize, and trying this to be the first fault, decernis her haill landis, guidis and gere (gif ony be) to be escheat, and hirsself to be banisht the country within the space of ane monet, at the least in the first passage, and gif she beis apprehendit with the walor of ane *viris theft*,<sup>2</sup> heirafter to be tane and drownit

<sup>1</sup> See Peterkin's Notes, app. p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *viris theft*, for *uris theft*, was the theft of the value of an *eyrir* 'ounce,'  $\frac{1}{4}$ th mark = 20d. stg. or 30d. ON. In Old Gulathing Law, which applied to

to the deith in the exampill of otheris." Yet this was a case which was not according to the Scotch law, aggravated by being by habit and repute a thief. I have never been able to discover whither the felons were transported from Shetland unless they were landed on the mainland of Scotland, and few who read this will then think their punishment a severe one. But the native of Shetland bears towards his home as strong an attachment as the Tyrolese, and I have hardly ever met with them in more southern climes, that they did not express a hope they might at least be spared to die in the land which gave them birth.

In one part of Shetland I was informed that the delinquents of the mainland and its neighbouring islands were transported to the island of Yell, which thus became for the Northern Isles a kind of Botany Bay, and even to this day the sheep-stealers of Yell are remembered as famous in the Shetland archipelago. A celebrated robber of this kind inhabited a cave near Dahl of Lumbister, a narrow gorge not two yards in width and whose outlet is closed by a voe of great length. Here the Shetland Rob Roy used to station himself while his accomplices drove down the sheep from the hill into the Dahl. As the affrighted animals hurried past him in the narrow path, this rank riever, who is said to have possessed most enormous strength, seized first two to kneel on as cushions during his hard task, placed two more under his hams, seized another pair in his brawny hands and last not least laid fast hold of a seventh with his teeth, holding them all securely till his companions came up to relieve him. The reader may believe this as he will, but he will not forget

Orkney and Shetland, it is enacted that if a man stole the value of an *ertog* ( $\frac{1}{3}$ rd eyrir = 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. stg., or 10d. ON) or more, he was outlawed or slain. For the theft of the carcase of a four-footed animal, even a night-old lamb, the thief was outlawed. In King Magnus Haakonsson's New Land Law, for *stela til eyris* 'to steal an ounce's value' (20d. stg., or 30d. ON) the thief was fined 3 marks, 24 times the value of the theft.

that these were little Shetland sheep and neither cheviots nor southdowns. By the rest of Shetland the Papa men are regarded as ignorant savages, and they in their turn look down with pity upon the poor natives of Foulah, and they again commiserate the lot of the inhabitants of the Fair Isle. Indeed I cannot say that I found the Papa men very intelligent, and they are by far the most superstitious of all the Shetlanders. Our helmsman was a firm believer in trows, fairies and all sorts of witchcraft. I asked him if he himself had ever been favoured with a view of these supernatural beings. He answered that this had but once occurred to him during his life. In returning one Sunday from the kirk at Hillswick he was surprised to observe a man who, without speaking a word, walked over the hill close by him and accompanied him in silence for a considerable distance. "But," said I, "this might have been a mere man of flesh and blood and his behaviour was by no means in any way supernatural." "Ah," said he, "but we went round a little know and when I cam to de oder seide, da mand wis gan. Dat wis a trow." And nothing could persuade him to the contrary. And shortly after, when I told him that I defied and denied the existence of all spirits either by land or sea, his jaw dropped and he could only reply by a vacant stare of terror to my foolhardiness of speech.

We had now a fair wind which carried us through St. Magnus Bay at a fair rate till we found ourselves under the lee of the island of Mickle Rooe. From the boat I could, at a distance [see] the junction of the granite and the greenstone rocks, to investigate which had been one of my chief objects in coming to Shetland, but I was to-day too ill to land, and had we done so we should not have reached Ollaberry that night. As the tide was very low and our luggage heavy we resolved to go round by Mavis Grind instead of taking the longer and consequently more laborious portage over the Aith. Leaving therefore

the latter on the right we pulled up the narrow sound that separates Mickle Rooe from the mainland. Were the steep rocky hills on each side of this inlet but clothed in wood, the view here would be one of the most magnificent in the north, but alas sterile Shetland can boast of no other wood than the two trees at Busta about two miles from hence, and I was often asked if I had not seen them as, though not worthy of the name of forest trees in more southern climes, they are a marvel to the untravelled inhabitant of Shetland. The sound through which we now passed, though deep, is extremely narrow and difficult of navigation. About seven or eight years ago a Spanish vessel was driven by stress of weather upon this iron-bound coast. Unfortunately, though close to its mouth, they could not see the channel, when by steering the ship a few yards to the south of the dangerous rock on which she split, would have conducted her safely into a deep confined basin that is calm during the heaviest gale.

All around us the day was warm and clear while to the north immediately beyond the fatal rock, just mentioned, a heavy mist obscured both sea and land. Through this appeared looming the island of Eagleshaw, the history of which is given by Dr. Hibbert, who I believe obtained the wild legend from Mr. Henderson of Bardister. Near Mangaster Voe appears the small holm of Eagleshaw (Egilshay) where a perpendicular vein of greenstone softer than the including mass of the same material by which it is enveloped has yielded to the process of disintegration so as to convey the idea of a deep rent, dividing the island into two unequal parts. This appearance has given birth to a monstrous tale. The two sons of a deceased udaller, in sharing their father's money between them, made use of a cylindrical wooden vessel called a cog which being unequally divided within by means of a transverse piece of wood forms when turned on one end double the measure that it was when resting on the opposite margin.



The younger son was blind, and the elder, in dealing out the respective shares, clandestinely contrived to fill the greater measure for himself, and the smaller one for his brother. “ You have now your share of the money ” said the heir whose eyes were perfect. “ I doubt it,” said the blind one “ and may the Lord divide Eagleshaw tomorrow as you have divided the money to-day.” The defrauded son had his wish; after a horrible night of thunder and lightning the island was found in the morning split across by a deep rent into two parts, one of which was just twice the size of the other.

We had now got beyond the lee of the island of Mickel Roee and the full force of the stormy Atlantic rolled into the narrow strait that forms the entrance to the calm basin of Mavis Grind. Within an oar’s length on the starboard side we observed the waves breaking furiously over a sunken rock and endangering not a little our light [craft] by their reflux. This rock is named Tairvilles Baa, from a Norwegian settler of that name [Tervels bā, ON. *Þorvalds bōði*, Jakobsen], who was lost upon it with all his sons when flying from Papa Stour, where he had slain an udaller in *holm-gang* or single combat. Tairville’s story has been differently told. It is said by Hibbert whose informant was no doubt Mr. Henderson of Bardister, that the individual slain in Papa Stour was a gentleman of rank, and that Tairville long resisted all attempts to bring him to trial for the murder, living by depredations on the country. Mr. Low was shewn at Papa Stour a circular inclosure of stone where the duel alluded to was said to have been fought.

Immediately after passing this dangerous sunken rock we found ourselves in smooth water and in a large basin surrounded on all sides, save one, by low barren rocks. Immediately in front of us were the ruins of an unfinished house, and we were all, I believe astonished that any one should have thought of leaving the haunts of men to fix

his abode in so desolate a situation. But oh ! of what material was his mansion constructed. Masses of the most magnificent porphyry lay scattered all around and never did I see the magic hues of this beautiful stone displayed to greater advantage. Here we unloaded our boat and having first carried over the luggage, the craft itself was dragged by our united exertions across the narrow isthmus, not more in this spot than one hundred yards in breadth, which connects Northmavine with the mainland. Reloading our boat we pushed without further delay or adventure to Ollaberry and arrived there about five in the afternoon. To our disappointment Mr. Cheyne was not at home, but this was by no means so serious a consideration as it would have been in more southern climes. We of course took possession of his house and I felt as if already I had regained my health. But Chalmers now complained a little so I made him keep his bed, and what was worst of all I put him upon low diet. For myself I was but too glad to follow his example, and Proctor too was half relieved of his anxiety by the comfortable quarters we had reached this day.

Wednesday, July 2nd. Chalmers was still unwell this morning and I spent the greater part of the day in looking over the improvements about Ollaberrie. About 5 p.m. I was delighted to observe Mr. Cheyne with a friend coming down the hill above the house.<sup>1</sup> The worthy man did not in the least recognise me and saluted me cordially, but as a stranger. But my identity was soon discovered and right welcome did he make us to his home and to all that it contained. Proctor went out this afternoon to shoot a seal, but though he hit one he was unable to secure it ere it sank in deep water. He brought home, however, a very beautiful specimen of the herring gull.

<sup>1</sup> Arthur Cheyne of Ollaberry, 2nd son of James Cheyne of Tangwick and his wife Ann, daughter of John Gifford, Sheriff Clerk of Zetland, died 8th December, 1849. (Grant's *Zetland Family Histories*).

Thursday, July 3rd. Until midday the heavy rain kept Proctor in the house, but at 12 noon, it changed into a passable Scotch mist, and this indefatigable naturalist started for Roeness Hill. I remained in the house with Cholmely during the whole day. Proctor returned about 10 p.m. having killed two red-throated divers and a few plovers and dunlins. During the whole day he had not seen any of the Skua gulls or indeed any object at all that was more than two or three yards before him, so thick and heavy the mist had hung upon the mountain.

Friday, July 4th. I amused myself during the day with a half broken pony of Mr. Cheyne's and I verily believe that I astonished the good Shetlanders by my skill in horsemanship. I wonder if anybody here would venture to mount a spirited thorough-bred. The very size of the animal would, I believe, deter them. Proctor was busily engaged with the birds he had killed yesterday. In the evening we walked out to the Ness to enjoy the delicious sunset, and the stars beamed bright above us before we returned to the house.

Saturday, July 5th. Arthur Smith came in this morning with a red-throated diver and five whimbrels which he had killed yesterday on Roeness Hill. As I was now quite convalescent, I rode Mr. Cheyne's pony over the hill to the north and crossed Quayfirth Voe by the Waddal.<sup>1</sup> This is a portion of the Voe where a long tongue of land nearly cuts off all communication with the sea, leaving nothing more than a channel about 20 yards in breadth which, about low water, is not more than knee-deep, and I was then enabled to avoid the terrible circuit by the head of the Voe. We then passed over the hill of Colafirth and descended to the Voe of that name, where we spent some hours in obtaining specimens from the magnificent rocks of horneblende and actinolite which

<sup>1</sup> ON. *vaðill*, shallow place in water . . . especially of the innermost and shallowest part of a small bay. (Jakobsen).

bound its southern shore. I recognised many spots here at which I had worked in my former visit but failed to re-discover a large boulder of quartz which I had formerly noticed as containing some beautiful kyanite. On my return from thence I entered into conversation with old James Hawick,<sup>1</sup> one of the few remaining udallers of Shetland. He was a fine hearty old man, and conversed freely upon politics, religion and the state of his own country, while he brought forward an appropriate text of scripture to almost every remark. I returned again by the Waddal, and in crossing the hill of Ollaberry was again delighted with the beauty of a Shetland summer's evening.

Sunday, July 6th. Heavy rain, dull even for a Scotch sabbath.

Monday, July 7th. We set off this morning at an early hour to Feideland where we were certain of most ample employment for our hammers. The weather was warm and a light air playing on the face of the waters carried us rapidly towards the wished for spot. Upon the rocks near Feideland I observed two specimens of the Black-headed, or rather it appears to me of Temminck's brown-headed gull, but we could not get near them.<sup>2</sup> The shore

<sup>1</sup> Probably one of the landowners in the adjoining parish of Delting of which the chief family of that name was Hawick of Scatsta. The first one on record was Andrew Hawick of Scatsta in 1575, who was 40 years old in 1576 (Balfour's *Oppressions*, p. 77). He wadset eight marks of land of Graven and two marks in Voe in Delting with eight marks in Wodbuster in Tingwall, to Andrew Sinclair of Aith, in 1591. (Goudies' *Antiquities of Shetland*). Lawrence Sinclair of Ustaness, c. 1575, married Katharine Hawick, who was mother of William Sinclair of Ustaness, Commander of H.M. forces in Zetland. (Grant's *Zetland Family Histories*). John Hawick was foud of Yell in 1604. (Goudie).

In 1507-14, 1628 and 1716 Rentals, Scatsta (72 marks of Land, 1716) paid the skatt of 1½ egrislands, or 22½ pennylands, which was paid in 1716 by John Hawick, who also had the feu of two marks of Uphouse, one mark of Hardwell and 18 marks in Trondavoe in Delting. In 1716, Richard Hawick paid the scatt of 20 marks in Brogh, Yellsound Scattald, and Lawrance Hawick feued two of the 10 marks of the earldom land of Buraness and paid scatt for six of the 30 marks of Buraness in Delting.

<sup>2</sup> Charlton's remarks doubtless "refer to one and the same bird. The bird was known in this country at that date [1834] as The Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*), and in 1820 a second edition was published of Temminck's

for a considerable way to the north of Ollaberry was low and rocky and hollowed out by the action of the sea into so many caves that it strongly reminded me of the peculiar coast of Strathaird in the island of Skye. Passing North Roe we arrived about midday at Feideland, and I recognised as I came along many a high pinnacle on which I had stood to gaze upon the rocks and the deep blue ocean below. The entrance into the Bay of Feideland is very fine, the wide basin being surrounded by high and precipitous rocks save where the fishing "Inn" or village stands on the low beach which joins the peninsula to the mainland. Feideland was formerly the largest fishing station in Shetland, but it has now greatly diminished in importance. In former times seventy or eighty six-oared boats rowed from hence to the *haaf* deep-sea fishing. This year there were but 22, and a still further reduction of their numbers is anticipated.

I have before spoken of the great falling off for some years of the Shetland fisheries. The fish have certainly become more scarce upon the coast, and the bad weather that has prevailed during the three last summers has prevented the fishermen from visiting their most productive and abundant haunts. I know few scenes more wild and desolate than that on the west coast of the Feideland. The Ramnay Stacks, rocks almost inaccessible to man, the rugged back of Roeness Hill and the wild Atlantic surges beating on this iron-bound coast, all impress the mind with a feeling of awe and gives a savage character to the landscape that cannot be described.

As we walked over the peninsula towards the Kleber Gio, Cholmely and Proctor followed a raven which we had

*Manuel d'Ornithologie* wherein he called the bird 'Mouette Rieuse ou a Capuchon Brun.' I think the writer means to imply that these birds had brown heads and must be Temminck's species, not realising that the two vernacular names were for the same bird *Larus ridibundus*." (Communicated by Mr. N. B. Kinnear, Deputy Keeper of Zoology, British Museum (Natural History), London).

marked down upon the cliffs as we came into the harbour. They soon found him again, it was apparently a young bird and almost fearless of man. But the wary creature ensconced itself behind a couchant cow and defied for some time all their efforts to circumvent him. At length he rose, both guns were discharged at him and away he flew unscathed to a pinnacle on the opposite side of Kleber Gio croaking forth his insolent note of defiance. The Kleber Gio, like that in Fetlar of the same name, is so called from the abundance of steatite which it contains, and there also we found veins and beds of beautiful asbestos, green chlorite, talc, horneblende and anthophyllite.

On a slanting rock on its southern side, before descending into the Gio, is an inscription in rude characters which then did not much interest me but which I now bitterly regret that I did not accurately copy. It was undoubtedly Runic, the letters were graven deep in the anthophyllite rock, in some parts they were cut as much as three inches into the stony face of the cliff.<sup>1</sup> There are many such in Shetland, and Hibbert figures one near Sandness, but it is much shorter than that at Feideland.

Returning to the fishing huts I was invited into the buith (*bude*, Danish, a shop)<sup>2</sup> by Magnus Tulloch who had come with us from Ollaberry, and was therein regaled whisky, bland and biscuit, in as original a manner as ever traveller dined in a wilderness. One half of his house was filled with salt and the hammock hung directly above the store of this wholesome condiment! Hear! and attend ye lovers of Shetland salt fish! A board served as a desk, a cask of whisky was his chair, and other furniture there was none, in this, the richest mansion in Feideland. By

<sup>1</sup> Probably the inscriptions mentioned by Tudor, in 1883, in his description of these rocks on which "countless generations of fishermen have carved their names like so many schoolboys." (Manson's *Guide to Shetland*, 1938-1940 ed. p. 250).

<sup>2</sup> ON. *búð*, Danish *bod* 'booth.'

the time we re-entered the boat the rain had begun to fall and the wind became adverse. As we left the harbour Proctor killed three scories at a shot, by firing into a flock which were watching the receding tide upon the low rocks. Those that we killed were the young of the lesser black-backed gull, but several young herring gulls were also amongst them.

On rounding the southernmost point at the entrance of the harbour, we were met by a severe and cutting blast which made us shiver in our boat cloaks, as our dress was already damped by the rain. As we returned along the coast we rowed into a small cave in which we had observed the nests of several green cormorants. One of the sea birds we wounded by a shot, and as he appeared very unwilling to dive, we hemmed him towards the extremity of the cave. At the moment that we thought ourselves secure of our prize he disappeared beneath the boat, and as we did not see him rise again we concluded that he had sunk to the bottom, and there died while holding fast by the seaweed and tangles. Leaving the cave we rowed under the fine natural arch of Virdabrick. Though of great height and width, it certainly does not equal that of Doreholm in Northmavine. The arch is cracked through in many places, and as we passed under its gloomy canopy a huge mass of rock hung fearfully suspended over our heads, which, had it fallen, would have infallibly annihilated our stout boat and all its crew. A little farther on we shot an oyster-catcher, upon which one of our boatmen declared that we should have a foul wind all the way home for having slain so good a bird which by the people of Northmavine is regarded as sacred. This time he was right and it was four hours before we reached Ollaberry.

We sate all this time exposed to a cold driving rain which to me was anything but agreeable and in the sequel proved most disastrous to our expedition. Near the Ness

of Ollaberry we fell in with an immense flock of birds apparently busily engaged with the shoals of young herrings which now abounded in the voes of Yell Sound. The flock consisted of herring-gulls, guillemots and razor-bills with their young, and I here procured a beautiful adult bird of the first named species. It was late ere we reached Ollaberry wet and weary, and though we retired soon to bed it was not to rest for I passed a feverish night.

Tuesday, July 7th. To-day I felt so unwell that I gave up all hopes of escaping an attack of fever. In the evening Cholmely and Proctor went off to As seter, while I remained at Ollaberry, and on the following Friday was obliged to take to my bed. On the next Sunday Cholmely returned from As seter in no better plight than myself, having been dreadfully fatigued on the previous day by a long walk round the west coast of Northmavine from Hillswick to Hamnavoe, in a storm of wind and rain. We were thus both fairly laid up, and we did not leave our beds till the Saturday following when no trace of fever remained. The day before I took to my bed Mr. Edmondston of Bunes had arrived in his boat from a seal shooting excursion in Yell Sound.<sup>1</sup> He had been successful and presented us with one out of the five seals which he had shot. However he did not stay long being scared away by my fever. During my illness I wished to be bled and accordingly a true barber-chirurgion made his appearance. He was by trade a fisherman and nowise distinguished from the rest of his occupation save that he had learned the mysterious arts of cutting hair and phlebotomy. On the previous day he had shorn my head of its fair covering and at "ilka lock he shredd" he stayed his hand and exclaimed "alas, alas, to cuit sic bonny hair, but so da saiy ayi dat soft hair has a hard heart." I hoped that

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Edmondston of Bunes, born 1779, succeeded his grandfather in the estate of Bunes and died 1858. (*Grant's Zetland Family Histories*).



such, however, was not my case. When, however, on the following morning I sent for him to bleed, he at first resolutely refused on the singular plea that he had never bled a gentleman in his whole life. Of the kindness of Mr. Cheyne during this sad period it is needless and impossible to speak, those only who have partaken of his hospitable table can appreciate this. It may seem strange to many that we should thus travel from house to house without even a recommendation, but in these remote countries the appearance of a stranger is hailed as a godsend by the landholders, as well as by the very intelligent natives of the humble peasants' dwellings. I have often been astonished as well as amused at the acuteness of the remarks made by the common people upon the actions and sayings of more refined society, which they had read of in the newspapers.

During this long and tedious time Proctor was busily engaged in procuring specimens of natural history, and I sent him for that purpose into different parts of North-mavine where he obtained several of the whimbrel, the red-throated diver, Richardson's and of the skua gulls. At length in climbing over a high stone wall a heavy stone fell upon and injured him so severely that he too was forced to take to his bed about the time that we were able to move again about the house. The stone walls of Shetland are indeed unsafe to clamber over, being frequently carried up to the height of six or eight feet with a single breadth of stones, so that you can often reconnoitre the country beyond through the whole construction. This last accident was the climax of our misfortune, our stars from this hour were more propitiously inclined, and returning health and strength made the days to pass without ennui.

Monday, 26th July. It was on this morning that I threw open the front door of the house at Ollaberry and sallied forth, wrapped in my boat cloak, to enjoy one of

the warmest and finest days I had ever experienced in Shetland. Oh how cheerful was the song of the lark and the green waving corn and the dark blue sea as smooth as glass, with the sea-birds sporting within a stone's throw of where I stood. I felt indeed a thrill of freedom after having been shut up 15 days in a low room with one small window that looked out upon the sky.

I this day received a letter from Mr. Yorston of Lerwick<sup>1</sup> concerning the Magnus Troil, whose arrival at Ollaberry I had anxiously expected to-day. However the vessel did not appear, nor could I learn that she had been seen going into Tafts Voe to call at Mossbank. The season for birds was now nearly passed, and as it would be long ere I could recommence my labours with the hammer, I relinquished my intention of revisiting the North Isles of Shetland and determined upon an immediate return to Edinburgh by the Magnus Troil. This evening Mr. Cheyne set off for Lerwick in his large boat the Wellington.

Tuesday, 27th July. Having heard nothing of the Magnus Troil we determined upon sending an express to Tafts Voe to enquire for that vessel. As we feared she would give us but short notice of her departure, we packed up our most bulky luggage and kept ourselves in readiness to start on the first appearance of the Magnus Troil. Arthur Smith brought over to us a pair of tuskars (instruments used for cutting peats) which we wished to take with us to the South. As we did not exactly understand the way of using them we dragged our weakened frames with great difficulty about three hundred yards up the hill above Ollaberry, in order that Mr. Arthur Sanderson might shew us the method of casting the peats. It was no great labour, but as I redescended the hill I felt that I had done enough for the day, and looked forward to a good night's rest to recruit me for the morrow. But that

<sup>1</sup> ? James Yorston, purser R.N., banker in Lerwick, who married, in 1820, Margaret daughter of Andrew Gifford of Ollaberry. He died in 1849. (Grant).

night's rest I was not destined to enjoy. On reaching the house we perceived our express returning through Yell Sound. We awaited it anxiously on the shore and heard to our utter dismay that the Magnus Troil had been in Tafts Voe last night, and after remaining there for an hour had proceeded straight to Lerwick from whence at two o'clock this day she was to start for Leith. What was to be done. It was but a day or two since we had risen from a bed of sickness and this was but the second morning that we had ventured into the open air, and yet if we hoped to come up with the vessel we must run the risk of being out all night at sea in an open boat. We deliberated for a moment and then determined to reach Lerwick that evening if possible though it was then 3 p.m. and another hour must elapse before everything could be got ready for our voyage. It is seldom that a Shetland vessel sails on the appointed day, so I thought we had yet a good chance of finding the Magnus in harbour on our arrival at Lerwick. Upon this slender hope then did we undertake a voyage so perilous for two convalescents. The evening promised well, and if the breeze which had been blowing steadily all day still held up we calculated upon reaching Lerwick by about eleven p.m., which at this season of the year would be only about nightfall in these northern regions. In an hour our boat was ready at the pier, our luggage was on board and with light hearts we took leave of all Mr. Cheyne's dependants, not doubting of reaching our destination that night. But old Peter, an ancient mariner, shook his head and feared, he said, that the wind would not hold as he saw the mist settling down upon the opposite coast of Yell. And then, sure enough, were the dark grey clouds rolling down the black hills and creeping like an advancing tide along the ocean. Behind us, however, to the west all was bright and cheerful as a strong breeze curled the face of the water, and the warm sun, still high in the heavens, shone down to promise a

happy voyage. The tide was full against us as we left Ollaberry and we hoped earnestly for a strong and steady breeze to enable us to encounter the fearful currents in Yell Sound which have always been an object of terror to the Shetland mariner. About six p.m. we entered this dreaded sound, keeping close in shore along the edge of the tide which ran boiling along the centre of the narrow strait, while on either side the water was still and smooth as glass. The wind which for the last half hour had been light and shifting, now veered round to the north-east and joined with the tremendous current in opposing our progress. Still we consoled ourselves with the thought that we always gained a little way as we tacked from one side to the other of the narrow sound. At sunset a thick mist fell upon us just before we reached the mouth of Tafts Voe, and as it closed around had a most singular and ominous appearance. The sun just sinking behind the Ness of Ollaberry, still cheered us in some degree with his light, for the fog, though impenetrable on all other sides, formed in the west a low and deep archway through which the sun-beams streamed upon the water almost up to our boat. It seemed as though we had entered some vast cavern and were about to explore its hidden recesses while the daylight becomes fainter and more uncertain as we advanced farther from its mouth. At ten p.m. it fell dead calm and a heavy warm mist enveloped the boat and rendered everything therein wet and uncomfortable. However, we were well provided against the weather having carried off several blankets from Ollaberry, and the boat was stowed with ample provender for the inward man. During the two succeeding hours we made little more than three miles and then, on a partial dispersion of the fog, we discovered that we were now abreast of Mossbank. A council was now held, yet like the ancient Persians, we first addressed ourselves to the brandy bottle and leg of mutton. Supper ended we by no means felt

inclined to pass the night upon the same spot, which indeed it was now probable we should do unless a speedy change in our favour in the shape of a good strong westerly breeze should spring up to carry us round the Ness of Lunna.

It now wanted but half an hour of midnight, the tide, though running in our favour, would avail us but little in this heavy boat, and it was the unanimous opinion that it would be impossible to reach round Lunna Ness ere the stream should again be setting to the west. Lunna Ness is a long narrow and high promontory running out into the sea from the north-east part of the mainland; and round this headland the tide rushes with tremendous power. In the obscurity of the night we therefore determined to run in for the banks of Lunna where the Ness, which is five or six miles in length, is joined, by a narrow low isthmus 200 or 300 yards broad, to the mainland. Guided by the compass we hoped to make this point in about an hour and there to obtain a boat which from the other side would speedily convey us to Lerwick. The helm was therefore put about and our course, from being nearly east by west, altered to S.S.W. After a short pull we again tacked to the east, as the boatmen seemed to doubt a little about the latitude they had got into, and from time to time we lay to and rested upon our oars to listen for the barking of a dog or the restless dash of waves upon this iron-bound coast. The thick mist gave rise to many a mistake, and the cry of land was given in whatever quarter we turned our prow. Twelve o'clock had passed when a huge dark object seemed to move along the water towards our boat, and the experienced eyes of our steersman soon pronounced it to be the wished for shore. But though the sea was calm and smooth as glass we kept well out into the open water lest we might encounter some of the *baas* or sunken rocks which are the terror of a Shetland mariner. We kept along in this way for a considerable time, following

the guidance of the compass, and casting many an anxious look towards the land. Suddenly the man in the bow called out "a baa ! a baa !" and to our utter consternation the black head of a sunk rock appeared not above two feet in front of us and at times uncovered and then again sinking deceitfully beneath the surface. By one vigorous stroke of our oars we happily escaped the threatened danger; but had the *baa* broke under us in the awful manner I have once experienced, some of us I fear would hardly have had strength or skill to reach the shore. The crew now candidly confessed that they did not know where they were, and it was agreed that we should return about half a mile to where we heard the barking of a dog, and there engage a pilot to the banks of Lunna. With great difficulty we ran the boat against some low rocks upon the shore and one of the crew, stripping off his shoes and stockings, waded out in quest of the habitations of man. The barking of the dog was again heard, and directed by the sound, he pursued his way and was soon lost to us in the mist. Through the silence of the night, however, we plainly hear his footsteps, and at length heard him knock at a door, while at the same instant he was saluted by the yells of at least a score of dogs, which indicated that the "town" was of no inconsiderable size. After a long parley he brought down with him an old man as a pilot who, however, was by no means the most active of his profession. He was lame of one leg and nearly blind of both eyes !!! But this was a case of emergency, and in so thick a mist, the best of eyes would be of no great service. For a time we made good progress, the old man took the helm and munched biscuit and jabbered away all the same about the probability of our finding a boat at the banks of Lunna. At length, however, land was espied, but in the opposite quarter from that on which we had expected to meet with the shore. Our old pilot soon perceived his mistake. We had got too close to the west side of the

narrow voe, and he afterwards attended more carefully to the indications of the compass. About half past one A.M. the fog partially cleared and we saw above the stars in the dark expanse, while in the east there appeared "the first grey tints of coming dawn."

Passing a few small islands we entered a little bay and soon found ourselves in the midst of what may be called a populous neighbourhood. We sprang joyfully on the beach and, leaving the rest to unload our luggage, walked across with one of the crew to the other side of the neck of land. Great indeed was our disappointment when we found that no boat was lying there in a state fit to go to sea. A large barge lay on the sand but it was guiltless of paint and through its shattered sides gaped many a hideous rent. Beside it, in equally wretched condition, were two or three old whillys, but it would have required three of them to transport us and our luggage to Lerwick. Nearer however to the spot where we had landed lay a fine six-oared boat, but alas that very day it had been tarred within and without, so that even had we ventured ourselves in it we could never have left it again at Lerwick. Three o'clock came and we were still standing undecided on the beach. Return we would not, even though the vessel had already sailed for Leith we knew that we would easily revisit the North Isles by means of the Packet, or should the long exposure to the damp night air cause a return of the fever we should at least in Lerwick have the best medical advice and attendance that Shetland could afford. At length it was decided that two men should be despatched over the hills to the place from whence he had obtained our old pilot, as we were told that there a six-oared boat was to be procured with an efficient crew. The boat however would have to round the Ness of Lunna in order to take us up on the other side, and from the great extent of that promontory it would be past 6 A.M. ere they could reach us on the eastern shore.

For nearly an hour after the departure our messenger I remained standing beside the luggage on the beach. The sun had now risen, but though clear and warm overhead, a grey mist still hung over the water hiding from our view every object that was not considerably elevated above our heads.

We endeavoured to procure some tea, but the owner of the "buithe" had gone to Lerwick and taken the key of the store along with him. On the hill at the head of the inlet was a field dignified by the name of Mr. Hunter of Lunna's park.<sup>1</sup> Though it boasted of no mighty oaks, o'ershadowing forest glades, it presented a beautiful carpet of wild flowers, and the lovely red of the *lychnis dioica* was especially abundant. On the summit of the opposite eminence was the "Hall," the residence of Mr. Hunter's widow,<sup>2</sup> he himself having been dead about a year. "Ta theengs is neber gan right sin ta laird dyed," said an old man who stood by me on the shore, "quhan he leaved he keepit all in fyen order, but dere is none to direct a place sin ta Lord taik ham away from, ta puir mann." Indeed the whole grounds were in a ruinous state, and it was evident that the master spirit of the spot had departed. About half past four a man came down from a cottage at some distance and begged me to go up there to rest myself till the boat should arrive. I availed myself of his kind invitation, and another man offered to be my guide thither. In the meantime my new host pushed off in his boat to procure the morning's meal for his family, and he and his craft soon disappeared in the mist. I heard the splash of his oars and his blithe song, long after he was hidden from my sight, and once when the fog cleared for a few minutes, I could see his small bark lying motionless on the glassy surface of the bay, hardly

<sup>1</sup> Robert Hunter of Lunna, b. 1778, d. 1833. (Grant).

<sup>2</sup> Helen Johanna, daughter of Robert Bruce of Symbister. She married after his death, in 1845, Thomas Richmond of Craigielea.



to be distinguished from the many low rocks that line the shores of the eastern coast.

On arriving at the cottage we obtained admittance after some loud knockings had roused the sleepy inhabitants. They did not however express any surprise at being thus intruded on by strangers at this unseasonable hour, and this could only arise from the true Shetland spirit of hospitality where the wayworn traveller is looked upon as honouring the dwelling in which he seeks repose. We were accommodated with chairs, a rare article of furniture in a Shetland dwelling-house, but it was in vain that we endeavoured to sleep. When the door was closed, the smoke arose from the fire in the centre and nearly took away our breath, while at the same time it pained our eyes so sharply that we rushed in despair to the door and threw it wide open again as before. And then the sea-breeze whistled around us so cold and freezing that our invalid forms shivered in the blast. And to add to our discomfort, Proctor, who was by far the most fatigued of the three, now fell asleep, and by his loud nasal tones effectually drove away all prospects of repose. As rest was out of the question I betook myself to eating, and thus the minutes flew quickly by till we rose to depart at 7 A.M. At the door we met the host, returning from his fishing excursion with a most ample supply of codlings and haddocks. Badly as he represented himself to be supplied with meal for bread, he had surely but small reason to complain when so plentiful a supply of the finest fish could be procured with so little exertion. As we proceeded down the hill we were informed that the boat was in readiness, and on arriving at the shore we found a capital craft with six of the stoutest looking boatmen I had ever seen in Shetland. The men of Lunna pride themselves much upon their rowing, nor were they this time wanting in their ancient fame, for the boat literally flew through the water under the influence of their vigorous arms.

The hot sun overhead had not however cleared away the mist and we were obliged to guide ourselves by the compass. I was half tempted to smile at the small compass the steersman held upon his knee, when the old man said, " True lamm, dat is small, but he has stuid by me in da day of need. Wid him I sailed from da banks o Norroway till da Fair Isle i da grit storm." Your name then, said I, is John Irving. " Ya dats what it is in truth lamm ! " I was not mistaken, this was the old man who was out in the great storm of 1832, from the Monday to the Saturday night, and for the last two days there was no food in the boat. It was he who had kept up the sinking spirits of his crew, who several times were tempted to lie down in the bottom of the boat and abandon themselves to the mercy of those elements which seemed leagued against them for their destruction. I asked him if he saw any other boats go down near him. " Oh lamm, I see two guidly sones o my ain bluid sink in da water by my side, but the Lord was pleased to spare the old father to be a hjelp til his family. On da Tuesday night we sa not a single sail and we fand no sight of da land till da Friday at sundown, dat wis da Fair Isle, and we tought it was da Noup of Noss, and da wind it bljew af da land and we should have set foot na mair upon da shore if da guid men hadna comed off from da Fair Isle in a peerie boat to pull us to da Isle; for, lamm, a fasting man can de but little work." Our crew however had evidently broken their fast, they pulled so well that in a short time we had passed the island of Whalsey and the really splendid mansion of Mr. Bruce of Symbister,<sup>1</sup> which however is built in a situation which exposes it equally to all the winds of heaven. It was now twelve o'clock and we calculated on reaching Lerwick in an hour.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Bruce of Symbister, born 1766. " About 1830, he built the present mansion house of Symbister, probably the finest in the County, at a cost of £30,000.' He died 1844. (Grant's *Zetland Family Histories*).

The mist thickened around us and it was only at long intervals that we obtained a view of the coast to direct us on our voyage. On a sudden I got a glimpse of the Maiden Stack,<sup>1</sup> which I immediately recognised from its peculiar form, as well as another rock which we passed on our left hand farther to the south. The latter is pierced through by a large arch and forms an excellent sea-mark on this dangerous coast.<sup>2</sup> At one P.M. I heard the cries of the sea-birds, and perceived that the water changed its colour, and in a few minutes the conglomerate rocks of Rovie Head were close upon our starboard bow. We were therefore now at the entrance of the harbour of Bressay Sound and we could already distinguish the masts of ships lying off the town of Lerwick. Every eye was now strained to catch a glimpse of the Magnus Troil. It was a moment of anxious suspense, but at length by means of a telescope I made out the two broad arrows at the mast-heads and joyfully assured my companions that the wished for vessel was still in the harbour. All, save Proctor, gave credit to my assertion, but he had long since lost all hope of overtaking her, and firmly maintained that she had long since gone away. No doubt he believed that a Shetland trading schooner started with the regularity of a London steamboat. By the time we had passed the Holm of Krouster we all were perfectly satisfied that the Magnus Troil still lay in Bressay Sound. Our troubles of the night were forgotten and we pulled to Peter Williamson's to take up the rest of our luggage and to recruit our strength with a hearty breakfast.

Here we met Mr. Cheyne and Wm. Cameron,<sup>3</sup> the latter for the first time during our expedition. They expressed no little surprise that we should have ventured upon so

<sup>1</sup> Or Fru Stack. See Manson's *Guide to Shetland*, ed. 1938-1940, p. 217. It lies off the Mul of Eswick, Nesting.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Hu Stack, ON. *há stakkr*, high stack, 111 feet high.

<sup>3</sup> Captain William Cameron, married 1809, Margaret Mowat of Garth, and died 1855 aged 75. (Grant's *Zetland Family Histories*).

dangerous and uncertain a voyage and no small fear for the consequences till they witnessed our gigantic feats at the breakfast table. Leaving Proctor to pack up, we took boat and went across the water to Gardie. Dinner was announced then at 4 P.M. as the ship was to sail at 6, and though but four hours had elapsed since breakfast, we sate down to this plentious [repast] with sharpened appetites. And then were set before us something more than the usual dainties of Hialta Land. Melons and grapes graced the board and both were the produce of a Shetland garden. As we were chatting over our wine, the colours of the Magnus Troil floated out at the foremast-head. We took a hurried leave of our kind entertainers and recrossed the Sound to Lerwick to see that all our luggage was removed from our former lodging. Proctor had filled six large boxes with the spoils of the Shetland archipelago, and these we rapidly conveyed on board about 7 P.M., when the vessel moved out of the harbour with a very moderate wind. For nearly two miles we were followed by various boats containing the friends and relations of the passengers. Wm. Cameron left us at the southern entrance of Bressay Sound and committed to my especial care and protection his sister. As we were off the southern point of Bressay island I enjoyed, and perhaps for the last time in my life, the sight of a number of shearwater petrels sitting quietly on the surface of the ocean. I had never before seen so many congregated together, they are generally solitary or at most in pairs, perhaps they had assembled to rejoice at our departure. How sweet and sound was my repose, even in the close and crowded cabin, after the fatigues of the previous day and night.

Thursday, July 30th. We had advanced but twelve miles during the night and were now a little to the south of the island of Mousa. Here a Miss McCrae joined us from Bigtown, and the rest of the day passed over

uniformly enough. The only circumstance that excited our attention was the manner in which we took advantage of the tremendous tides which run upon the coast. At nightfall Fair Isle was still in sight about eight miles N.N.W.

Friday, July 31st. In vain this morning did we look out and whistle for a propitious wind, a glassy smoothness was upon the face of the ocean, the clouds in the heavens were few and stirred not in the blue expanse, the air was hot and sultry, even the waves heaved as if sluggishly beneath our ship.

As we lounged about the deck, wishing for the dinner hour, a large whale rose close to the vessel and was presently followed by several more of the same species. They played fearlessly around us, diving under the ship and coming up on the other side so close that we could have dropped a biscuit on their backs. The largest individual amongst these was not I should think above 35 ft. in length. This year they had been very numerous at the "haaf" on the west coast of Northmavine and were extremely dangerous to the boats rushing upon them with the utmost fury, and damaging them in a way never before witnessed by the Shetland fishermen. In general these whales are extremely timid and fly with terror on the approach of man. At the sight of these monsters of the deep, Proctor's spirits rose to the highest pitch, he averred that their appearance betokened wind and that by the next morning we should be blessed with a favourable breeze.

Saturday, August 1st. I was delighted to hear the quick rushing of vessel through the water as she flew upon her course. The breeze had sprung up about midnight and we sailed gaily on with a warm sky above, far, far out of sight of land and with no signs of life around us but a few kittiwakes and the wandering solan goose, the pelican of the northern seas.

During the day however several Dutch luggers and herring busses crossed our course and rolled heavily away towards the north-west. At 6 P.M. we were in sight of Kinnaird's Head lighthouse, and by nine that evening were off Peterhead, having run from the Fair Isle, a distance of 120 miles, in 16 hours. The evening was lovely, a bright red light tinged the low coast and filled the western sky, while our vessel was making way through a fleet of at least 300 fishing boats which stretched out on all sides in search of herring, their shoals having just made their appearance in these seas. At night we saw the "fires" of Aberdeen, and the next morning, the second of August, we were off the Firth of Forth. The wind had fallen during the night, but at 10 A.M. a fine breeze sprung up from the eastward and bore us on at a rapid rate towards [Leith]. We anchored in Leith Roads at 6 P.M.; in half an hour more we were safely housed in Edinburgh, and my second expedition to Shetland was brought to a conclusion.

Finis, 1834.

EDWARD CHARLTON, M.D., D.C.L., NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

The following particulars are taken from the obituary notice which appeared in *The British Medical Journal*, of May 23rd, 1874, and from Burke's *Landed Gentry*, 1937.

Dr. Charlton was born 23rd July, 1814, and died on May 14th, 1874. He occupied a very prominent position not only in Newcastle, but throughout Northumberland and Durham and the North of England generally. He was the second son of the late William John Charlton of Hesleyside, Northumberland,, by his wife Katharine Henrietta, 4th dau. of Francis Cholmely of Brandsby. The family has been seated in Hesleyside since the early part of the fourteenth century. He received his early education at St. Cuthbert's College, Ushaw, Durham, along with Archbishop Eyre, the Bishop of Hexham and

Newcastle (Dr. Chadwick) and other ecclesiastical Roman Catholic dignitaries. Dr. Charlton was senior physician to the Newcastle Infirmary. He was connected with the School of Medicine which was begun in Newcastle in 1834, and subsequently took a leading part in founding the present College of Medicine. He has, ever since its foundation, in the year 1851, held the position of Joint Lecturer on Medicine in the College, of which he was also the President. He was likewise Professor of Medicine in the University of Durham. His leisure was devoted to antiquarian and literary pursuits. His special field in the study of antiquities was Scandinavian lore.

*Note.* Dr. Charlton, born in 1814, was thus 18 years old on his first visit to Shetland in 1832, and 20 years old when he made his second visit in 1834. The volume containing the MS. diary of his two visits consists of 415 pp. 11" x 9" and 15 full-page illustrations, and was written in its present form in 1843, containing remarks on events subsequent to his visit, as in the case of the alleged "Prisoner of Papa Stour."

Dr. Charlton's 2nd son, William L. S. Charlton (d. 1922), presented the volume to A. W. Johnston in 1909.

*non legato.*



SCALLOWAY LASSES.

As played on the violin by Mr. Rae Duncan born 1858. Noted by Dr. Otto Andersson, June, 1938.



## ORKNEY SASINES.

*Edward Sinclair of Essinquoy, and Ursula Fulsie, his spouse, in tenement of land in Kirkwall belonging to the subchantor of Orkney.*

179. At Kirkwall, 28th February 1621, is registered a Sasine dated 13th February 1621, given by Captain Thomas Knichtsone, indweller in Kirkwall, as bailie, to Edward Sinclair of Essinquoy, and Ursilla Fulsie his spouse, in terms of FEU CHARTER by Mr. John Gairdin, subchantor of Orkney, with consent of the Bishop and chapter, of that tenement of land fore and back with yard thereof lying in Kirkwall, between the tenement of the archdeacon of Orkney on the south and the tenement or manse of the treasurer of Orkney on the north, the common way leading to the Laverok on the east, and the shore of the sea called the Oyse on the west, which Charter is dated at Kirkwall, 3rd January 1620 (*sic*): witnesses, Robert Menteith of Egilschaw, Mr. Henry Aitkin, commissary of Orkney, Patrick Smyth of Braco, Andrew Smyth his brother, William Cragie, indweller in Kirkwall, David Heart, notary, and Gilbert Mowat his servitor. Witnesses to Sasine: Bernard Stewart, brother of John Stewart of Berscuib, Patrick Vaus, merchant, Thomas Ewmound, baker, indwellers in Kirkwall, Matthew Murray, servitor to Robert Menteith of Egilschaw, and the said Gilbert Mowat, servitor to the notary, David Heart.

*Same, in tenement of the archdeacon of Orkney.*

180. At Kirkwall, 28th February 1621, is registered a Sasine dated 19th February 1621, given by same to same, in terms of FEU CHARTER by Thomas Swintoun, archdeacon of Orkney, with consent aforesaid, of a tenement

in Kirkwall fore and back with yard, lying between the tenement of the subchantor on the north, the tenement or piece of waste ground of the chancellor of Orkney on the south, the road to the Laverok on the east, and the Oyse on the west, which Charter is dated at Kirkwall, 3rd January 1621 (*sic*): witnesses as above, to Charter and Sasine respectively.

## REVIEWS.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CAITHNESS, by John Mowat. Wick: Peter Reid & Co., Ltd. Price 7/6.

Mr. Mowat has placed all interested in the literature of the far North of Scotland under a debt of gratitude for this excellently compiled and printed bibliography. He has made this his chosen field and he has done his work with remarkable skill and thoroughness. Caithness is fortunate in her bibliographer and Mr. Mowat has erected a splendid memorial to his own memory. The work embraces: 1. Books and Pamphlets relating to Caithness; 2. Law Cases connected with Caithness; 3. List of Books and Pamphlets printed or published in Caithness; 4. A classified list of Magazines and Periodical Articles relating to Caithness, and 5. A list of Authors connected with Caithness. The foregoing summary indicates the extent of the field covered by the Bibliography. Mr. Mowat has done his work with the thoroughness of one who has spent long years gathering his material. There cannot be many books or pamphlets in any way dealing with Caithness, if any, that have escaped his eye. All interested in Scottish bibliography will be sure to add this book to their collection.

D.B.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY, edited by William Grant, M.A., LL.D. Vol. II, Parts III and IV (Bunkers to Clat-an-clay). Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association, Ltd.

This monumental work has advanced another step towards its completion. It is regrettable to learn, from the Editor, that part III has been held up for a year and a half for lack of funds. It is gratifying, however, to know that Dr. Grant is hopeful that the publication of the Dictionary will proceed at regular intervals. These Parts attain the same high level as their predecessors. Part IV forms the concluding portion of Vol. II. In an accompanying letter it is stated that the Editors have in typescript nearly the whole of volume III and that they are working ahead on other letters. Students of folk customs, civil and church history, philology, etc., will find here many an item to interest them. The Dictionary is edited with the greatest care and shows splendid workmanship on the part of Dr. Grant, his assistants and collaborators. The printing has been done in excellent style and the printers deserve a word of congratulation.

D.B.

# ‘TABOO’ WORDS AMONG SHETLAND FISHERMEN.

## A PRELIMINARY SURVEY FROM AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW.

BY PROFESSOR JAMES DREVER.

In one of Dr. Jakobsen’s popular lectures—‘The Old Shetland Dialect’—he deals briefly with the so-called “taboo” words used by Shetland fishermen at the haaf-fishing, from a more or less anthropological point of view. The most likely origin, he says, of the custom of using these words—a custom common to the fishermen of Norway and the Faroes—is that “before the introduction and spread of Christianity, and also long after that period the people, and especially the fishermen, believed themselves to be surrounded by sea-spirits, whom they could not see,” but who watched jealously all that they were doing when at the haaf-fishing. “In the Pagan time,” he goes on, “people believed in the sea-god *Ægir*, whose Kingdom was the mysterious ocean, and he had his attendant minor spirits who watched intruders upon his element. The feeling which came to prevail among the fishermen towards the sea-spirits was one of mysterious dread. They considered the sea a foreign element in which they were intruders, and the sea-spirits in consequence hostile to them.” Naturally, therefore, the fisherman when at the haaf must take great care what he says or speaks about, and it becomes very important for him to have a secret language, a language known and used by other fishermen, but substituting other names for certain things which it is important to avoid mentioning by their usual names. Jakobsen points out that this

language consists for the most part of old Norse words, a certain number of them being apparently old worship words and words used in the older Eddic poetry.

Jakobsen's interest in these 'taboo' words is of course mainly philological, but these suggestions raise interesting anthropological and psychological problems, which seem to call for more attention than has been given to them by those who have hitherto dealt with the Shetland haaf language. It is to some extent perhaps a misnomer to call all the words 'taboo' words, the 'taboo' words being rather the words for which the haaf words are substituted, but this point will be considered later. Jakobsen's suggestion is that the haaf words originated in the main from the fishermen's superstitious dread of the sea-spirits, and that the fact that some of the older words are worship words would seem to indicate worship of these sea-spirits. There is, however, a good deal more in it than that. In fact it is possible that a more detailed study of the haaf language might yield interesting information regarding the beliefs and superstitions and even religious practices of the early Norse inhabitants, not merely of Shetland, but also of the other Norse colonies in the West, and of the mother country. It is at least certain that anthropologists have placed on record numerous facts regarding the 'taboos' of primitive peoples which have a more than superficial resemblance to the Shetland phenomena.

'Taboo' might in its original sense be defined as prohibition dependent on religious or magical sanctions. In 'taboo' are originally combined two notions (*a*) of the sacred and (*b*) of the impure or unclean, but the impurity or uncleanness has itself a sacred origin. The idea has no moral implications, but implies simply the separation from ordinary purposes, and the appropriation to religious or magical purposes of persons, things, etc. As it is employed at the present day, the word 'taboo' may be

said to cover 'the forbidden,' but always with the background of religion or magic. If an individual does not abstain from certain acts which are 'taboo,' undesirable magical results will follow, which will, as it were, punish the breaking of the 'taboo.' In connection with our present field of enquiry it must be remembered that 'taboos' on names are very widely prevalent among primitive peoples, and take various forms. The motives underlying such 'taboos' may also vary. One fundamental motive, however, is nearly always present, a motive which is also exhibited on a wide scale in folklore and fairy tale. That is the belief that naming an object (or a person) gives one some sort of power over the object (or person), the name being thus regarded as having some sort of inherent connection with the object, as being in fact an essential part of it. Thus the name of king, chief, or priest is almost universally 'taboo,' since king, chief, and priest have all a sacred character attaching to them. The haaf-fishermen's use of 'boniman,' or 'predikanter' or 'prestingolva' or 'upstander' for 'minister' might possibly be explained as an instance of this kind of 'taboo.'

Again words used in a religious or magical ritual are also frequently 'taboo' on ordinary occasions. A very close analogy to one group of haaf 'taboos' is described by W. H. R. Rivers in his account of the "dairy ritual" among the Todas, a primitive native race of Southern India. The main occupation of the Todas consists in the care of their buffaloes and the work of their dairies. In connection with these latter an elaborate ritual has been developed. Many features about this ritual have analogies among the superstitions existing—at least formerly—among the Shetland fishermen. In particular the 'taboo' words of the dairy ritual are closely analogous to a large group of the haaf 'taboo' words. In the ritual special words are used for objects in the dairy and its

surroundings. In the same way the haaf fisherman uses special words for his fishing tackle, his boat and its gear, the fish he is seeking and so on. These ritual words are 'taboo' with the Todas, as far as ordinary intercourse is concerned, and Rivers had considerable difficulty in obtaining them.

From the nature of the case the ritual of the Todas cannot be expected to present close analogies for the 'taboo' words designating the different kinds of fish taken by the haaf fishermen—cod, ling, tusk, skate, mackerel, halibut—but these would naturally occur as part of the haaf ritual. The origin of some of the words used is uncertain—Jakobsen suggests Lappish—which would apparently indicate considerable antiquity. The naming of the fish by words possessing in themselves a magical power would be supposed to give a power over the fish. In this part of the haaf language we have then, if we may argue on the analogy of the Toda dairy ritual, an old quasi-religious or magical fishing ritual, to be used by the fisherman when he is pursuing a calling upon which his livelihood depends.

The evidence that we have here the remains of such an old ritual is fairly strong independently of the analogy with the dairy ritual of the Todas and other primitive rituals of a similar character. Not only have we 'taboo' words for the boat and its gear, the fishing tackle and the fish, but every phase and stage of the haaf fisherman's procedure is marked off, as it were, by a group of 'taboo' words. The ritual seems to begin with the obtaining of the necessary bait, with which are associated certain superstitions and certain 'taboo' phrases. The fisherman will not say where he is going or where he has been, but will reply to the enquirer, if he replies at all, with some such phrase as: "sjusamillabakka" (between sea and shore) or "stakkamillabakka" (between rocks and shore), both 'taboo' phrases. Similarly there are

'taboo' words and phrases associated with the launching of the boat, its rowing or sailing, the preparing of the bait, the baiting of the hooks, the setting of the line, the catching of the fish, the hauling of the fish, the preparing of food when at the haaf. At certain points, clearly the most important points in the procedure as a whole, we have a wealth of 'taboo' words and phrases. This is shown most strikingly in connection with the fishing itself. For example as the fisherman hauls in ling (for which he has at least five words) he says as the fish succeed one another: "White, white upo white, white in under hvido, hvida ligger o hvido." The curious thing about this is that it can hardly be considered a charm, since the ling are already caught. On the other hand, to make mackerel bite, he says: "Rolli, rolli, rise and rive, Trivi, rivi, an' tak de dorro,"—an obvious charm.

Strong confirmation of the ritual character of this large group of 'taboo' words in the haaf language would be given if it could be shown that the words were 'taboo' in ordinary life ashore. How far that is the case the present writer is unable to say. There is a haaf word for the breaking of a 'taboo'—"boli"—but it is not clear under what circumstances, and with reference to what words, if any, this word is, or was at one time, employed. Some information regarding this point would be very valuable.

The theory of a fishing ritual would account for about half the total number of 'taboo' words—at least a hundred and fifty—recorded by Jakobsen. It might possibly account for many more, but it could not account for all. Tentatively it might be suggested that it is possible to classify the 'taboo' words in three groups with considerable allowance for over-lapping:—

I. A group consisting of what Jakobson calls old worship words, including words which appear in the older Eddic poems, such as the "Alvissmal." This would include words for the sun (foger, sjiner, sulin), for the

moon (globeren, glomer, glunta), for the sea (djup, ljoag, mar), for the land (kogi, mana), for fire (brenner, furin, fon), and possibly a few more.

II. Words belonging to the fishing ritual, which have already been discussed.

III. A miscellaneous group consisting of protective or substitute words, i.e. words used instead of words which were for some reason 'taboo' at the haaf, together with what might be designated merely 'lucky' words, most of them later accretions.

These are however points to which the present writer hopes to return on a subsequent occasion.



## A BOAT SONG FROM UNST.

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY WILLIAM W. RATTER.

Four fragments of old Norn rhymes from Unst are given by Mrs. Jessie M. E. Saxby in the "Home of a Naturalist," the work by her and her brother, Rev. Biot Edmondston.

One of the fragments as given by her, beginning "Saina poba wer-a," was in a fuller manner noted by Dr. Jakobsen, but both versions are too corrupt to be understood. However, the writer during the first great war got some lines of this old song from an Unst man who sang the lines and his version seems to be intelligible or partly so. Here are the words as he sang them with an attempt made at translation, word by word.

### THE OLD SONG.

Starka virna vestilie  
 Obadeea, obadeea  
 Starka virna vestilie  
 Obadeea monye  
 Stala, stoita, stonga, raer,  
 Oh, whit says doo, da bunshka baer;  
 Oh, whit says doo, da bunshka baer.  
 Litra mae vee, drengie  
 Saina papa wara  
 Obadeea, Obadeea,  
 Saina papa wara  
 Obadeea moyne.

### SUGGESTED TRANSLATION.

*Starka*, Norwegian *stark* or *staerke*, meaning *Strong*.

*Virna*, *weather* or *wind*. Compare the biblical, "truede vjerne og søen"; rebuked the winds and the sea.

*Vestilie.* *Westerly.* From the West'ard.

*Obadeea.* This may be the Norn equivalent of the Norwegian *obyde*, given by Aasen meaning "fortræd": hurt, trouble, annoyance.

*Monye or moynie.* Men? It appears the skipper is addressing the crew.

*Stala.* Put in order. Norw. *stella*.

*Stoita*—support. Norw. *Støde*, "bringe til Stadighed"; in this case, brace up by the shrouds.

*Stong*, mast.

*Raer*; re, yard; but *raer* is the plural. Was there once a type of boat here different in rig from the sixern?

*Oh whit* says *doo*, is plain modern Shetlandic.

*Da bonshka baer.* At *baaden ska' baer*; that the boat will bear or carry her sail. *Baaden* would become *boen* through the "d" being elided when the article *en* was added, *baaden* > *bo(d)en*.

*Litra* or *leetra*, Norwegian *lita*, "lada sig nøie," be pleased with. *Litra mae vee.* I am pleased with that.

*Drengie*, boys.

*Saina papa wara.* Bless us, father ours; or bless us, our father.

Was this old rigmarole sung to the round dance, the dance still danced by the Faeroese to the tunes of their old ballads? It is not unlikely. Mrs. Saxby tells us this was a long song. The pity is, there is practically nothing of the old songs or rhymes from the days when Norn was the language of our forefathers that has come down to us.

UNST BOAT SONG.

Tom M. Ratter's score of the old tune as he took it down first from the whistling of William W. Ratter in 1943.

MM about 112.

The musical score is written for two staves in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is simple and repetitive, consisting of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are in Shetland dialect and are written below the notes.

STOER-KA WOER-NA' WEST-A-LIE OB-BA-DI-A OB-BA-DI-A

STOER-KA WOER-NA WEST-A-LIE OB-BA-DI-A MON - JE.

STELL-A, STOIT-A, STONG A RAER, OH WHAT SAYS DOO! DA BONSH-KA BAER OH

WHAT SAYS DOO! DA BONSH-KA BAER LITER-A ME-VI DRENG - I

SEN-A PAP-A WA - RA OB-BA-DI-A OB-BA-DI-A

SEN-A PAP-A WA - RA OB-BA-DI-A MON - JE

In 1945 Mr. Tom M. Ratter noted down the following version in 6/8 time which he considers preferable to the version which he noted in 1943 in 4/4 time. His preference for the 1945 version in 6/8 time arises through the fact that the tune, if sung in that time, has a rhythm which fits the rhythmical action of rowing much more accurately than the version in 4/4 time which is too march-like in character.

The version in 6/8 time receives some support from Mr. W. W. Ratter's version in Professor Otto Andersson's "*Giga och Bröllopslåtar på Shetland*" (1938; Åbo, Finland; page 88 not translated) in which it was evidently

sung in 6/8 time and which almost coincides with that of 1945, except for one note and the metronome speed which he thinks should be slower.

### UNST BOAT SONG.

As noted from William W. Ratter in 1945 by Tom M. Ratter.

MM about 54 - 60.

STOERKA WOERNA WESTA - LIE ... OB - BA - DI A, OB - BA - DI - A,  
 STOERKA WOERNA WESTA - LIE ... OB - BA - DI - A MON - JE.

STELLA, STOITA, STONGA RAER, OH WHAT SAYS DOO! DA BONSHKA BAER OH  
 WHAT SAYS DOO! DA BONSHKA BAER -- LITERA MEVI DREN - GI.

SE - NA PAPA WA --- RA --- OB - BA - DI - A, OB - BA - DI - A  
 SENA PAPA WA --- RA --- OB - BA - DI - A MON - JE.

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William W. Ratter, in Professor Otto Andersson: "Giga och bröllopslåtar på Shetland. (Separattryck ur Budkavlen No. 3, 1938)." Åbo, 1938, p. 88.\*

\* For *westerley* read *westalie*; for *morgie* read *monje*; for *scalley* read *stella*; for *at* read *da*.

## AN ORKNEY MEDICO OF THE 17TH CENTURY.

MATHEW MACKAILE, APOTHECARY AND  
CHYRURGEON.

BY JOHN MOWAT, F.S.A. SCOT.

It is now difficult to say when the earliest trained medical practitioner started practice in the Orkney islands. No doubt the ailments of the common people were looked after by the local "skilly body," whose supposed knowledge of use of various kinds of herbs had been handed on from one generation to another. Fortunately the healthy physical frames of the virile race did not require much medical treatment and only the better class could afford to pay a doctor's fee.

One of the earliest records we have of a medical man of any standing having given his skill to the people of Orkney is that of Mathew Mackaile. He came to Kirkwall about 1660 and remained four years. We learn that he had been invited by the "Sheriffdome" which also guaranteed a salary. He also seems to have had the patronage of the Earl of Morton. He styles himself "Apothecary and Chyrurgeon" and "Physician and Chyrurgeon." While resident in Kirkwall he must have visited most of the islands and he must also have been medical adviser to several of the local gentry. There was a receipt extant and in the possession of the late Archdeacon Craven which bears this out. The receipt, which is dated Nov. 14, 1662, reads as follows:—

"I Mr. Mathew Mackaile, Physician and Chyrurgeon to the Sheriffdome of Orkney, grants me to have received from Robert Sinclair of Sabay, the sum of Three pounds

Scots, and that as his proportion of my sallarie which he (with the rest of the Gentry) hath obliged himself to pay unto me for the year proceeding November 1, 1662. In witness throf I have written and subscribed this pnt. Nov. 14, 1662. Mathew Mackaile."

Three pounds Scots at that date was equal to five shillings sterling and does not seem to be a very extravagant doctor's bill for Sabay, who was one of the chief landholders in the islands. As it also indicates, the receipt is for Sabay's share of the annual guaranteed salary which could not have been very large. It would be very interesting to know if there are any local records giving the experiences of this seventeenth century medico during his stay in Kirkwall. From his various writings he must have made himself fairly familiar with the islands.

Biographical particulars of Mackaile are very meagre. A few facts of his career are given in the Dictionary of National Biography. Some of the most interesting points in his life story can be gleaned from the dedications and prefaces of the various curious pamphlets which he wrote and published. We gather that Mathew Mackaile was the son of an Edinburgh Minister, Hew or Hugh Mackaile, who was a minister at Percietown in 1633, where Mathew was born. He afterwards held charges at Irvine in 1642 and Trinity College Church, Edinburgh, in 1649. The father was also on several occasions a member of the Commission of the Assembly. He died in 1660, the year the son went to Orkney.

Mackaile's mother's name was Sibilla Stevenson, also the daughter of a minister. Mathew was born about 1636, probably in one of the Ayrshire parishes. Until he graduated M.A. at Edinburgh in 1654 we have no record of his early days. He seems to have acquired considerable fluency in Latin which was the language of his first pamphlet "Moffat Well," published in 1659. He would

also seem to have had a very proficient knowledge of Holy Writ, as he quotes and uses biblical phraseology very extensively in his various medical writings. This is not surprising, he being a son of the manse. Indeed it is more surprising that he took up the study of chemistry, medicine and natural history instead of following his forbears in the ministry of the church. Another ministerial connection he had was his cousin, the Rev. Hugh Mackaile, covenanter and martyr, who for his associations with the rising of 1666 was condemned and sentenced to death at Edinburgh. There is a hint that Mackaile, who was then a M.D., brought letters from the Marchioness of Douglas and the Duchess of Hamilton on behalf of the martyr, but without avail.

Dr. H. Marwick in his "A Record Miscellany. I." given in the *Orkney Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, mentions two other local documents which refer to Mackaile and his stay in Orkney. The one is a Charter of sasine of 1664 in which he appears as "bailie in that part," and is further described as "Mr. Mathew Mackaile Chyrurge medicine to the Earledome of Orkney." The second document introduces him in quite a different light. He is charged before William Douglas and Patrick Blair, Justices of peace at Kirkwall, on the 19th of November, 1664, of a breach of peace, along with "Hary Erbery, marchand." It would appear from the recorded deposition that Erbery's wife had been a patient of Mackaile and he had said that the treatment of her pap had so protracted the cure that an old woman could have done it in a much shorter time. The doctor challenged him with this and "give him the lie." After that, many unhandsome expressions passed on both sides, one of which was that Erbery was a rebel and traitor when he entered the country. It appeared he belonged to Cromwell's soldiers who had for sometime been stationed in the town. The soldier-merchant's retort to this

accusation was a throwing down of the glove, with a challenge to fight.

When the man of peace intervened, Erbury's opinion of the skill of the "professor of physic" was not very complimentary and he said he could bring proof to show that Mackaile had killed a man by giving him a vomit which made him blind and from which he died. Such outspoken criticism would hardly pass these days. The trial does not appear on record. By the time of the quarter sessions Mackaile may have left Orkney. But a concluding note, of a later date, certifies that they "fully agreed one with another, and drunk together in a brotherly way."

From the preface of his first published Tract, dedicated to his patron Patrick Hepburn who "Sowed the first seeds of the pharmaceutico-spagyric art in my mind," he indicates that he studied chemistry at Paris under Hannibal Barlet, but how long he remained in France is not recorded. He was back again in Edinburgh, and acted as an Apothecary and became a burgess of the city. In 1657 he was employed by Archbishop Sharp to write papers regarding church affairs in Scotland. In 1659 his first printed book appeared—a short treatise on "Moffat Well" written in Latin and printed at Edinburgh. The next we hear of him was in 1664, when he issued an English translation of his Latin tract on "Moffat Well," and printed with it several other tracts. This work is dedicated to William, Earl of Morton and is dated from Kirkwall, April 22nd, 1664. In the dedication he says: "I do usurp the memory of your Lordship's most undeserved courtsie in admitting me into the number of your Lordship's favourites by appointing me to attend the Sherrifdom of Orkney as a publick servant unto your Lordship and gentlemen there."

Mackaile probably resided at Kirkwall about four years, during which he visited Caithness and various of the



Orkney islands where he studied natural phenomena and noted numerous "Curiosities." In 1666 he wrote a short note "On the Tides round the Orkneys," which was sent to Sir Robert Murray and appeared in the 7th volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society in 1672. This article was unsigned but the authorship was claimed by Mackaile in one of his later pamphlets and in a later communication to the Royal Society at London, in which he says "I have already contributed my mite tho' incognito 'The account of the Tydes about the Orcades.'" The paper, which was afterwards reprinted in Barry's History of Orkney and in Macfarlane's Geographical Account, shows that Mackaile was a very careful observer.

In Vol. III of Macfarlane's Geographical Collections there is a longer paper entitled "A short Relation of the most considerable things in the Orkney Islands by Mr. Mathew Mackaile, Apothecarie at Aberdeen," contributed to Sir Robert Sibbald in 1683. Also in this volume there are two letters describing in detail curious things he had observed on a visit to Caithness in 1666. One was the description of a disease among the cattle in Caithness which the people called "Heastie," and which they believed came from witchcraft. The other was the account of a woman in Bower who was supposed to have been seven years with child and never brought to bed. "At seven years she died but was not opened there being no chururgion near the place." He also says, "Mr. Patrick Clunies, minister at Wick, Caithness, informed me that there was a Marish not far from his house, out of which one could dig as many stones called thunderbolts as they pleased." These stories were written in the house of the Earl of Caithness. Also in a four page tract entitled "Monstrum Cathanesiense" he gives the full and particular description of a huge boy named Donald Sutherland, born and living at the Church of Latheron in Caithness. "The boy," says Mackaile, who came there on horseback

on the 7th day of May, 1663, "was 18 months and 14 days old and was as tall as an ordinary child three years old." He goes into extraordinary detail of the physical appearance of this abnormal child.

In 1666 Mackaile had returned to Edinburgh and we find him interceding for his cousin Hugh Mackaile, the martyr, who had been a prisoner in the Tolbooth for his sympathies with the covenanters rising.

During this stay in Edinburgh, we find him busy collecting material for his tract "The Diversity of Salt."

In 1671, Mackaile was invited to Aberdeen by the magistrates to practise as an apothecary and physician. He accepted the offer and for twenty-five years he pursued his profession with ever increasing reputation and credit. It is not quite clear what were Mackaile's actual degrees. In his first published pamphlet he describes himself as "Pharmacopocist, pharmiacist," but in subsequent works his favourite designation is "Chyrurgo-Medicine." Later he writes himself as "Apothecary and Chirurgical alias Chirurgo-Medicine." In 1696, King's College, Aberdeen, conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Medicine. He would be at that time not less than 60 years of age. A great part of his later years in Aberdeen must have been devoted to the writing and publication of his curious pamphlets. For an account of these I am mainly indebted to Professor John Ferguson's scholarly Bibliography of Alchemy, and the Ferguson Collection in Glasgow University Library.

"Moffat Well," a Latin treatise was printed at Edinburgh in 1659, and translated into English and printed along with several other pamphlets at Edinburgh, 1664.

In 1675, he published, at Rotterdam, a curious tract which gives proof that he was then engaged in medical practice and that he had surgical knowledge. The tract is dedicated to Dr. Patrick Urquhart, Professor in Aberdeen University and to James Bothwick, surgeon,

and other patrons in Aberdeen. This tract was entitled "Noli-me-tangere tactum," or a treatise concerning cancers.

In 1677, there appeared his tract on "Mace," dedicated to the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, George Skeen of Fintray and the Magistrates of that city.

We might mention other works: "The Diversitie of Salts and Spirits maintained," printed by John Forbes, printer to the town, Aberdeen, 1683. For the production of this work, which reflected on certain local physicians, Forbes was rebuked by the Town Council and ordered to print no more works until they had been inspected by the Council.

"Terræ Prodromus Theoricus, containing a short account of Moses Philosophizans," etc., is the last work of Mackaile and also printed by John Forbes, Aberdeen, 1691. It is one of the most curious, and makes most extraordinary use of biblical phrases and quotations from Scripture. We have no record of Mackaile's death.

## CAITHNESS FOLK-TALES AND HISTORICAL INCIDENTS.

EDITED BY JOHN MOWAT, F.S.A.SCOT.

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### I. FOLK-TALES ON CLOD-THROWING.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were stories of strange and mysterious happenings in Caithness, concerning which some believed and others doubted. One of these mysterious and uncanny manifestations was what was described as "Clod-throwing." There were at least three instances of these happenings which created extraordinary sensations. One was in the Braemore district of Latheron, another in the Spittal district of Halkirk, and a third at Freswick in Canisbay. Each of the cases had this similarity that the afflicted parties were assailed with broken pieces of peat or clods within certain houses and thrown by unseen hands.

The first instance comes from the inland parish where the inmates of a certain dwelling were tormented by clods coming from the burn, and visitors to the house were assailed in the same way. In these days, in many of the country houses, the fire was in the centre and set against a wall known as the "brace," and in the roof above, was the "lum" which permitted the smoke to leisurely find its way out. This was a very natural way for mischievous boys to find an opportunity to molest the inmates. One night, a doubting neighbour, thinking to waylay the perpetrators and to suppress the scandal, climbed on to the thatched roof and watched the lum. Nothing happened outside, but the missiles continued to fly about the fireside. Then it was the custom for a quantity of

peats to be taken into the fire-room during the day and put into a corner known as the "peat-neuk." It was from here the clods came. Some neighbours came to make light of the whole affair, and for the peat clods substituted potatoes. Next evening the watchers were welcomed by a shower of potatoes. They were now persuaded that it was not the work of human hands. All made for the door, and the owner of the house was left with the supernatural company. It was now decided that something must be done. A consultation was held and it was agreed that a cock should be taken from a neighbouring district and put among the fowls at the haunted house, and a Bible placed above the door. This was done and at night-fall the cock began to crow and continued until dawn. From that night there was no more clod-throwing. Such was the story told by one of the watchers to the narrator many years ago.

The second story, known as "The haunted girl of Braemore," received considerable publicity and even press notice. The girl, whose name was Murray, was about 14 years of age when the molestations began. Whatever house she happened to be in after dark, unaccountable things would happen. Peats would suddenly spring from the fire on to the floor. Potatoes would leap from the table, and chairs would make attempts to dance. Bits of turf and peats would come flying in at the open door or windows. As no one was hurt by the flying missiles, it would appear the mission assigned to them was more to annoy than to damage, and although these annoyances followed the girl for a number of years, she did not seem to be frightened and accepted the perplexing business with considerable coolness. There was some attempt at explanation. One was that the girl had removed the broken part of a coffin from the churchyard. Another was that the girl and a chum disputed and were belabouring each other with broken peats, when the mother of the

other girl, known as uncanny, appeared and said to the girl Murray, "you are fond of clods, but will get plenty of them by and by." However it might be explained, at the time there was a firm belief in a supernatural power at work.

The third illustration was popularly known as "Sanny Gray's Clods," and at the time created quite a sensation in the county. Sanny was a cobbler, and lived on the Heather of Freswick. For a period he was subject to a curious affliction, never fully explained. It was the general report in the district that "clods or broken pieces of peat would rise from the hearth and strike him in the face. Or as he sat at his work on his cobbler's stool similar missiles would come down the lum and over the bed, directed at his person. Even the sharp tools on the stool would rise and wound him." His case achieved considerable notoriety and people came from all parts to enquire into the mystery. The Rev. Robert Caldwell, Independent Minister, was one of the visitors, and it is said that, while he was engaged in devotional exercises, a clod struck him in "'e sma o' 'e back." Capt. Sutherland was another who decided to call and show his unbelief. He, it is said, was assailed by a fiery peat. A neighbour, an elder of the kirk, also went to sit with the cobbler for a night and during the evening a missile, heavier than usual, landed on the cobbler's stool, and sent an awl flying, which struck the thumb of the elder and left a mark. For some generations the name of the cobbler was whispered with awe. Associated with the story was this explanation. Sanny had a servant lassie whom he had cause to dismiss, and did so using an oath. From that time the plague of clods began and continued until the servant left. This was sufficient, and, by the superstitiously inclined, it was believed that the divine wrath had been vented on the house for the rough language that had been used to a young and innocent girl. Such are the tales as they were told.

## II. THE MINISTER OF CANISBAY AND THE LAIRD OF MEY, 1639.

“Complaint of Mr. Androw Ogston minister at Canisbay  
in Caithness upon the Laird of Mey, 22nd August 1639.”

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Petition by Mr. Ogston.

“Right Honorable and revered Moderator and revered Commissioners of this Venerable Assembly, into your Godly wisdoms humble mimes and Shows I, Mr. Androw Ogstoune Minister of Canisbay, in the province of Caithness, that wheras there was a solemn fast appoynted to be kept for putting up ane common supplication to God for blissing to the late Assemblie at Glasgow indicted by his M/. I, having come to the Kirk, being entered to perform my office, non off my parissoners wold cum into the Kirk with me, though I sent out my officer for them severall tymes. Wherupo, after I had preached to nyne or ten I went out to the Kirkyard, and finding the people still there, I began to rebuk them for as fearfull contempt of God’s word and prophanatie of his Sabbath. They answered all in on voyce that Sr. Wm. Sinclair, Laird of Mey, comandit them that no one of them sould enter into the Kirk that day. As also that upon the last December 1638 when I sent the Kirk officer to sit before the Presbyterie a servant of the Laird of Meyes for adulterie, the laird took the summonds from the officer, did beat him and putt him in prison for two nights. So that I got no man to serve in the said officer for fear of the Laird of Mey. Moreover, in March this past yeir 1639, my horse was stabbed in my stabill with a dirk.

Besids all this I got no obedience to Kirk discipline by fornicators, adulterors, drunkards and suck lyke licentious persons, who do back themselves with the laird of Mey, saying they have a master to defend them. Wherefor I do most humblie intreat your Godlie wisdomes to tak

such ordour therwith that I may enjoy the comon benefit of the full and peacable exercise of my calling and utheris may be deterd from such intollerable insolence I recomend you and your travells to the speciall Direction of ' Him who is only wise.' "

Extract from the Woodrow MSS. in the Scottish National Library.

Rev. Andrew Ogstoun, formerly a teacher in Turriff, Buchan, was presented to the Kirk of Canisbay in 1601 by Patrick Mowat of Balquholly and Freswick who was the patron. Ogstoun was present at the Glasgow Assembly of 1610 and along with Alex. Forbes, Bishop of Caithness, voted for the movement to establish Episcopacy in Scotland. He was also a member of the 1638 Assembly at Glasgow to which the petition refers.

Ogstoun adopted original methods to encourage church attendance. The tradition is that failing in the ordinary way to get the attendance he desired he invoked the services of a piper. Accordingly on Sabbath morning a short time previous to the hour of service, a piper began at one of the more outlying portions of the parish and played his way to the church. The plan worked well, for the people, attracted by the novelty, followed the music Sabbath by Sabbath and thus he gathered a good congregation.

It is also related that after the close of the service he allowed the congregation to have a game at " Knotty " before going home. He died in 1650 in his 83rd year. In Canisbay Churchyard there is a large upright monument to his memory with a lengthy latin inscription. He was the ancestor of the Houston family of Canisbay.

### III. GEORGE BORROW IN CAITHNESS.

1858.

George Borrow was born a wanderer. In his books, " The Bible in Spain " and " Lavengro " and " Romany Rye," we have some of the finest travel literature. Not



much is known, or has been recorded, of his visit to Caithness and the North of Scotland in 1858. In the autumn of that year he was ill and depressed. His wife urged a tour in Scotland. He set out alone. In "Lavengro" he gives picturesque records of an earlier visit to Scotland. This time he took notes in little books, not yet published. All we have is in some letters sent to his wife, from which we learn he was in Oban on Oct. 22nd, in Inverness on Nov. 5th, at Thurso on the 21st and in Kirkwall on the 27th. By this time, he writes, he had walked several hundred miles in the Highlands. At Inverness he writes of meeting "a stout gentleman from Caithness—John Miller, gave me his card—show mine—his delight." A week later—"I was disappointed in a passage to Thurso by sea. So I was obliged to return to this place. On Tuesday D.V. I shall set out on foot and I hope to find your letter waiting me at the Post Office Thurso."

The next letter was written after his arrival at Thurso and is dated Nov. 21 and addressed to "My Dear Carreta," his pet name for his wife. It runs as follows—"I reached this place on Friday night and was glad enough to get your kind letter. I shall be glad to get home to you. Since my last letter to you I have walked 160 miles. I was terribly taken in with respect of distances, however I managed to make my way. I have been to Johnny Groats House which is about 22 miles from this place. I had tolerably fine weather all the way, but within two or three miles from that place [John O' Groats] a terrible storm arose. The next day the country was covered with ice and snow. There is at present a kind of Greenland winter, colder almost than I ever knew in Russia. The streets are so covered with ice that it is dangerous to step out. Tomorrow I pass over into Orkney. It is well that I have no further to walk for walking is almost impossible. The last 20 miles were terrible and the weather is worse

than it was then.” This would indicate the walk along the north coast of Caithness from John O’ Groats to Thurso. We cannot be sure that he spent a night at John O’ Groats but it is not unlikely that on the night the 20th the last lap of the road would be in the vicinity, although we have no record in the Huna Inn Visitors’ Book to confirm. From the time he left Inverness it was a full fortnight and in the journey he probably took the east route, although Wick is not even mentioned in this letter to his wife. Later in the letter he remarks—“ I was terribly deceived with respect to steamboats. I was told one passed over to Orkney every day. I have now been waiting two days, and there is not one yet. I have had quite enough of Scotland when I visited Johnny Groat.” This would indicate that he spent three or four nights in Thurso, where, we would like to know. His impressions of the little grey town would have been interesting. He has two complaints. One that his hat is very shabby having been frequently drenched with rain and he asks to get a new one sent on. Thurso could not provide a hat. Then he complains of his appetite being “ poor ” owing to the badness of the food and want of regular meals.

The next letter is dated from “ Kirkwall Saturday 27th Nov.” He had walked from Stromness and mentions having met Mr. Petrie, Clerk of Supply, and Sheriff Robertson. He sends “ a little Kirkwall Newspaper ” and also says he posted “ a Johnny Groats Newspaper.” He gives instructions that they are “ not to be torn as they are very curious.”

Dr. Knapp, one of the biographers of Borrow, mentions that he took voluminous notes of this tour in Orkney and Shetland and the North of Scotland in little leather bound notebooks which had not been published. Here might be the hidden treasure of his Caithness Tour and something as picturesque as “ Wild Wales ” or “ Seeing Scotland.”

## REPORT OF TEST EXCAVATION AT LANGSKAILL, ST. ANDREWS, ORKNEY.

By ERNEST W. MARWICK.

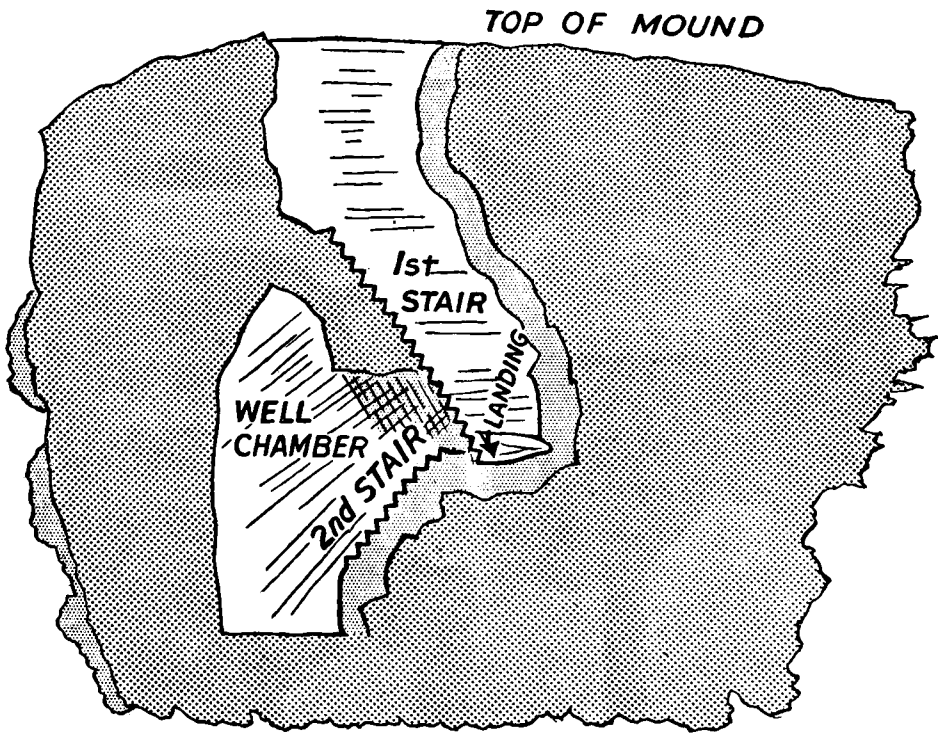
Hon. District Secretary.

A mound at Langskaill, St. Andrews, Orkney, known locally as Moan Howie (Mine Howe on the Ordnance Map) is at present being investigated by Mr. Alfred Marcus of Kirkwall, assisted by several people in the neighbourhood. Mr. Marcus made a test investigation at the suggestion of Mrs. Tait of Quoyburray, whose husband owns the farm of Langskaill. There were various local traditions concerning this mound, which is one of several, almost within a stone's throw of each other. It is said that a passage leading from it in the direction of the cemetery (at the other side of the road) was once uncovered, and there is also a tale that a cow once disappeared into the earth in the vicinity of the mound. These stories had whetted local interest in the nature of this interesting hillock.

The excavation was visited by Members of the Ancient Monuments Inspectorate on the 13th June, 1946. The following description of the work in progress is taken from a report by Mr. James Richardson, Inspector of Ancient Monuments.

“The excavators dug an examination pit exposing kitchen midden deposits mixed with rubble dross. Transferring their operations a few feet away, the investigators were rewarded by revealing a truncated flight of steps contained within well-built walls of dry rubble masonry. Slowly and carefully tracing their way downwards by withdrawing the soil packing, the excavators found that the long flight of steps was arrested by a landing. From

this point another stair descended on an axis set at a reverse angle; this stair gave entrance to a round well or cistern chamber packed with peat ash and flagged at the bottom. This chamber is ceiled by a well constructed dome of beehive character. The respective stairways, though set at a steep incline, were devised so that the treads were of ample foothold—a form of construction found at the well-known Broch of Midhowe, Rousay,



Rough sketch giving a cross section of the mound.

excavated by Mr. Walter Grant of Trumland and also at the Broch of Gurness, Aikerness.

“Where the stairway changes its axis there are two mural recesses where buckets and vessels of pottery could be placed or where milk could be kept in a cool atmosphere.

“The evidence so far revealed suggests that the construction unearthed is part of a Broch tower of the

usual circular plan. It is anticipated that further examination trenches dug on the side of the mound may reveal the outer wall of the tower. If this supposition is correct, then the arrangement of the well-house and its stairway will prove to be the most highly developed of its kind in any monument of the Broch Age so far known. When the true nature of the construction is established, the stairway will be temporarily sealed until circumstances permit for a complete and scientific excavation of the whole site."

<sup>1</sup> A notice of the find is given in the *Orcadian* of 30th May, 1946. Ed.

# RENTALS OF THE CROWN LANDS AND REVENUES OF THE LORDSHIP OF SHETLAND.

c. 1507-1513—c. 1832.

By A. W. JOHNSTON.

(Abbreviations are given at the end).

In 1937 and 1938 grants were awarded by the Leverhulme Research Fellowships in aid of research into "The Rentals of Shetland c. 1500-1717."

These Rentals (Nos. 1, 3 and 6 of the following List), have been arranged and collated in parallel analytical form, and research made into the economic system of the islands, of which a brief preliminary summary is appended.

Since this was done copies of Rentals Nos. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12, have been obtained, which have now to be collated with Nos. 1, 3 and 6. No 2 is missing, and No. 10 has not yet been found.

## LIST OF RENTALS.

1. Lord Sinclair's Rental of the Mainland and South Isles of Shetland, with the title: 'The skat of Zetland,' and a later title: 'Skat Book of Zetland' (RH.). From internal evidence it is now dated 1507-1513. The Rental states: "Item Swynbrucht [*now* Sumburgh] . . . in my lordis hands." In 1498, Swinburgh had been given to Sir David Sinclair, who bequeathed it in 1506 to Henry, Lord Sinclair, the lessee of the Lordship of Shetland. Sir David Sinclair died in 1507, and Lord Sinclair died at Flodden in 1513, so that the Rental must have been compiled in 1507-1513.

Contents. The skatt of all odal and lordship lands, and the rent of lordship lands, entered in three separate accounts for each parish, viz. (1) skatt- and rent- wadmäl (homespun cloth currency), and levy-tax, 'leanger.'—one penny of leanger was payable by a calf-skin, or half an ell of wadmäl; (2) rent-butter; and (3) skatt-butter, originally paid in malt. These accounts are grouped in three sections, viz., A. Skatt- and rent-wadmäl, and levy- tax accounts for all parishes, arranged consecutively; and similarly arranged sections, B. rent-butter accounts; and C. skatt-butter accounts. The names of parishes and farms are thus repeated thrice.

It is a tax-collector's rough list of the lordship revenue in the Mainland and South Isles, omitting the North Isles of Unst, Yell and Fetlar, of which a contemporary Rental is not known to exist.

The Rental is a copy (of a missing original) made about 1540 (the date of the manufacture of its paper) and probably in 1542, when the lease of the lordship changed hands.

The anonymous copyist apologises for his ignorance of its 'strange' terms, resulting in obvious misreadings, such as *m* for *w*, in *-mek* for *-wek*, i.e. *wick*, and Colmasater for Colwasater in Delting—*Colwa-*, No. dial., *Kolva-*, gen. of *Kolve* f. 'charcoal.' (Aas.).

This is the only Shetland Rental which uses the term 'uriland,' ON. *øyrisland* 'ounce-land,' in: "Item, all Quhailsay iij vrisland," viz., Sumbuster (Symbister), Vsbuster (Isbister), and Brucht (Brough), paying the regular rate of skatt on the basis of the 5 ells wadmäl currency ounce which had then depreciated to 3:1. This term and 'leanger veafirht' will be dealt with at the end.

2. 'The Bishop's Rentall produced to the Exchequer in November 1612' [by Bishop Law], cited in No. 3 below, but is now missing.

In October, 1612, the earldom of Orkney and lordship of Shetland were annexed to the Crown, and Bishop Law was appointed commissioner, justice, chamberlain and factor. A commission was also appointed to devise a scheme for separating the intermixed bishopric, earldom and lordship estates, which resulted in the excambion of 1614. (See No. 3 below).

On the 12th November, 1612, Bishop Law lodged, in Exchequer, the 1595 Rental of the king's and bishop's lands in Orkney (PR. preface p. 5, and Rental No. II, 1595); when he, obviously, also lodged the Bishop's Rental of Shetland, as well as the Rental of the lordship? It was necessary that the Crown should have the rentals of the annexed estates. It seems probable that the Bishop's Rental of Shetland had also been made in 1595, along with a Lordship Rental, two years after Patrick Stewart had succeeded to the earldom, lordship and church-lands in 1593.

The Bishop's Rental of Shetland can be restored fairly well, from No. 3, Pitcairn's Report on the stipends of the clergy (GG. 155-163), and the feu-charter of the tenandry of Grimbusta (OSR.I. 178-192, described in a note to No. 3 below). The feu-charter gives only the number of marks of land in each parish, without the names of the lands, which latter may be ascertained by assuming that the lordship lands in No. 3 which are not found in No. 1, are the added church-lands. In the case of Unst, Yell and Fetlar, all the church-lands are given in No. 3.

3. Rental of Yetland, 1628 (RH.). [By John Dick, sheriff depute of Orkney].

Contents. (1) List of the marks of land in each parish 'gevin in be the fowdis for collecting of the taxation;' [in Shetland, taxes were levied on the marks of land, whereas in Orkney they were assessed on the pennylands, of the normal value of 4 marks each]; (2) weights and measures and reckonings of the duties; (3) charge of moneys for the duties, crop 1627, 'as given up by Mr. Jon Dick to his father, December, 1628.' [John Dick, sheriff depute of Orkney in 1628, died 1642, eldest son of Sir William Dick, tacksman of the earldom of Orkney, then in the possession of the Crown, born 1580, died 1655 (ZFH.)]; (4) 'Rental of the dewties of Yetland,' arranged in accounts for each parish, of the rents of property and bought lands, churchlands, etc., skatt of all lands, corn-tithe (parsonage), other than that assigned in stipends, to the clergy, (which latter are given in Pitcairn's Report, c. 1607-1615, GG. 155-163); (5) 'umboths,' or tithes which were let for a money rent and are not included in No. (4) above; (6) 'wattill, ox and sheep silver' of each parish; and (7) money rents as given in No. (4) above; (8) [Appendix] (a) Rental of 'wattil,' in 1605, of each parish; (b) Rental of Lawting oxen and sheep 'given up to Mr. William Levingstoun, sheriff deput and chalmerlane,' 1615; (c) Rental of peats 'yeirlie to be castin, win and led to the Castle of Scalloway, comforme to



ane warrand direct to Alexander Bruce and precepts to the fowdis, daited at Birsay,' 20th February, 1604—the ' fathom ' of peats to be 20 ft. high, 16 ft. broad, and 14 ft. long, and the peats to be ' thriequarters deip,' no peats were paid by Unst, Yell and Fetlar; (d) ' the holmes and ylandis in Yetland extracted out of ' the Bishopis rental produced to the Exchequer in November, 1612 and ' [the extract] subscribed by Andro Edmonstoun, minister at Yell ' [before 1598—c. 1632, when he died ZFH.]; (e) ' Rental of the Bishopis umbothis ' subscribed by A. Edmistoun, including miscellaneous tithes and lands; and finally (f) ' Rental of the conquest Landis in Yetland, conquest be my lord [Patrick, earl of Orkney], in anno 1604, 21 June, 1604.'

The earldom and lordship were annexed to the Crown in 1612, as already mentioned in No. 2 above; and in 1614, the church, earldom and lordship estates in Orkney and Shetland were rearranged in an excambion, by which the church estate or bishopric, was concentrated in 7½ compact parishes in Orkney, including the combined church and earldom lands and revenues, together with its own civil jurisdiction; while the earldom and lordship consisted of the remaining earldom, lordship and church lands and revenues in Orkney and in the whole of Shetland, with its own separate civil jurisdiction.

The special term ' piece of corn-teind,' consisting of 4 lasts of land of 18 marks each=72 marks in all, corresponding with the normal øyrisland of 3 marks rent, and with the Scots ploughland of 3 marks ' old extent,' the ' plógsland ' of the Saga (OS. 194), will be treated under *tithe* below.

4. ' Rental of the Lordship of Zetland, crop 1656.' (Z). It is stated in the volume mentioned below, that the original rental was procured from ' Mr. [John] Leslie of Ustaness [died c. 1792], whose grandfather, Thomas Leslie, of Burswick was about 20 years collector of the Crown rents of Shetland,' and that it is affirmed to be in his handwriting. In ZFH. it is stated that Thomas Leslie of Burswick (afterwards of Uresland) was Steward depute of Zetland in 1660 and Commissary of Zetland and died in 1691.

Contents. Skatts of all lands; rents of lordship lands; corn-teind; wattle, sheep and ox money; duties payable in money; umboth duties; boats teind; tolls from Dutch merchants; feu mails; errata; and abstract of Rental.

Volume of Rentals, Nos. 4, 7 and 8. (Z). In this is also mentioned No. 10 below, a copy of which has not yet been obtained. It is entitled: 'This Book contains copies of the Rental of the Lordship of Zetland, crop 1656 and 1733, also a rental of the Lordship taken from the Count Book kept by the Factor [Thomas Gifford, of Busta], 1716. As it is from these that the Rental, crop 1772 [No. 10, below] hath been framed [by Mr. Balfour], it seems proper to prefix some account of them and a few explanations which may render these copies more intelligible to strangers.' [Here follows a description of the Rentals and explanations].

5. 'Accompt of the Rests in the paroch of [each, by name] for the crop 1668, payable 1669 [pp. 1-13, and] for the croft 1669, payable 1670.' [pp. 14-28. RH.]. There are large lacunæ in the first 15 of the 28 pp.

Contents. As above, in which names of payers are given. At the end, p. 28, 'breviats' are given, of which the 'suma of all is .. .. £1873 18 3

'Paid to Captain Andrew Dick, per his receipt of the date,	
'Septr 14, 1675 .. .. .	£100 0 0
'Paid him, as per another receyt, of the date Agust threttie	209 12 8
'Resting in the several paroches afterspeci't, Nesting,	
'Lunasting, Whalsey, Tingwall, Gulbry and Dinrossnes,	
'[not included in the above] the sum of .. .. .	350 0 0

'Waltere Dicks booke, to which his	£659 12 8
'oath relats, taken by mee,	[brought down] 1873 18 3

[signed] James Foulis.

[Total] £2533 10 11

In 1669, Capt. Andrew Dick was appointed Steward Principal and Chamberlain of Orkney and Zetland. In 1678 he was M.P. for Orkney and Shetland. Born c. 1638, died c. 1701. Walter Dick of Wormaldale is mentioned in (ZFH.). Sir Francis J. Grant writes that Walter is first mentioned in 1653, as resident in Scalloway, and became 'of Wormaldale' after 1664, but he has no reference to James Foulis.

6. Gifford's Rental of Shetland, 'crop 1716, payable 1717 to the Right Honourable the Earl of Morton.' (C.).

The title page, states: 'this Rental is holograph of Thos. Gifford, Esq., of Busta, and is presumed to be a copy of the Rental, or Count Book, for 1716 referred to by Mr. Balfour in the introduction to the Rental of the Lordship prepared by him in 1772.' [See No. 10 below].

'This copy was found by the subscriber, among the papers of the late James Cheyne, of Tangwick—and for the sake of preservation bound up by [signed] Henry Cheyne, of Tangwick, writer to the Signet, in the year 1840.'

James Cheyne, of Tangwick, born 1737, died 1821, among whose papers this Rental was found, married Ann, daughter of John Gifford, Steward-clerk of Zetland, a younger brother of Thomas Gifford, the compiler of the Rental. Henry Cheyne, of Tangwick who found the Rental was a grandson of James Cheyne and his wife Ann Gifford, a niece of the compiler (ZFH.). The Rental was in the possession of the late Harry Cheyne, of Tangwick, son of the above Henry Cheyne, when it was lent to A. W. Johnston to copy.

Contents. Each parish has two accounts, viz. (1) Skatt, wattle, ox and sheep money, and tithe other than that assigned in stipends to the clergy; (2) rents of lordship lands and feu-duties; (3) separate accounts of some of the large estates with scattered holdings as enumerated in the parish accounts; and (4) List of the marks of land in each parish, enumerated as lordship, feued and odal.

The names of all the payers are given, with the number of marks of land for which they accounted, which are omitted in the other copy, No. 7 below.

In this Rental the groups of skatt-paying lands are for the first time called 'scatalds,' a term which occurs in 1576 (DB.) as 'skattell,' in the sense 'neighbourhood, district,' and is probably Shetland Norn \**skatt-tōl* 'skatt-neighbourhood or district,' from the Norwegian dialect *tōl* f. 'neighbourhood, district' (Aas.). A Shetland

‘skat-tel’ was a group or district of farms paying skatt on the common basis of the marks of land in the district, and having its own exclusive pasture, or *hagi*.

7. ‘Rental of the Lordship of Zetland, crop, 1716.’ (Z.). This is the same as No. 6 above, except that it omits the names of the payers, but enables one to restore a lacuna.

8. ‘Rental of the Lordship of Zetland, anno 1733’ (Z.). This is similar to Nos. 6 and 7, and is the only Rental which Sir Lawrence Dundas received when he purchased the Earldom of Orkney and Lordship of Shetland from the Earl of Morton in 1766.

9. ‘Account Book of the tithes of Fetlar, as uplifted anno 1732, etc., Jo. Bonar, minister. By’ [part cut away, probably bearing his signature: John Bonar] (B.).

The Rev. John Bonar was minister of Fetlar and North Yell from 1729 to 1752 when he died.

Contents. Lists of boats paying teind in fish; method of payment of corn, or parsonage, and bow, or small tithes; a note of disputed tithes; list of lands paying corn-teind with the names of the payers; Index to the ledger accounts of the payers of tithe; 83 ledger accounts, two of which are missing. A full description of the contents are given in *Old-lore Miscellany* (Vol. IV, pp. 110, 119, 169, and Vol. V, pp. 56, 105, 118) including many unusual articles of debit and credit.

This book is to be presented to the Society as the first volume of these Rentals, which will form the 3rd Series of Orkney and Shetland Records.

10. ‘Rental of the Lordship of Zetland, 1772.’ (Z.). This rental was compiled by Mr. Balfour from Rentals Nos. 4, 7 and 8, contained in the volume mentioned under No. 4 above. It is also mentioned in No. 6 above, and in GG. p. 189, who states: “in the Marquess of Zetland’s estate office in Edinburgh, there are continuous Rentals brought down from the carefully prepared Rental of 1772 to the present time.” A copy has not yet been obtained.

11. Private Act of Parliament, 52 George III, c. 137, 1812. Schedule (B) gives the ‘mail, feu and teind duties,

and casualties payable to Lord Dundas, in the Lordship of Zetland'; and Schedule (C) 'The Lands and heritages in the Stewartry of Orkney and Zetland belonging to Thomas Lord Dundas in fee simple,' consisting only of Oxna and parts of Fracafeld in Shetland. Schedule (B) is printed in GG. p. 190.

12. 'Rental of' [each parish, by name], giving only the number of marks of land and their owners, c. 1832 (RH). The lands are classified as: udal, feued, umboth, glebe, and other lands, of which the total number of marks is 14,197. The Lordship property land is included in the udal land, and is indicated by the name of the owner, Lord Dundas.†

#### APPENDIX.

Complaint of the commons and inhabitants of Zetland, 1576 (RH.). This is printed in DB. pp. 15-92, which has been compared with the original MS. by Mr. Henry M. Paton, Curator of Historical Documents in H.M. Register House, Edinburgh, who has made a voluminous errata, of which the more important items will be printed in the Miscellany. This complaint is an important document in the elucidation of the Rentals of Shetland.

After the additional Rentals have been collated with Nos. 1, 3 and 6, a visit to Shetland will be necessary, to make a general survey of the islands, to identify obsolete and changed names, and to help in arriving at the derivation of the place-names. These Rentals provide a mass

† The importance of this Rental is that it gives places not given in the above Rentals e.g. in Northmaven: (1) Brebuster, 4 marks, of which  $3\frac{1}{2}$  udal and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mark umbod (i.e. Churchland which should have become earldom land in 1614) owned by Arthur Gifford [of Busta, succeeded 1811 served heir, 1827, d. 1856, ZFH.]—shown on OM. as Breibister, next to Fethaland in North Roe; (2) Houlsquoy, 3 marks udal, also owned by Arthur Gifford, not shown on OM.; and (3) Binnigarth, 4 marks udal, of which  $2\frac{1}{2}$  also owned by Arthur Gifford—shown on OM. as Benigarth, near Houll—the latter is given in Rental No. 6, 1716, as 16 marks udal, and also as 16 marks in this Rental No. 12. of which Arthur Gifford owned  $11\frac{1}{2}$  marks.

of old forms of names, without which it is impossible to arrive at the original name.

#### ORKNEY AND SHETLAND RECORDS.

The 1st Series issued was miscellaneous documents, Vol. 1; the 2nd Series, Orkney and Shetland Sasines, Vols. 2 and 3; and the 3rd Series will be Shetland Rentals, commencing with Vol. 4, which will be the Fetlar Tithe Book, No. 9 above, which is to be presented to the Society by a member, and is now in preparation. It is hoped that other members will also present volumes, especially one containing Rentals Nos. 1, 3, 6 and 12, the most valuable of the whole collection, which would form a volume of about 350 pp. and could be issued in parts containing one or more Rentals.

#### PRE-NORSE POPULATION OF ORKNEY, SHETLAND AND CAITHNESS.

The Celts, when they came to Britain and Ireland in about the fourth century B.C., "formed rather a military aristocracy than the staple of the population," and "it need cause no surprise if we find some ancient names difficult to explain from Celtic sources." The Celts, an Aryan race of the same origin as the Norsemen, were similarly "tall, fair, or ruddy-haired men, blue-eyed and large of limb." "That the pre-Celtic population were by no means wiped out is proved by the fact that their descendants are still plentiful." (CPNS. pp. 1, 2, 66). The pre-Celtic population adopted the language of their conquerors and their descendants can be distinguished by racial characteristics. Of possible pre-Celtic place-names Watson gives Ebuda, etc. (op. cit., p. 70); and the writer would suggest, possibly, Unst and Fetlar in Shetland?

At the time of the Norse colonisation of Orkney, Shetland and Caithness, Shetland was Celtic, Inse C(h)at 'islands of the Cat tribe'; Orkney Inse Orc 'islands of

the Orc, or Boar tribe'; and the mainland of Scotland, including Caithness was Pictavia 'land of the Picts.' The Picts are first mentioned in A.D. 297; and in the fourth century they took the place of the Caledonians, after which Scotland (hitherto called Caledonia) became Pictavia (op. cit. 9, 65, 67).

The Scots Kingdom of Dál Riata was founded c. A.D. 500; and after the death of the last Pictish king, in A.D. 843, Pictavia became Scotland, the name used in Orkneyinga Saga c. 872 and after. Orkney and Shetland apparently came under the sway of Dál Riata in A.D. 580-682 (OSA. xi). But before A.D. 580 St. Columba requested the king of the Northern Picts "to recommend to the *reguli* of the Orkneys (one of whom was present, and whose hostages were then in the king's hands) that Cormac and the clerics who had accompanied him on a missionary voyage to the Orkneys should receive no harm" (op. cit. x). This had the desired effect.

When the Vikings began to settle in Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Lewis, the inhabitants were probably identical with those of Pictavia viz. (1) mainly descendants of the pre-Celtic dark race; (2) their Pictish (P-Celtic) conquerors who were of the same Aryan race as the Norse; and (3) the succeeding Gaels or Scots (C-Celtic); all of whom have left their monuments—Skara-Brae, brochs, oghams, christian dedications, etc. The preservation of their place-names, early church dedications (SS. Ninian, d. 432; Bridget, d. 520; Columba, d. 597; and Triduana, 8th century), and the survival of their descendants, prove their existence when the Norse came.

The Orkney and Shetland 'Pictish folklore' of a small, dark and weird race, obviously refers to the pre-Celtic aboriginal inhabitants of Skara-Brae and other 'Pictish houses.' The Norsemen mistook them for Picts, because, as elsewhere in Scotland, Wales and Ireland, they had adopted the Pictish language.

## THE VIKING SETTLEMENT.

The Vikings probably began to colonise Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Lewis, in the eighth century, when Scotland was called Pictavia, including Caithness which was called Cataibh 'among the Cat tribe,' and apparently settled among the pre-Celts, Picts and Gaels or Scots, to account for the preservation and continuation of the aboriginal and Celtic place-names, etc. as already noted.

In Scotland, Wales and Ireland, where the Celts were outnumbered by the aborigines, the latter adopted the more advanced language of their more civilised conquerors. In the case of the Norse settlements in Ireland, Lewis and Harris, the Norse settlers ultimately adopted the language of their more numerous Celtic Aryan cousins; but their Norse language is preserved in Norse place- and person-names; whereas in the case of the old Norse earldom of Orkney, Shetland and Caithness, where the Gaelic element was not so strong, the Norse language prevailed over Gaelic, until Scotland acquired the earldom of Caithness in 1014, and that of Orkney and Shetland in 1468, after which the population has been recruited from Scotland, with the result that they have now adopted the kindred English language. After the Norse settlement in Caithness, the Gaels changed its name from Cataibh to Gallaibh 'among the strangers or Norsemen.'

The Norse forms of foreign place-names are fanciful and largely based on *sound*, regardless of *meaning*, as shown below and in the case of Óðinsborg for Athens, etc.

Shetland, Celtic: Inse C(h)at 'islands of the Cat tribe' (who also inhabited Caithness and Sutherland) became in Norse: \*Hjalt-øyjar, Hjalt-land '(sword-)hilt islands, land.'

Orkney, Celtic: Inse Orc 'islands of the Orc or Boar tribe,' became in Norse: Orkn-øyjar 'seal islands.' Orc was also a personal name, preserved in the Scots place-name Dùn-orc 'Orc's mound' (CPNS. 30), which is



probably the original Celtic form of ON. *Orka*-haugr (OS. 273) 'Orc's mound,' possibly the burial place of the Pictish chiefs or kings of the Orc tribe in Orkney. As a personal name Celtic Orc would become in ON. \*Orki, m., gen. sing. and pl. Orka. *Orka*-haugr is now *Maes How*, suggesting a Celtic form \*Dùn-*orc*-mae 'Orc's mound plain,' giving a later colloquial *Mae's How* 'mound of the plain, plain's mound'; and that *How-Mae*, in North Ronaldsay, was Celtic \*Dùn-mae 'mound plain'; with which compare Multovie, Gaelic *Multa-mhaigh* 'wedder-plain' (CPNS. 502). Scots *how* is ON. haugr, No. dial. *haug*, variant *hog*, *hau*, so that *How-mae*, would be a hybrid ON. and Celtic *Haug-mae* 'mound-plain.'

The Pentland Firth in old Gaelic is: Cuan nan Orc 'sea of the Orcs' (CPNS. 63); In modern Gaelic: an Caol Arcach (GD.) 'The Orkney Firth.' In ON. Pétlandsfjörðr (OS.), of which Pét- 'Pict.' In Gaelic Cruithnich, early Irish Cruithne, Welsh Prydain is 'a Pict, Briton' (McB.). The Scots and Shetlandic form of Pict is *Pecht* (CPNS. 68; GG. 1.), in place-names, Petta- (JJ.); and in Orkney Pickie, adj. 'Pictish' (POAS. I, pp. 22, 64). Skotlandsfirðir 'Scotlandsfirths = west coast of Scotland' of OS. must date from the time after Pictavia became Scotland, which latter is the name used in OS. in A.D. 872 and after.

Caithness and Sutherland formed the Celtic province of the Cat tribe; in old Gaelic: i Cattaib, later Cataibh 'among the Cats,' In ON. this became Katanes; Gaelic Cataibh was probably treated in ON. as Kati, m., pl. Katar, gen. pl. Kata-. With ON. -nes 'promontory' compare Ptolemy's name for Caithness: Cornavii 'promontory dwellers' c. A.D. 120. In the case of Pét- and Kata- the Vikings did not attempt to equate them with Norse words, as in the case of Orc and Chat.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the later Germanic origin of ON. kati and its diminutive ketla 'ship,' in Snorra Edda, see H. Falk: *altnördisches Seewesen* 1912, p. 88. (Per G. Turville-Petre).

Caithness up to c. 1014 in OS. is called Katanes and Nes, but in 1014 and after it is 'Katanes ok Sudrland' when it became and has since been a Scots earldom (OS. 6).

After the Norse settlement in Caithness it became in old Gaelic: *i Gallaib*, now *Gallaibh* 'among the strangers' or Norsemen; but Sutherland still continues to be Gaelic: *Cataibh* 'among the Cats.' (CPNS. and GD.).

Dun-ross-ness, in Shetland, in 1507-1513 (Rental No. 1) is Dun-ros-nes, with the accent on the qualifying syllable *ros*, pointing to a descriptive Celtic \**dùn-rois* 'mound of the promontory,' viz. the mound or ON. *borg* 'broch' now called Jarlshof from which the adjoining farm Sumburgh took its name, situated on the promontory of Sumburgh. Ros would include the whole promontory. *Dùn-rois* suggested ON. *dyn-røst* 'din tideway' (OS. 280), which was applied to the strong current now called Sumburgh Roost. The promontory became ON. *Dyn-rastar-høfði* (OS. 230, n.), now Sumburgh Head, and the adjoining bay *Dyn-rastar-vágr* (OS. 220, n.), now West Voe, Sumburgh. The name of the parish is given in a Norwegian charter of 1490 (PAM.) as *oDw[n]ristanes*, ON. \**á Dun-rastar-nes* ON. *duna*, *f* = *dynr*, *m.* 'din'; but the contemporary colloquial form, preserved in Rental No. 1, is Dun-ros-nes, as it still is. The Norwegian charter form was probably derived from literary sources.

The names of the three North Isles of Unst, Yell and Fetlar are probably corrupt Norse forms of corrupt Celtic or pre-Celtic names. The old forms are for Unst: *Aurmtr*, *Aumstr* (OS. 137), *Qrmstr* (Edda); for Yell: *Alasund* 'Yell Sound' (OS. 159, 163, indexed *Álasund*), *Jala* for *Jali* (Edda); and for Fetlar: *Fetilár* (OS. 135, n.). *Føtilör* (Edda), and *Føtalar* in 1490 (PAM. 86, 94).<sup>2</sup>

Fetlar was originally the most fertile island in Shetland, having at least 22 ouncelands as compared with Whalsay,

<sup>2</sup> For Munch's derivations see *Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed*, vol. for 1857, pp. 343 ff.

of about the same area, with only 3 ; Yell (without its isles) about four times the area of Fetlar, with only  $16\frac{3}{4}$  ouncelands; and Unst, about three times its area, with  $28\frac{3}{8}$  ouncelands. Fetlar would have been a veritable Pictish \*Inis Phett (Gaelic \*Innis Pheit), 'island of farms.' That the Pictish term pett 'portion, croft' (anglicised pit) was once used in Fetlar, as it was used elsewhere in Shetland, is supported by the fact that its Gaelic equivalent baile (which replaced pett in Scotland e.g. Pit-four > Bal-four, etc.) is found in the following place-names in Fetlar; Balye-gord in Aith in 1628, Baila-gord in 1716.\* Baila in Hubie in 1716; and Baelans in Dale in 1716. The latter place is near a burn of which the original name must have been Clōda, the Celtic river-name Clōta, to account for the farm Clothin alongside the burn. There are at least seven examples in Shetland of this name, Cloda, Cloða, and with the ON. suffixed article Clothin (*Misc. X*, 179). The occurrence of Gaelic baile in Shetland shows that the Gaels became the ruling class and substituted Gaelic for Pictish place-names as they did in Scotland.

For other Celtic place-names in Shetland see JJ. Of possible Pictish names he gives pett in Preste-pet in Yell (p. 171), which corresponds with *Pettantagart* in Aberdeenshire, Gaelic *Peit-an-t-sagairt* 'priest's portion or farm.' (CPNS. 267).

Dr. Hugh Marwick (POAS. 1, pp. 22, 64) gives an account of some Pictish place-names in Orkney including houses called *treb*, *trave* [W. *tref* 'homestead,' OW., OB. *treb* 'house,' English *thorp*, McB. with which compare the Eng. variant *trop*] which were built near or on the 'Pickie dikes' also called "treb-dikes." This suggests that these walls surrounded a *treb*, or district of *petts* 'crofts.' In Wales the *tref* developed from 'house' to 'hamlet,'

\* Gaelic: *gort*, *gart*; Welsh: *garth*, 'field, inclosure' (CPNS. 198); Irish: *gort*, 'garden' (op. cit. p. 79). Probably a Pictish name which the Gaels found and prefixed *baile*.

'village,' and then to a district of four gavels of 64 acres each (CPNS. 357). The Pictish *treb* in Orkney and Shetland had probably also become a district of farms and became the *dabhach* of the later Gaelic settlers and ultimately the *øyrisland* 'ounceland' of the Vikings (cf. PSAS. p. 56). Thorp in Orkney and Shetland may represent a Pictish *treb* in its original sense 'homestead,' or later 'hamlet' (See JJ. 110; OS. 182; OST. 251-2).

When the Vikings settled in Orkney and Shetland they would have found the Gaelic taxes much the same as their own. Gael. *càn* 'tribute' = ON. *skatt*; *Coinm-headh* 'quartering, entertainment' = ON. *veizla* (see OS. 266, 267, where it is stated that ON. 'veizla' was called 'kunniþ' by the Katnesingar in 1152); *fecht* 'military expedition,' *sluaghach* 'hosting' = *leiðangr*, *farar kaup* 'levy tax.' The Gaelic taxes were assessed on the *dabhach*, and the Norse on its successor the *øyrisland*. For the gaelic taxes see CPNS. 235. It should also be noted that "the ounceland and the *davach* in the west and north-west of Scotland were one and the same." (PSAS. p. 56).

#### EARLDOM.

King Harald, on his conquest of the Viking colonies of Orkney and Shetland took possession of all *óðal* estates of which the owners became tenants *in capite*, and thereafter paid rent and *skatt* to the king, as they did in Norway. He erected Orkney and Shetland into a Norwegian earldom. The earls had, as in Norway, to rule the earldom and collect the *skatt* of all lands and the rent of crown lands of which they had to transmit  $\frac{2}{3}$  to the king and retain  $\frac{1}{3}$  for the cost of their government, all as in Norway (SL. III, 96). The earls were each and successively invested by the king and only held the earldom during his pleasure from first to last. Although Norwegian earldoms were thus not hereditary the succeeding

earls were usually arbitrarily selected by the king from members of the same family in the distaff as well as the male line, thrall-born and bastards, and did not possess a vestige of óðal right in the rule, lands and revenues of the earldom. During a vacancy in the earldom, it reverted to the king and he appointed his representative to rule and to collect the crown rents and revenues up to the last.

King Harald granted the óðal estates in fief (lén) to earl Torf-Einar (a bastard) and remitted the payment of skatt (SL. IV, 168).

The OS. version (SL. III, 127; OS. 14; OTS. 143) is a self-evident erroneous absurdity contrary to fact and reason. It is alleged that, as the landowners were unable to pay the wergeld for the slaughter of Halfdan, king of Ringrealm (which amounted to 60 gold marks = 480 ounces of gold = one year's skatt of each of the original 480 ouncelands in Orkney and Shetland, viz. a silver mark OO = 216 d. ON. the amount still paid in Orkney) they actually offered to surrender their estates to the earl on condition that he paid the wergeld. In other words the owner of an ounceland gave it to the earl and thereafter had to pay him a rent of 3 marks a year and a skatt of one mark in exchange for the earl's payment to the king of one mark of wergeld, once for all, a mere duplicate of their annual skatt!

It is quite evident that the earldom was founded exactly as in Norway, the king 'made all free lands his own' (SL. III, 96) and gave them in fief to earl Einar, as stated in *Heimskringla* (SL. IV, 168).

In A.D. 934, as a political bribe, the Norwegian king restored the Norwegian óðul to the óðal heirs (SL. III, 150). It was not until c. 995 (OST. 149; SL. III, 127/8) that earl Sigurd, also as a bribe, restored the óðul in Orkney and Shetland to the heirs who thereafter paid him and

his successors a feudal casualty of a duplicate of one year's skatt of one 00. mark on the succession of each heir. This was considered a hardship in earl Rognvald's time, who (c. 1139-1144, OTS. 260) in order to raise money to build St. Magnus Cathedral, decided to bring up the feudal casualty law before the Thing and offered to allow the óðalsmen to buy up outright once for all the duplicate of one mark on the succession of each heir on payment of one mark for each plógsland, or 'piece of corn teind,' of 72 marks of land, instead of for each ounceland, which they gladly accepted. Many of the ouncelands from an original value of 72 marks had deteriorated in value to 54 marks and less, so that the plógsland basis was advantageous and equitable. (Plógsland is treated under *tithe*).

In 1098 (OST. 198) king Magnus divested the two ruling earls Paul and Erlend and invested his son Sigurd as earl of Orkney. In 1379, the king of Norway invested one of the competitors, Henry Sinclair, as earl of Orkney. His son Henry was not invested and during his life Orkney and Shetland were ruled by the king's deputies until the investiture of his son William as earl of Orkney. In 1468-72 the king of Norway wadset Orkney and Shetland to the crown of Scotland with all the Norwegian crown rights of skatt and earldom or crown lands, thereby divesting earl William of the earldom title, rule and all earldom or crown revenues which were annexed to the crown of Scotland. The king of Scotland granted certain lands in Scotland to the divested earl in exchange for the lands in Orkney and Shetland which had been privately acquired by earl William, as enumerated in the rentals.

#### MONEY AND TRADE WEIGHTS.

Before coinage began in Norway in A.D. 1050, there were two different weights in use for both money and commerce. Schive states that English coins were in use in A.D. 1025.

The weights were the eighteen and twenty penny ounces. The 20d. ounce became the 30d. ounce of the coinage, which A. W. Brøgger (*Ertog og Øre*, 1921, p. 95) states is founded on the Roman ounce of 27.29 grams of 20 tremises or pence, of which  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, the stater = ON. ertog, is 9.096 grams or  $6\frac{2}{3}$  tremisses or pence; and as the 18d. ounce is  $\frac{1}{10}$ th lighter it would be = 24.561 grams of 18 tremisses or pence, of which  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, the stater = OO. ertog, is 8.187 grams of 6 tremisses or pence = the Eastern stater or ox unit of 8.18 grams. F. Seebohm (*Tribal custom in Anglo-Saxon Law*, 1911, pp. 235-6) states that in their trade with the East the Norse used the Eastern standard stater, or ox unit, of 8.18 grams. Brøgger is of opinion that the Roman ounce is the genuine ON. ounce, and that the lighter weight was only in use in the Viking period.

The 18d. ounce is preserved in the Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Lewis uncenceland of eighteen pennylands which paid a skatt or feuduty of 18 gold pence = the silver mark of 144d. (at 8:1) =  $\frac{9}{10}$ ths of the ON. coined silver mark of 240d., viz. 216d. ON., the actual value of the skatt paid in Orkney since 1050. In Orkney the skatt was based on butter which maintained its value, whereas in Shetland it was based on the currency 5 ells ounce which depreciated to 3:1, so that the value of the skatt depreciated from 216d. ON. in 1050 to 72 d. ON. in 1230, which is the present ON. value of Shetland skatt of an uncenceland, viz. 24 ells at 2d. = 4s. + 4 meils of malt at 6d. = 2s.

As shown below, Orkney and Shetland money taxes were converted into ON. money after coinage began in Norway, but the 18d. ounce continued to be the unit of commercial weights.

The fact that the 18d. ounce is preserved in the north Hebrides viz. Lewis and the north-west mainland of Scotland (PSAS. p. 54), points to the earliest Norse settlement in the Hebrides as compared with the later *tirunga* 'uncenceland' of 20d. in the south Hebrides and

mainland of Scotland (op. cit. p. 55; and GD. s.v. peighinn).

The 20d. ounce is also preserved in the Icelandic Grágás, in which it is stated that in A.D. 1000 the ounce was xxd., which was afterwards altered in the MS. to lxd. (Grág, 245), probably in 1052-1130 when the ON. coinage depreciated to 2:1, so that 1 ounce weight of silver was of the value of 2 currency ounces of 30d. = 60d.

However the 20d. ounce is preserved intact in Grág. 113, where wergeld was paid in the law-silver ounce of 10d., which was half silver and half alloy and of the value of 10d. or half an ounce of silver.

One would naturally conclude that the 18d. ounce of 3 Norse ertogs or Eastern staters, or ox units, of 6 tremisses or pence was the earliest Norse money weight, and that it was ultimately replaced by the Roman 20d. ounce, of 3 Norse ertogs or staters of  $6\frac{2}{3}$  tremisses or pence. In the Norse coinage the ounce was varied from 20d. to 30d. ON. and the mark from 160d. to 240d. ON. Gold was the standard in Norway and England, so that 1 ounce of gold in Norway at 8:1 = 8 ounces of silver, and in England at 12:1 it was worth 12 ounces of silver or 240d. stg. Was this the reason why the Norse silver mark was fixed at 240d. ON. though only of the nominal value of 160d. stg.? Tarranger could only suggest that numerical similarity was the object. It gave a round 10d. instead of an odd  $6\frac{2}{3}$ d. ertog. Brøgger states that the 10d. ertog can be traced back to the original ON. Roman ounce.

The fact that King Harald laid a skatt of one 18d. ounce of gold on the uncenclands of Orkney, Shetland, Caithness and Lewis, and later a skatt of a 20d. ounce on the tirunga or uncencland of the south Hebrides is proof that both the 18 and 20 penny ounces were known to him and in Norway, and Grágás proves that the 20d. ounce was known and used in Iceland in A.D. 1000.

The gialld ' wergeld ' of 60 gold marks laid on Orkney



and Shetland (OS. 14; c. A.D. 894, OST.) for the slaughter of Halfdan háleggr, king of Ringrealm, was obviously paid in the 18d. ounce, of which 60 gold marks = 1440 gold ertogs, or ox units = 12 long hundred of cows. In view of his inhuman death, the wergeld would probably be more than that of a king. The corresponding wergeld of an óðalsmaðr or hauld would have been  $\frac{1}{8}$ th or 180 cattle, i.e.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  long hundred, whereas the general wergeld of a freeman was 100, or a long hundred of 120 cows (Seebohm). This points to an increase of the wergeld by one-half, as in the case of the cowardly slaughter of earl Einar (OS. 31; A.D. 1020, OST. 156) whose bœtr ' wergeld ' was also fixed by the king of Norway at that of 3 lendirmen or  $\frac{1}{2}$  more than that of an earl. It can thus be reasonably concluded that the wergeld of the chief grades of society were as follows in the 18d. ounce money.

Class	Gold marks	Gold egtogs or ox units	Long hundreds of cows	Silver marks	ON. Silver marks	ON. réttir Silver marks.
King	40	= 960	= 8	= 320	= 288	24
Earl	20	= 480	= 4	= 160	= 144	12
Landed-Man	10	= 240	= 2	= 80	= 72	6
Hauld	5	= 120	= 1	= 40	= 36	3

The cow is here valued at 1 gold ertog = 8 silver ertogs =  $2\frac{2}{3}$  ounces of silver of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  ells = 12 ells of wadmál =  $2\frac{2}{5}$  ounces ON. of 5 ells = 12 ells. The ON. price of the cow, in Gulathing wergeld, was increased by  $\frac{1}{24}$ th from  $2\frac{2}{5}$  ounces to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ounces, and the currency ounce of 5 ells was increased to 6 ells, so that the price of the cow was increased by  $\frac{1}{4}$ , from 12 ells to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ounces  $\times$  6 ells = 15 ells.

In old Gulathing Law (c. A.D. 1100), during the period 1052-1130, when the currency had depreciated to 2:1), the wergeld of a hauld amounted to 100 silver marks (NGL. 1, cc. 218-239, pp. 74-81) = 50 weighed silver marks, as compared with 36 marks ON. in above table. To the 36 ON. marks has to be added the increased price of the cow,  $\frac{1}{24}$  of 36 =  $1\frac{1}{2}$  + 36 =  $37\frac{1}{2}$  +  $12\frac{1}{2}$  marks for added women, bastards and thrall-born, etc. = 50 marks. This

wergeld is a composite work including the original 3 baugs, and then doubling them by additional payments added to the uppnámamenn, Þversakir, etc. Another hauld's wergeld is given in cc. 243-252, pp. 81-82, and Bjarni Maðarson's schemes for the division of 6, 5, 4 and 3 gold marks of wergeld cc. 316-320, pp. 104-110. The wergelds of the other classes were in the ratio of réttarfar.

Compensation for personal injury, ON. um réttarfar manna, (old Gulathing Law, see *inter alia* cc. 186-217, NGL. I, pp. 68-74) 'concerning men's legal claim for atonement, compensation for irregular conduct, improper behaviour' (Fr.); 'of the right of men to penalties for personal insults or affronts and other injury' (NGL. I, Old Gulathing Law c. 200, p. 71; NGL. v, Glossarium s.v. réttarfar). Of the long list of injuries, etc. c. 200 gives 'ill-treating or striking a man,' c. 195 'pulling a man's moustache.' Old Gulathing Law c. 200, um réttarfar manna, is translated by L. M. Larson: The Earliest Norwegian Laws, 1935; "concerning the rights of men to atonement. A freedman shall enjoy the right to six oras in a single atonement [for personal injury], and his son, to one mark in a single atonement. A freeman [has the right] to twelve oras in a single atonement; the hauld, to three marks in a single atonement, a baron or a staller, to six marks in a single atonement; a jarl or a bishop, to twelve marks in a single atonement." etc. All money marks are silver unless definitely described as of gold.

In SL. 6, p. 489, s.v. Wergeld, Magnússon inexplicably gives *réttarfar* ('compensation for personal injury or insult') as *wergeld*, bœtr; in which he is followed in OST. p. 360, where it is stated that the *compensation* (in error for *wergeld*, ON. bætr, OS. p. 38), of earl Einar, was that of three lendirmen, or 18 silver marks; instead of at least 30 00. gold marks, or 27 ON. gold marks = 240, 00. or 216 ON. [silver] marks. Magnússon makes the same mistake in Frostathing Law, translating *réttarfar* ('compensation

for personal injury or insult ') as wergeld *bætr*, reparation for slaughter which is enumerated for the hauld and lower classes at 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2 gold marks. (NGL. I pp. 184-197).

That the ON. *vætt*, *vétt*, was also founded on the 18d. ounce weight, is suggested by the fact that the Norse *skippond* of 345.6 lbs. = 24 *vættir* of 28.8 marks = 32 marks or 16 lbs. of the 18d. ounce, so that the Orkney and Shetland barrel of 288 lbs., or 24 *lispund*  $\times$  12 lbs. = 18 *vættir*. Units are usually in whole numbers. The statute *skippond* of c. A.D. 1275 was adjusted from 345.6 to 346 lbs. = 24 *vættir* of 28.8 $\frac{1}{3}$  marks, described as 'half 9 marks and 20, and 8 ertogs.' Fr. Macody Lund (in *Norges Økonomeske system og verdiforhold i middelalderen*, 1909, p. 8, n. 1.), also calculates that the ON. *skippond* was 345.6 lbs.; and gives the old Gulathing *skippond* at 288 lbs. (pp. 16, 17, 18).

During and after the start of the Hanseatic League in the 13th century, when new laws were being made in Norway, it will be noted that many German names of weights and measures were introduced which are not found in the old laws. The genuine ON. *mælir* was also called *skjappa*, *skeppa*, from the German *schepel*, *scheffel*; among other names were the *lispund*, *linspund*, *lífspund* from the German *livesch pund*, i.e. *liflandsk pund* (Livonian pound); and *bismari*, *bismara-pund* (of German origin) which is found in Gulathing Law as *pund*, 'Þriggia punda smær.' (NGL. I, p. 5).

*(To be continued).*

#### ABBREVIATIONS, ETC.

THE POSSESSORS OF THE RENTALS AT THE TIME THEY  
WERE COPIED.

B.: the late Horatius Bonar, W. S., Edinburgh; and now with his family. Rental No. 9, copied by A. W. Johnston.

- C.: the late Harry Cheyne, of Tangwick; and now with his representatives. No. 6, copied by A. W. Johnston.
- RH.: H.M. General Register House, Edinburgh. No 1, copied by Henry M. Paton; No. 3, copied by the late Henry Paton; Nos. 5 and 12, photostat.
- Z.: The Marquess of Zetland's Estate Office, Edinburgh, Nos. 4, 7 and 8, photostat.

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- Aas.: Ivar Aasen: *Norsk Ordbog*, 1873. Norwegian dialect.
- Buch.: J. Buchanan: *Tables for converting weights and measures*, 1838.
- CPNS.: Dr. W. J. Watson: *Celtic Place-names of Scotland*, 1926.
- DB.: David Balfour: *Oppressions of the 16th century in Orkney and Zetland*, 1859.
- Fr.: Johan Fritzner: *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*. 3 vols., 1886-1896.
- GD.: E. Dwelly: *Gaelic Dictionary*. Revised ed., 3 vols., 1918. With appendix of proper names revised by Dr. W. J. Watson.
- GG.: Gilbert Goudie: *Celtic and Scandinavian Antiquities of Shetland*, 1904.
- Grág.: Grágás, Copenhagen, 1852. Cited by chapter.
- GV.: G. Vigfusson: *Icelandic-English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1874.
- JJ.: Jakob Jakobsen: *Shetlandsøernes Stedsnavne*, 1901. The translation, London, 1936, is cited.
- L.: Sir A. Lawrie: *Early Scottish Charters prior to A.D. 1153*. 1905.
- McB.: A. MacBain: *Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language*, 1911.
- Misc.: *Old-Lore Miscellany*, Viking Society, 1907, in progress.

- NGL.: Norges Gamle Love, Vol. 5, glossarium, 1895.  
No. dial.: Norwegian dialect. See Aas.  
OE.: Old English.  
OM.: Ordnance Map, one inch scale.  
ON.: Old Norse.  
OO.: Old Orkney and Shetland weight, on basis of 18 penny ounce.  
OR.: O. Rygh: Norske Gaardnavne, Forord og Indledning, 1898.  
OS.: Orkneyinga Saga. Text ed. by Sigurður Nordal, 1913-1916.  
OSA.: Orkneyinga Saga. Translated by Jon A. Hjaltalin and Gilbert Goudie. Ed. with introduction by Joseph Anderson, 1873. Introduction cited.  
OST.: Orkneyinga Saga. Translation by Dr. A. B. Taylor, 1938.  
OSR.: Orkney and Shetland Records, Viking Society, Vol. 1, 1907-1913.  
PAM.: P. A. Munch: Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie, Vol. for 1846.  
POAS.: Orkney Antiquarian Society, Proceedings.  
PR.: A. Peterkin: Rentals of the earldom and bishopric of Orkney, 1820.  
PSAS.: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Proceedings, Vol. LXXVIII, 1944, p. 39 ff, A. McKerral: Ancient denominations of agricultural land in Scotland.  
RP.: Rental of the Provostry of Orkney, 1584[-1589].  
Schive.: C. I. Schive: Norges Mynter i Middelalderen, 1865.  
SL.: Saga Library. Translated by William Morris and Eiríkr Magnússon, 6 vols., 1891-1905.  
SWIN.: [Lord Swinton—Buch. 9n.] Scots weights and measures, 1789—Orkney and Shetland in 1759, pp. 104-7.  
ZFH.: Sir Francis J. Grant: Zetland Family Histories, 2nd ed., 1907.

## PRONUNCIATION OF PLACE-NAMES.

The accented and qualifying syllable of a place-name is printed in italics thus: Dun-*ross*-ness.

## ON. MONEY MARKS.

All ON. money marks are *silver*, unless definitely described as *gold*.

## REVIEWS.

André Manguin: *Au temps des Vikings. Les navires et la marine nordique d'après les vieux textes. Préface du Marquis de Saint-Pierre.* J. Peyronnel & Cie, Paris, 1944. (Out of Print).

Reviewed by Prof. Haakon Shetelig, *Aftenposten* 11. Dec., 1945.

More than a year ago a book appeared in France which only now has reached Norway and will be greeted with intense interest, Manguin's description of ships and seafaring in the Viking Age. The book is introduced with a preface by the well known Norman historian, Marquis Louis de Saint-Pierre; himself proud of his Norwegian descent he maintains that the best traditions of Normandy go back to Rollo and his men, though their exploits were later forgotten, put in the shade by the Conquest of England under William, Rollo's descendant. French sources tell us very little about the first Normans in Normandy. For that one must go to their home, to the Sagas of Iceland and Norway as Manguin has done in his book about the ships. Saint Pierre wishes that all in Normandy will read the book "in order to be steeped in the steely strength of their ancestors which in past centuries made the Norman race the guardian of the culture of Europe."

Manguin has in very truth gone back to the original sources. He is fully competent in the Norse language, *norrois*, as the French call it. To collect his material he has examined all the old literature, Eddic and Skaldic poems, Sagas, laws and legends. In Sagas only his list of texts consulted numbers 125. Equally comprehensive is his list of modern works on the Viking Age, especially valuable for many French works, little or not known in Scandinavia. From every text he has copied all events and happenings that concern ships and seafaring. He has literally exhausted everything not only from the historic sagas and the laws but also from legends and folklore.

His aim is not to give a technical description of the shipbuilding and navigation of the Vikings but to create a living image of ships and seafaring in folk life in the North, in daily life, in expeditions across seas, in fishing, in war and taking land in foreign countries, colonisation. Tales and folklore are here of great value. They show best what place ships took in folk thought, in the world of imagination and dreams. Manguin knows all about the building of Viking ships and explains it in a short guide to the book, on the basis of the Gokstadship and the Osebergship, before he starts on his real theme: to follow the ship from the moment it is launched and then on the course of its stormy life until it reaches its last port in the grave mound with its famous master as lord.

The author has not found space to elucidate seafaring from archaeological sources, e.g. the king in the Gokstadship had with him in the grave a peacock. This luxury was at the time fashionable to embellish the gardens of royal palaces and monasteries in France. The peacock in the Gokstadship gives reason to believe that the king himself or those near to him had been on Viking expeditions to the coasts of France. French chronicles tell of Vikings from Vestfold plundering Nantes in 843. The famous brooch of gold found in a hoard at Hon in Eiker is also booty taken in France. But our old literature by itself contains rich materials illustrating seafaring in Viking times.

The Sagas are for Manguin, even more than for us, the key to a world of adventure, full of poetry and romance. On every page the ships stand out as a dream of freedom and high deeds. Nothing was loved so intensely as beautiful ships as we see in Skaldic verse and in sagas, the dragon ships, the pride of kings, their high stems resplendent within the morning sun, their oars moving as the wings of an eagle. Famous royal ships act as weighty moments in historic sagas. The Skalds use innumerable poetic images to designate ships. Manguin is in touch with the Viking spirit when he gives the names of the ships, always full of life and meaning, the Serpent, the Crane, the Reindeer. Imaginative minds gave a soul and an individual life to the ship. A ship was not a prosaic thing to be used but a personal being with its own will to victory in battle with the elements. It struggles against the tempest, clashes with the waves so that its woodwork is near crashing. A union of mutual trust is knit between seaman and ship. It sounds true that Fridthiof's "Ellida" knew the voice of its master and understood what he said. In Flóamanna saga the two ships "Vinagaut" and "Stakanhofdi" talk together quietly in port about who will win next day's battle. Manguin has collected an overwhelming wealth of illustrations of life on board, in harbour and expeditions, in tempests, in shipwreck, in enemy lands, in leidangr. We see ships as precious inheritance or royal gifts. Among the last we miss a splendid ship with purple sails and golden stem, presented to king Aethelstan by Harald Fairhair, according to an English source, but not mentioned in Heimskringla. Evidently Norwegian ships were highly valued in England. Such a ship was an honour for Harald himself. Harald took more pride in ships than in anything else, as is seen in Hornklofi's poem:

"The lord of Northmen who rules over deep keels, repainted stems and red shields, tarred oars and sea-wetted tents."

Manguin's book is penetrated by this spirit. Through the old literature he perceives vividly how seafaring impressed itself on the minds and the thoughts of the Vikings, gave its own resonance of sportsmanlike daring and courage to the spiritual life of the Viking Age, stamped on all sagas and poems dealing with seafaring. Everywhere we find the splendour of adventure and of a fresh breath from the deep sea. Ships and seafaring is the strongest feature giving character to our oldest history. Manguin is not writing history, but he gives the character of the Viking Age in a wealth of events, episodes and anecdotes, taken directly from the sources, as illustrations full of colour and variety, palpitating with life. He gives us infinitely more than just ships. Every little story is told as it is given to us in the source, in the succinct and picturesque saga style as a momentary image of the scene and the persons, with the *dramatis personae* characterised in a few words of their own. Through the saga style as a momentary image of the scene and the persons, with the *dramatis personae* characterised in a few words of their own. Through the whole book there rises up before us a full and complete picture of the cultural and historical milieu, the psychological background of Nordic expansion in the Viking Age.

He permits himself digressions and devotes a chapter to retelling the Saga of Cormac and Steingerd, the most poetical love story in our old literature, a fascinating psychological document. He also tells of Viglund who in danger at sea thinks of his love, Ketilrid, and in his poem has a vision of her, beautiful as glorious ship under sail "across the sea-gulls' plain," This love poetry combined with deeds of daring clothes the Viking Age with a romantic aspect like the French age of chivalry, and overshadows the brutalities and cruelties



of the time. Manguin assures us that the Vikings were not worse than other people in this respect. Christians perpetrated the same cruelties on each other as the Vikings did to them. The Vikings stood higher than the Christians in honesty and truthfulness. There may be two opinions on that. What is certain is that every Scandinavian reader will rejoice in reading Manguin's very sympathetic book which warms the heart.

Manguin is a Norman himself and writes of his own people, the Normans who under Rollo took possession of Normandy in 911 and extended their territory in 924 and 932. Place-names show that the country was colonized on a large scale and that the Norse language lived for several generations in tracts where a Norman dialect is spoken to-day. The Norman conquest of South Italy and England issued from Normandy where the Crusades found their most eager adherents. The Normans of to-day never forget the proud historic heritage they owe to their Nordic descent. It is not by mere chance that Manguin's book was published in 1944, when France was crushed under the German occupation. Saint-Pierre writes in his preface: In this time of grief after the defeat, when too many of us can neither learn nor forget, it does one good to live a few hours with men who are greater than we, both in their sense for realities and in the reach of their dreams. He can hardly find words strong enough to express his admiration for "mes bons vieux nordiques." To him they are the bearers of culture, the source of new youth in an old, corrupt world. Now, as then, the world must be made young again by a breath from the lonely north where sea and storms reign. The book ends with a dedication and prayer:

"Scandinavians, my brothers, you who have saved the nobility of man in contrast to us weak Latins; give us an honest handshake; let your clear blue mirror the greatness of the past in our tired eyes and teach a reborn world what our ancestors meant by "honour," the foundation of society and morality among the old Northmen."

(Translated from the Norwegian by Dr. Jón Stefánson).

THE CATHEDRAL AND ROYAL BURGH OF KIRK WALL, by John Mooney.  
Kirkwall, W. R. Mackintosh, 1943. Pp. XV + 247.

This is a very interesting book, one for which Orcadians, and Northern scholars generally, ought to feel deeply grateful to the author. It is also produced in a way that reflects considerable credit on the publisher.

The book falls naturally into three parts. In Part I, the history of the Cathedral is traced in detail, material not easily accessible elsewhere being utilized, and problems of great interest and importance to historians of Orkney and of Scotland being discussed in an acute, clear, and indeed masterly way. Of these problems more hereafter. Part II is concerned with the history of the City and Royal Burgh of Kirkwall, particularly from 1468 onwards, and again with the utilizing of material which any future historian of Kirkwall will be very glad to have at his disposal. In Part III there is a discussion of the Earldom of Orkney itself, in its relation to the Crown of Norway and the Crown of Scotland, and a return, raising somewhat wider issues, to the main problems of Part I so far as these may be related to the Marriage Settlement of 1468, and the subsequent dealings of the Crown of Scotland with the rights and revenues of the Earldom and the Bishopric. In a series of Appendices the author presents documents—some of them not hitherto made easily accessible to Northern scholars—relevant to several of the issues raised and points made.

So much for the general scope and treatment of the work. For the scholar

and the historian the main interest will naturally centre in the author's argument in support of the theory propounded to account for the unique position of the Cathedral as the property not of the Church, but of the Municipality. This theory is based in part on researches carried out and views expressed by the late J. Storer Clouston, but the essential, and, if generally accepted, most important contribution made by the present author is based on an interpretation of the Marriage Contract of 1468, upon which, in his opinion, hinges this unique position of the Cathedral along with much else.

In the opinion of the present critic it is exceedingly doubtful if the sense in which the author construes the relevant Latin phrases of the Marriage Contract can be accepted. He construes "*terras nostras Insularum Orcadensium*" as if meaning "*terras nostras in Insulis Orcadensibus jacentes*," that is, "our lands *in* the Orkney Islands." The phrase "*terras nostras Insularum Orcadensium*" occurs twice, and we also have "*terras Orchadiae*," "*terras Orchadenses*," and "*terrae Insularum Orchadensium*," in the last three cases without the '*nostras*' or '*nostrae*.' The suggestion throughout, it may be reasonably argued, is not that the document is referring to the 'King's lands' in the Orkneys, but to the Norwegian territories consisting of the Orkney Islands, the word "*terrae*" being used in accordance with its sense in classical Latin, not in the sense which it frequently bears in late Latin. Context and construction alike suggest this. Other illustrations can easily be found of the same period, showing the construction in the two senses. In the treaty between Magnus IV, of Norway and Alexander III of Scotland, after Largs, we have "in Orchadia, terra domini regis Norvegiae"; in the charter granting the lands of Sumburgh to Sir David Sinclair we have "*terras de Swinburgh jacentes in Dominio Zetlandiae*" and again "*terras nostras jacentes in dicto Dominio Zetlandiae*" (Orkney and Shetland Records, O.L.S. v. 1, p. 98). It seems plain, therefore, that the author's case here is not so strong as he appears to think.

Apart from the doubtful success of this attempt to read into the Marriage Contract of 1468 explicit reference to the 'King's lands' in Orkney, even the most captious critic can have nothing but praise for the acuteness and lucidity of the author's whole argument. The spirit of careful and impartial enquiry is the spirit of the true historian. We may agree with Mr. Mooney or be at variance with him regarding his interpretation of the facts he has brought to light, but that need not affect our estimate of the enduring value of his work.

J.D.

MANSON'S GUIDE TO SHETLAND, 1938-1940, by Thos. M. Y. Manson. Lerwick: T. and J. Manson, "Shetland News" Office. 2/6.

Shetland has many attractions for fishermen and other holidaymakers and, when the war is over, access from the mainland will certainly be easier and more rapid. The air line services to Sumburgh starting from both Glasgow and Aberdeen will be a great comfort to those queasy souls who dread the troubled waters of the Moray and Pentland Firths and Sumburgh Roost, and internal communications have been much improved of late years.

This handbook and guide, first published in 1932, is an excellent piece of work by a good scholar. No pains have been spared to make the account of the history, archaeology and natural history of Shetland and its parishes as accurate as possible. Successive editions have been brought up to date; for example this edition has a new map of the islands and a sketch plan of Lerwick Burgh as extended in 1938, both drawn by the editor, who has added at p. 138

a note on excavations at Wiltrow (1935) and Jarlshof (1936-7). Incidentally some of the linotype sticks at p. 29 need re-arrangement, and "sheds" (1936 ed., p. 137) and "shreds" (1938 ed., p. 138) should be corrected to "sherds."

It is much to be hoped that the editor's articles on "Early Shetland and the Old Earldom," which appeared in *The Shetland News* during April-June, 1942, and reached me through the courtesy of the author, may be re-printed in book-form. They would be welcomed by members of the Society.

University of Leeds.

BRUCE DICKINS.

NOTE.—The above handbook and guide is at present out of print, but it is hoped to republish it soon.

THE ISLANDS OF SCOTLAND: HEBRIDES, ORKNEYS AND SHETLAND, by Hugh MacDiarmid. London: B. T. Batsford (1939). 10/6 net.

This book, like all Batsford publications, is magnificently produced and lavishly illustrated, but the author is less typical. Hugh MacDiarmid (C. M. Grieve) is in fact the most vigorous and most interesting of Scots writers of the present day. On the one side a Little-Scotlander, on the other he works to bring Scots creative writing, too long tied up in a stagnant backwater, out into the main stream of European thought. He loathes the Celtic twilight and the cult of the kailyaird as much as capitalist civilisation, and fears neither physical remoteness nor the cultivation of literature on a little oatmeal. There is much good writing in this book, mainly in prose, partly in the free verse of which he is a master. He lived for some years on the Isle of Whalsay and, but for the call to munition work in Glasgow, would be living there still. He is intimate therefore with Shetland and points the moral of the Faroes. He is less familiar with Orkney, or he would not speak of "the Orkneys" nor call Mainland (the *Hrossey* of the Northmen) Pomona, yet he has visited practically every island in that group and in the Hebrides. He is widely read in many subjects, but his apparent acceptance of the late Lt.-Col. Waddell's views expressed in *The British Edda* is, to put it mildly, uncritical. That is a small matter weighed against the merits of the book.

BRUCE DICKINS.

THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL DICTIONARY, edited by William Grant, M.A., LL.D., Edinburgh: The Scottish National Dictionary Association, Ltd. Vol. III, Part I. Vocabulary from *Clatch* to *Covenant*.

This splendid work is proceeding amidst the strain and stress of war. It is a noble monument to Scottish philological scholarship. Dr. Grant and his collaborators deserve the thanks of all students of Scottish literature. The part before us, like its predecessors, is full of interesting items on the life and customs of the people. The whole range of Scottish literature from 1700 has been carefully ransacked with the result that the Editor presents us with a work that will rank high in the field of lexicography in the days to come. Vol. III, Part I, has now been reached and contains words from *Clatch* to *Covenant*.

Part I of Vol. III was edited by Miss Marie A. Matheson, M.A. (Mrs. Goldie), Carnegie Research Scholar, 1935-37. The final preparation and proof-reading were in the hands of the Associate-Editor, Marjorie M. Stewart, M.A. And a word must be said about the paper, what fine paper for war-time. It is to be hoped that this great undertaking will not be cramped for lack of funds. The mass of material on hand is being put into shape for future volumes, of which a goodly number are planned.

D.B.



# LEIÐARSTEINN

## THE COMPASS OF THE VIKINGS.

By CARL V. SØLVER, M.M.

The question how the Vikings found their way across the Atlantic Ocean has never been satisfactorily answered, and the reason therefore is that no authentic accounts of their navigation have reached us. In the sagas we find various accounts of ships, wind and weather, riggings and sails, etc., etc., but extremely little is said about how the Vikings navigated on high seas.

It is not my intention in this article to give an exhaustive reply to this most interesting question, but I shall try to point out some facts and to give some suppositions which other writers probably may amplify.

Taking for granted that the Vikings were a bright people awake to their surroundings, it is not at all surprising that they were able to navigate on high seas without the aid of a compass and without any special astronomical training. In the following pages I shall endeavour to give a plausible explanation of this question based upon available documents and moreover as seen from the standpoint of a master mariner of our days.

It is well known that the Vikings not only reached Iceland and Greenland and colonized these countries but also that they kept up a constant trade direct from Norway to Greenland, and even if we do not know how they found their way over the sea out of sight of land, we may put forth suppositions bearing the stamp of probability.

In order to navigate on the open sea two things are essential, namely (1) to be able to steer a definite course, and (2) to be able to ascertain the geographical position

at sea. Now, the principal thing for steering a course is to know the quarters of the horizon, and therefore, the most important point for the present topic is whether the Vikings had any knowledge of the Mariner's Compass. In this connection I shall emphasize the fact that neither compass nor chart are necessary in stating the probability of deep water navigation; and later on, in this treatise, I shall take the opportunity of discussing this theme further.

The earliest mention of the Mariner's Compass in the literature of the northern countries is a passage in the so-called "Hauksbók," a saga, the latest edition of the famous "Landnámabók" comprising the discovery and colonization of Iceland by the Vikings, and reads as follows:—"Floki the son of Vilgerd instituted a great sacrifice and consecrated three ravens to show him the way (to Iceland), for at that time no men sailing the high seas had any *leiðarsteinn* (lodestone) up in the Northern lands." (Finnur Jónsson: *Landnámabók*. Copenhagen, 1900, page 5 and XVI.

*Leiðarsteinn* is the old northern name for lodestone used as a compass. Haukr Erlendsson lived c. A.D. 1300, and wrote *Hauksbók* with materials from two earlier works, namely that of Styrmir Karason (who died c. 1245) which is lost, and that of Sturla Thordarson (who died 1284) which has no such paragraph. It seems therefore evident that Haukr put in the above paragraph in his edition of the *Landnámabók* in order to enlighten his contemporaries about this newly invented instrument. All that is certain is that the use of the magnet as a compass was known in Scandinavia at the close of the 13th century and that at Floki's time (c. A.D. 880) no such instrument was known. Naturally it is impossible to state at what time the *leiðarsteinn* was introduced into Scandinavia, but in order to form an idea of this query, it is of interest to investigate the documents dealing with

magnets and compasses from the earlier part of the Middle Ages in Europe.

The earliest definite mention of the magnet used as a compass in Europe occurs in a treatise entitled "*De utensilibus*" written by an English monk, Alexander

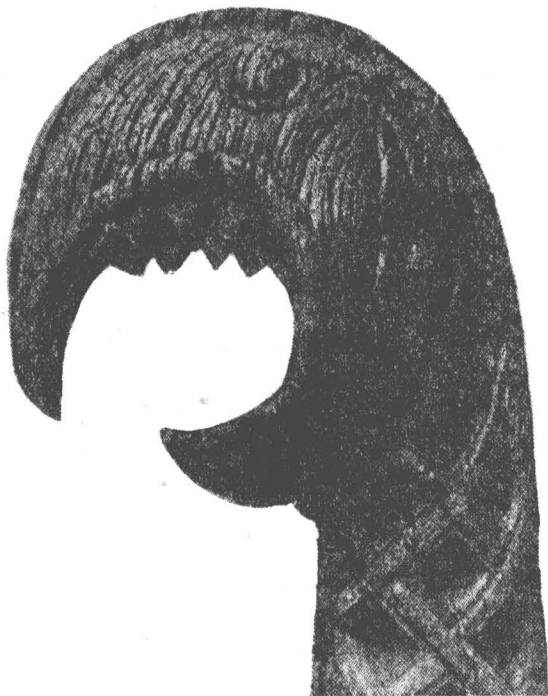


Fig. 1.—Dragonhead of oak found at the estuary of the river Scheldt. Supposed to be a figure-head from a Danish Viking ship. British Museum.

Neckam, professor at Paris c. 1180. He describes the compass as "a needle carried on board of ships, which being placed on a pivot and allowed to take its own position of repose shows the mariners their course when the pole-star is hidden." In another of his works "*De naturis rerum*" he writes:—"Mariners at sea when,

through cloudy weather in the day which hides the sun, or through the darkness of the night, they lose the knowledge of the quarter of the world to which they are sailing, touch a needle with the magnet, which will turn round till, on its motion ceasing, its point will be directed towards the north."

From Torfæus, who wrote "*History of Norway*" (Copenhagen, 1711) we learn that the compass was already in use among Norwegian seamen in the middle of the 13th century, and Roger Bacon, the English scientist (c. 1214-1292) tells in his "*Opus Minus*," written c. 1266, that if the magnet is fixed on a float it will point to the north."

Investigating sources from other parts of Europe evidence will be found that lodestone, used as compass, was universally known from the eastern Mediterranean to the Polar sea in the 13th century.

All these evidences are unfortunately written by authors who certainly had no connection with the sea, but most of them describe the magnetic needle, evidently an improvement from the lodestone on a float, and this points with some probability to the fact, that this last compass was known a very long time before the magnetic needle suspended on a pivot.

The earliest more thorough description of a compass is due to a French monk, Petrus Peregrinus de Maricourt, hailing from Picardy in north of France. In the year 1269 while staying in the Norman kingdom of Naples he accomplished a real treatise on magnetism and the compass, named "*Epistola de Magnete*," of which a considerable part still exists in various transcripts. Part I of this deals entirely with magnetism in general, but in part II two different kinds of compasses are described in detail. One of these is made from a piece of lodestone on a float in a cup filled with water, fig 2. and the other named as an improvement is a magnetic needle on a pivot in a round box. These two compasses have been fully





graduation of his compasses indicate how far he is from the navigation of the early Middle Ages. However, what is of importance to the present question is that the author explicitly localizes the use of the compass to the north-western part of Europe:—"Lodestone is commonly found in the northern countries, and in all parts of the northern sea, such as Normandy, Picardy and Flanders the mariners use them." This statement, in connection with other facts, induced H. Winter to set up the hypothesis that the Mariner's Compass originally was invented by the Vikings or at least in Scandinavia, and in a most convincing way he explains his views in an article:—"Who invented the compass" (*Mariners Mirror*, 1937, page 95). However, I do not entirely share his views as to the Viking origin of the Mariner's Compass and am more inclined to localize this invention, or the development of the same for use at sea, to the southern shores of the North Sea or the English Channel.

From the above development it seems evident that the earliest form of compasses must have been floating lodestones, and as such I have represented the present reconstruction of the *Leiðarsteinn* of *Hauksbók*. For such an attempt there are at disposal but very few clues except that the polarity of the lodestone is supposed to be known by the navigators of that age. There are, however, other clues, and I shall try to explain them.

It is a well known fact that the Vikings, prior to the introduction of the compass, made use of the sun and the stars for steering purposes, and that the pole-star (*Ursa Minor*) was called "*leiðarstjarna*" (guiding star). The saga expression "*stafnhald til stjörnu*" literally means "to keep the ship's head to the star," thereby meaning the pole-star.

To steer a fixed course by stars on a dark clear night is a most easy matter. The pole-star remains in a position of nearly due north the entire night, and in order to steer

e.g. east, the ship is turned to such a position as to have the star on the port beam. The direction of the ship is held by the helmsman by one of the stars on the eastern sky in a line with the stem. These stars gradually change their positions, and from time to time it is necessary to straighten up the course, so the pole-star is continually

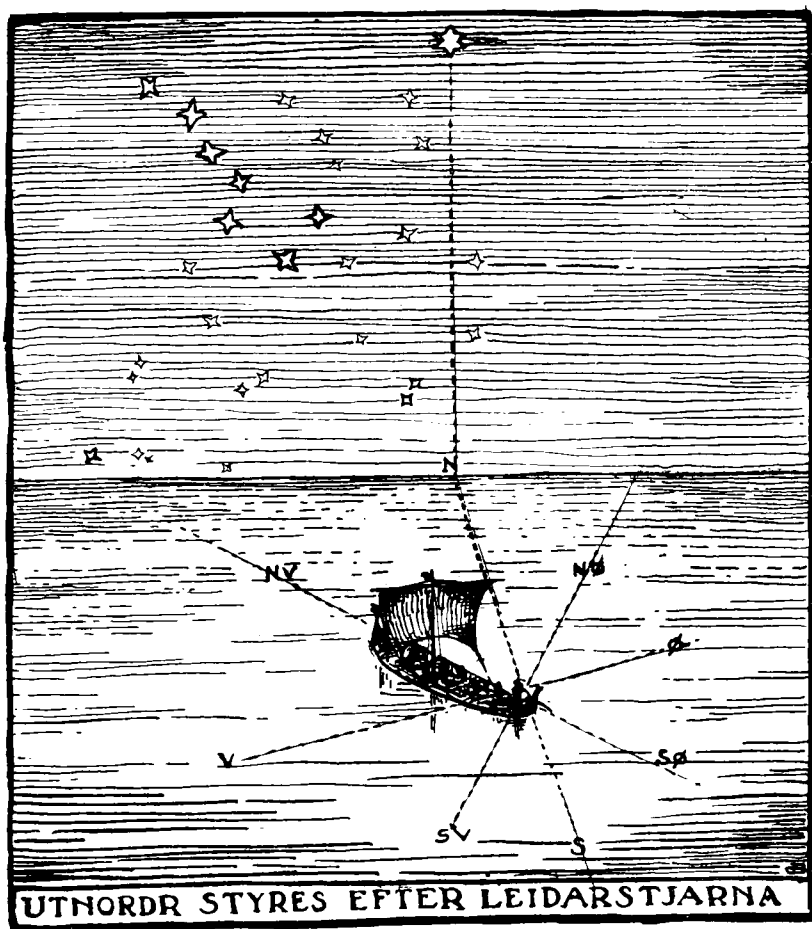


Fig. 3.—A Viking ship steering "Utnorðr" (North-West by "leiðarstjarna" (the pole-star), keeping the course by one of the stars on the N.W. sky.

kept on the port beam. In order to steer north-west the pole-star is kept four points (45 degrees) on the starboard bow—between right ahead and abeam—and the direction of the ship is held by one of the stars on the north-western sky (fig. 3). In the same way, evidently, the Greeks of old steered their ships, as related in the *Odyssey* (V. 272).

In modern times ships and especially sailing-ships are also steered by stars, the ship is laid on the course by the compass, but in order to steer a straight course the helmsman selects a bright star ahead to steer by. In this way the movements of the ship from her course is much easier detected than by watching the comparatively small deviations on the compass card. As the Vikings from time to time corrected their course by always keeping the pole-star at a certain angle with the ship, so the modern helmsman now and then straightens up his course by comparing it with the compass.

In case the sky is overcast, the problem of steering a straight course became more complicated for the Vikings, especially when the pole-star was not visible. It was now essential to know the direction to one of the visible stars, which required a knowledge about their relative positions and about the use of a bearing-dial; I shall, later, in this article, show that the Vikings most likely possessed such knowledge of practical astronomy and that they were quite capable of using a bearing-dial for navigation. The bearing-dial is undoubtedly one of the earliest instruments of navigation and in all probability it has been in use at sea by the Vikings prior to the introduction of the *leiðarsteinn*. In *Flateyjarbók* (2-297) is mentioned an instrument, a so-called "*sólarsteinn*" (sun-stone), used for finding the position of the sun, and the same instrument is named in *Biskupa sögur* (1-674). Probably such a *sólarsteinn* is identical with the "*doyal*" named in an English inventory list of 1339, evidently a bearing-dial used in connection with a "needle."

A bearing-dial is a disk of wood or metal, divided as a compass card, and on fig. 4 I have made an attempt at a reconstruction. If the azimuth of a celestial body (its position measured on the horizon) is known, by means of the bearing-dial any horizontal direction may be found. In case the azimuth of the sun is known to be north-east



consecutive days we steared without any compass by the direction of wind and sea, and still we managed to proceed in approximately the right direction.

In case of a calm, or if the wind changes when the sky for a longer period has been overcast so that neither stars nor the sun are visible, it is completely impossible to

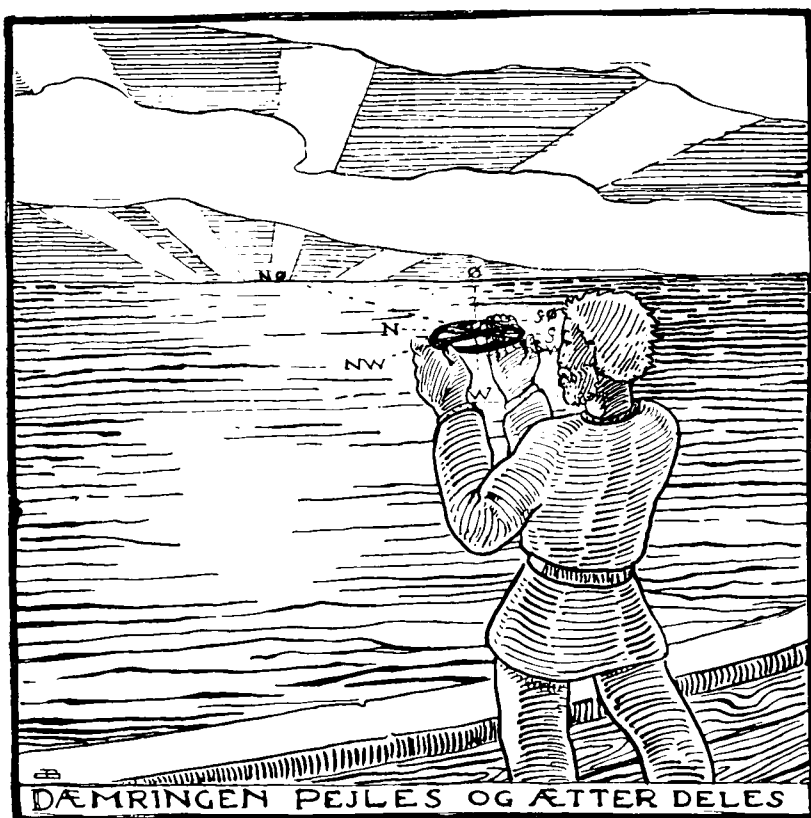


Fig. 5.—Taking a bearing of the sun at dawn in “landnorðr” (North-East) with “Sólarsteinn” (bearing-dial) and determination of the cardinal points.

navigate without a compass. Such situations were of course far from rare in the navigation of the Vikings on the foggy northern seas; indeed they were so frequent, that they had a special name for it, as it is called in the Sagas “hafvilla,” f. ‘the state of a sea-farer who does not know where he is on the sea.’ (Fritzner): “haf-villur,” f. pl., ‘loss of ones course at sea.’ (Vigfusson in Cleasby).

I have taken for granted that the bearing-dial has been known and used at sea during the entire Viking age, and as the bearing-dial is supposed to be known previous to the compass, an essential point is gained in order to reconstruct the leiðarsteinn-compass of the Vikings.

As soon as it was found that the lodestone floating in a bowl of water points to the north, it is natural to assume that the bearing-dial (generally used for ascertaining the

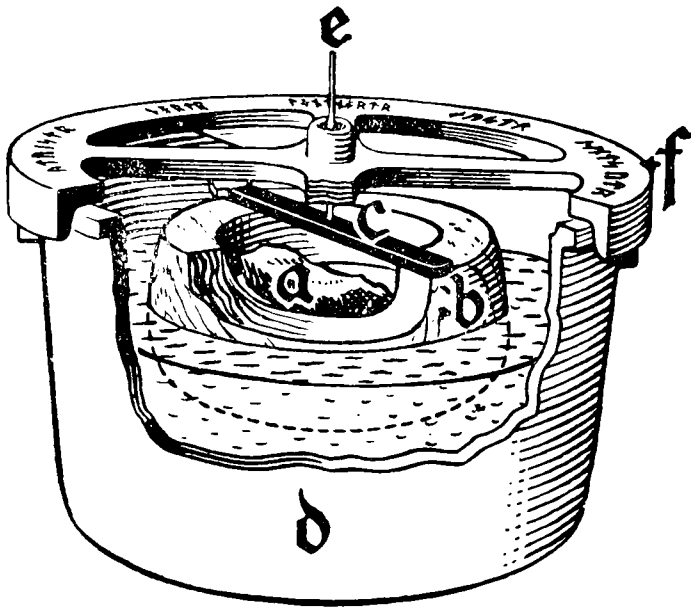


Fig. 6.—Reconstruction of a Leiðarsteinn-Compass, a. lodestone. b. float of wood. c. arrow of wood. d. bronze bowl half filled with water. e. bronze pin for keeping float in centre of bowl. f. bearing-dial of bronze

quarters of the heaven), should be placed on the bowl with the north-point in a line with the north-pointing end of the lodestone—and the result is a leiðarsteinn-compass. The English inventory list, mentioned above, also contains: “two sailing needles and a doyal,” and this is probably a similar kind of compass in which the lodestone has been replaced by one or two magnetic needles.

In my reconstruction (fig. 6) I have placed a piece of lodestone (natural magnetic iron-ore) upon a wooden float in a bowl of cast bronze. As the work proceeded it

became evident to me that the float had to be centralized in order to turn freely in the bowl—otherwise the float would stick to one of the sides of the bowl and the compass would consequently be useless. Therefore I furnished the float with a pin fitting freely in a hole in the lid of the bowl. This lid I have designed as a bearing-dial also of cast bronze with a wide centre hole for the above-mentioned pin in the float. When water is filled in the bowl the float with the lodestone will remain stationary irrespective of any horizontal movements of the bowl. By means of a known N.-S.-direction e.g. by the pole-star, the fiducial line is marked on the float e.g. by means of an arrow of wood with the apex towards the north.

The bearing dial is thus made as a lid to the bowl, and on the rim are marked the directions of the horizon supposed to be known in the Viking Age, thus:—

Modern English.	Old Norse
North.	Norðr.
North-East.	Landnorðr.
East.	Austr.
South-East.	Landsuðr.
South.	Suðr.
South-west.	Útsuðr.
West.	Vestr.
North-west.	Útnorðr.

The names of these compass points sound very nautical and it is very easy to imagine their origin on board of ships sailing along the western shores of Denmark or Norway. There can be very little doubt that “Landnorth” is the point of the north quadrant, indicating towards the land, and that “Útnorðr” out to the open sea. The intermediate points were known as “Miðmundastað norðr ok landnorðr” (N.N.E.) etc. The dial was thus divided into 16 points, the so-called “ættir.”

When a leiðarsteinn-compass was to be used it was carefully lifted up in both hands and kept as steady as



possible. When the motion of the float had ceased, the bowl was turned until the north-south line was in a line with the fiducial line on the float the apex of the arrow to the north. All the directions of the horizon were then found very easily.

Such a leiðarsteinn-compass is excellent for orientation and really quite as reliable—although not as handy—as a modern land compass. As an experiment I have furnished my reconstruction with a glass lid and cardan suspension, and this ancient construction of a compass proved quite reliable as a steering compass under ordinary conditions at sea. Steering is effected, in similar manner as with a modern aeroplane compass, by always keeping the north-south line of the dial over the fiducial line on the float, and then to turn the ship to the required course.

But still there is the question of how early the leiðarsteinn-compass has been known in Scandinavia. Pierre de Maricourt refers in 1269 the use of the lodestone to the north of France and Flanders, and Hauksbók's mention is of about the same age. Alexander Neckam tells us that, in 1168, a compass needle suspended on a pivot was in use, and this proves a preceding development. Therefore, there is every reason to presume that a compass in a more primitive form had been in use on the southern shores of the northern seas very much earlier.

The possibility also exists that the compass—formerly always believed to have been introduced to the north of Europe from the Mediterranean—may have been discovered independently on the shores of the northern seas. It is important for this question that magnetic iron-ore is found all over Scandinavia, whereas it is more rare in the Mediterranean countries. Further it is of interest to remember that a compass is of much more importance in navigating the foggy northern seas than the Mediterranean where the weather during the whole summer is clear.

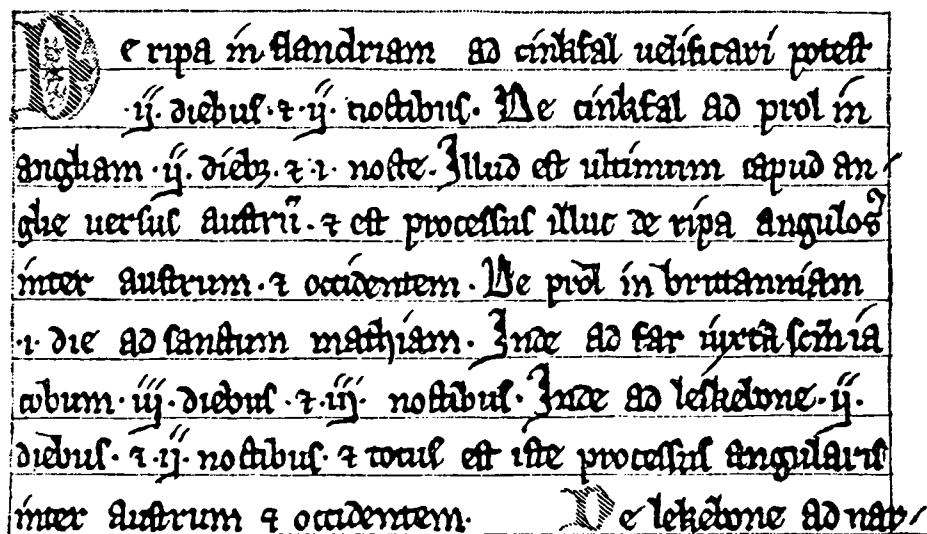
Investigations in this direction have for ages past been

hampered by the acknowledged passus:—"The compass has been invented by Flavius Gioya in Amalfi 1300 A.D.," and only quite recently this theory has suffered modifications. The priority of the invention was claimed by Italy on the two main arguments, namely (1) that the names on the Italian wind-rose indicate the country round Amalfi, as the north-easterly direction is called "Greco," the south-easterly "Libecco" etc., etc., and (2) that the conventional sign for the north point was the "fleur de lis," which is the coat of arms of the Anjous, the royal house of Naples.

In a most interesting and competent article on this question, H. Winter proves that both these arguments are untenable. (*Mariners Mirror*, 1937, page 96). Greece is not situated N.E. of Amalfi, but S.E. and the so-called wind-rose with these names was known long before 1300. With regard to the fleur-de-lis, this sign was not used for the north point of the compass card until c. 1500, when it appeared on the Cantino chart. The Italians have made great efforts to prove that Flavius Gioya really lived in Amalfi, but up to the present without any success.

However, it is most probable that the Mariner's Compass in the shape we now know it—compass needles and card combined suspended on a pivot—has been invented in Italy c. 1300 as a link in the vast evolutions in all quarters of shipping and navigation, which took place in Italy during the entire 14th century. The earliest Italian compass cards, however, are not embellished with a fleur-de-lis—a triangle in red or blue indicating the north point—and from this age the compass card formerly divided into 12 points now have the 16 point division known from the Viking age. Further, from this age the principal point of the compass card, which formerly was east, now begins to give way to north as has been kept up until the present day, and this certainly points to Scandinavian influence.

In this connection it is of interest to read a sailing direction from Ribe, a sea town still existing on the south-west coast of Jutland, Denmark, to Accon in Palestine, as it appears in the Ecclesiastical history of bishop Adam of Bremen, written at the close of the 11th century. The bishop evidently had his information from his contemporary the Danish king Svein Estridson, whom he visited in the year 1070. Unfortunately the language is Latin whereby the characteristic Nordic notations for



**R**e ripa in flandriam ad cinkfal uelificari potest  
 .ij. diebus . et .ij. noctibus. De cinkfal ad proel in  
 angham .ij. diebus . et .i. nocte. Illud est ultimum apud an  
 ghe uersus austrum . et est processus illuc de ripa angulos  
 inter austrum . et occidentem. De proel in britanniam  
 .i. die ad sanctum mathiam. Inde ad far uerum sciam  
 abum . .ij. diebus . et .ij. noctibus. Inde ad lekebone .ij.  
 diebus . et .ij. noctibus . et totus est iste processus angularis  
 inter austrum et occidentem. De lekebone ad nar

Fig. 7.—Sailing-direction from Ribe (Denmark) to Accon (Palestine) from the Ecclesiastical history of bishop Adam of Bremen, written at the close of the 11th century. (See text).

the various courses are lost, but the ancient names for Gibraltar, Lisbon, etc. clearly prove wherefrom the description hails. The courses put down in the text are rather awkward, and evidently the courses given in the verbal Danish transmission have been given more clearly, and it must be remembered that this text was not written by a navigator for practical purposes but by a bishop rather as a popular description of such a journey possibly as propaganda for a crusade. The text runs as follows:— (fig. 7). “From Ripa (Ribe, S.W. Coast of

Jutland, Denmark) one may sail to Cincfal (the later Zwin by Sluis in Holland) in two days and nights. From Cincfal to Pral (evidently Prawle Point in the Channel) in England in two days and one night. This is the southernmost point of England (not quite correct, as both Lizard and Land's End are situated more southerly) and the course from Ripa is in bights from south to west. From Pral to St. Mathias (the westernmost point of Brittany) in Brittany one day; from there to Far (El Ferrol in Spain across the Bay of Biscay) by St. Jacobs three days and three nights. From there to Leskebone (Lisbon) two days and two nights, and this course is between south and west. From Leskebone to Narwese (Gibraltar) three days and three nights the courses being between east and south. From Narwese to Taragun (Taragona in Spain) four days and four nights on courses between north and east, etc., etc., until from Mescin (Messina in Sicily) to Accharon (Accon in Palestine) in the Holy Land fourteen days and as many nights between east and south, but nearer east."

From this will be gathered that although the Vikings were great navigators, they evidently had no knowledge about the leiðarsteinn at the time they set out for the south, c. A.D. 800-1000. It is, however, quite possible that they hit upon this invention on the coasts of Flanders or north of France and immediately made use of it as soon as they comprehended its possibilities for navigation on the high seas.

The way from the North Sea to Amalfi and from leiðarsteinn to the complete compass is then open, and there may be a possibility that the invention of the Mariner's Compass is due to Scandinavian influence as Winter asserts.

I am afraid, however, that I cannot follow Winter entirely. According to present documents there is no possibility for the supposition that this leiðarsteinn-compass was known in Scandinavia at the time of the

colonization of Iceland and Greenland and the Wineland voyages A.D. 800-1100. Not only is this leiðarsteinn-compass not mentioned in any of the thorough descriptions of the voyages, but in *Flateyrbók*, dealing with events about the year 1000, an occurrence is related which would appear quite otherwise if leiðarsteinn had been known. The text runs as follows:—

“But now the fair wind ceased to blow and they got north wind and fog and they did not know where they went, and so passed several days. After this the sun broke through, and they were able to find the quarters of the horizon (“deila ættir”); now they hoisted their sail, etc., etc.” (fig. 8).

11 **nað uatnar en þa tok af byrma z lagde at norrænur z þokur**  
 12 **z uissu þeir ægi, huert at þeir foru, ok skipti þat mǫrgum dægum. eft þ sa þ**  
 13 **sol sa z maattu þa deila ættir uinnu nu segl z sigla þā dægr.**

Fig. 8.—(11) — — — en þa tok af byrma, ok lagde aa norrænur ok þokur (12) ok uissu þeir ægi, huert at þeir foru, ok skipti þat mǫrgum dægum, efter þat sa þeir (13) sol sa maattu þa deila ættir — — —

Facsimile of *Flateyrbók* 223, 11-13. The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

Translation of the saga text: — — (11) “but then the fair wind ceased and a northerner blew up with fog, (12) and they did not know the course they steered and so passed many days. After this (13) the sun appeared so they were able to ‘deila ættir’ (to find the quarters of the horizon) — — —

How this was done is described before, and there is no doubt that those who navigated the ships had the necessary knowledge about nautical astronomy and were able to apply same to an extent which has not been acknowledged before.

The original discovery of the new lands in the Atlantic ocean were evidently due to chance, but how were the Vikings without any compass able to maintain a tolerably constant trade with these countries and find their way thither and back again time after time.

It is quite possible to sail from Denmark to Iceland in clear weather without any compass steering a good course

by the sun or stars and keeping account of the distance travelled. But only a few days of fog will bring all calculations to nought and it is only by merest luck if land be reached. However, in case the art of determining the latitude is known everything looks brighter; only one day of sunshine is sufficient to ascertain how far south or north the ship has driven during the fog, and the ship may keep on in comparative safety until land heaves in sight. To my supposition there is only one way of explaining the Viking navigation over the enormous distances of open sea, namely by what is generally known by "latitude-navigation," of which later.

Really, the Atlantic voyages of the Vikings were not dependent on whether they had any compass or not; but of one thing I am positively sure, that without knowledge of determining the latitude one way or the other by astronomical observations, they would not have been able to reach their destinations time after time with comparative certainty.

The Vikings were by no means the first to steer out upon the open ocean without any compass. The ancient Greeks made monsoon voyages across the Indian Ocean year after year; and up to modern times people from the Pacific Ocean isles set out upon long ventures on open sea without any compass and returned to their native homes evidently aided by a primitive determination of latitude by astronomical observations and by "latitude navigation."

Unlike longitude, the determination of latitude expressed in one way or another is a most simple problem and has been known undoubtably from most remote ages, especially by people living on extensive coast stretches in N.-S. direction. The Egyptians navigating the Red Sea c. B.C. 1500, must have known this art, and the voyages of the ancient Greeks from Babel Mandeb to known ports on the Indian coast only become intelligible in connection

with knowledge of determining the latitude by astronomical observations. "Latitude-navigation" simply means to sail in a northerly or southerly direction to the latitude of the place of destination and to follow this latitude east or west, as the case may be, until the land appears and this is the safest navigation when the art of finding the longitude is not known. Columbus, on his homeward course on his first voyage from the West Indies, sailed northwards to the latitude of St. Vincent and followed this parallel of latitude (approximately) until land came in sight. In reality this form of navigation has been the foundation for all ocean navigation for centuries right up to comparatively modern times, when the determination of longitude at sea by astronomical observations was possible by the aid of a chronometer.

Even a hundred years ago the Danish schooners trading to Newfoundland having no chronometers, used latitude-navigation. They sailed from St. Ybes in Spain slantwise across the North Atlantic until the latitude of Newfoundland and steered west on this parallel of latitude until they sighted land; an approximate longitude was found by "dead reckoning."

In this very same way, I presume, the Vikings have navigated—with the exception that they had no compass. It is a well known fact that the Vikings had a clear conception of latitude. In *Flateyrbók* (232-35) is an account that on the shortest day in Wineland Leif measured the angle on the horizon from sunrise to sunset (*dagmál-eykt*) and found that Midwinter day in Wineland was longer than in Greenland, a real determination of latitude. This method is of course not applicable at sea, where the only way to find the latitude is by means of an observation of the sun or a star at meridian or by the altitude of the pole-star.

Now, such astronomical observations imply knowledge of declination of sun and stars for each day and means

for measuring the altitudes above the horizon. For computing the actual calculation very little is necessary; indeed, it is nothing else than to add two figures together.

Although we have no actual proof that the Vikings were able to do this, there is no reason to doubt, that they had a good grounding in practical astronomy for such work. The reason that no knowlege of their deep-sea navigation has reached us must be sought in the absence of contemporary sources, and in the supposition that the art of navigation was kept as family secrets within special generations of the so-called "*leiðsagnarmenn*" (pilots, navigators) conversant with this art.

It is a well known fact that the Scandinavian people prior to the introduction of christianity, had their own calendar and knowledge of practical astronomy apparently without influence from Rome. The eldest part of the Ancient Icelandic manuscript (No. 1812) kept at the Royal Library at Copenhagen, dating from the close of the 12th Century, comprises transcripts of elder works and oral traditions. In these is mentioned a man, Oddi Helgason, generally called "*Star-Oddi*" on account of his knowledge of astronomy, living in north Iceland in the end of the 10th century and observing probably on the little island of Flatey. Oddi was in the service of a chieftain named Thord; his employment must have been in connection with the sea for we are told that his master sent him to sea on a fishing expedition. Evidently he was a "*leiðsagnarmaður*," nautical adviser or pilot to his chief.

The oral traditions of Oddi are called "*Odda-tala*" and they comprise quite a small table of the sun's declination. Actually it is a table of the sun's meridian altitudes from midwinter for each week until midsummer expressed in "*half-wheels*" (sun's semi-diameters ab. 16' of arc) measured by the length of the shadow of a vertical staff. Thus it only gives the changes in the declination,



but sufficient for the purpose of determining the latitude, and the figures compared with the declinations worked out for the year A.D. 1000 are surprisingly correct and within one degree.

The same transcription of Oddi's also contains—besides tidal phenomena—a small table of the sun's azimuth giving the direction of the “dawn” (evidently the

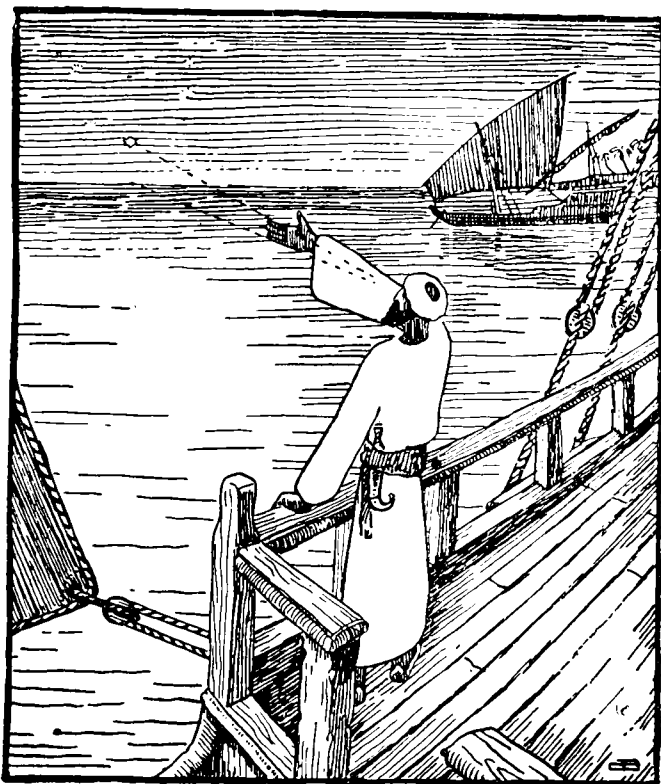


Fig. 9.—Arab pilot measuring the altitude of the pole-star on the coast of Malacca for determining the latitude; Four finger-breadths (isbas) =  $6^{\circ} 52'$ .

direction to the sun when ab.  $15^{\circ}$  below the horizon) at winter solstice at east-south-east, and for each point (ætt) of the Compass until north-north-east at summer solstice the interval of days are given. These tables were evidently made for use on land for the latitude of Flatey; but when a plain man in a remote part of Iceland had such intimate knowledge of practical astronomy, we might with

some certainty presume, that many others of his contemporaries possessed like knowledge and had been able to use the same for navigation.

Unfortunately "Odda Tala" does not give any hints as to the way in which Oddi accomplished his observations, but it is evident that he must have made use of some kind of primitive astronomical instruments. The altitude of the sun without any doubt was measured by the length of the shadow of a vertical staff like the gnomon of the ancient Greeks, the so-called "skapt" (compare the expression "sól skapt-há = when the sun is in a line with the stick mentioned in the "Grágás"<sup>1</sup>) for determining the time of the day. The azimuth of the sun was measured evidently with a bearing-dial, the so-called "sólarsteinn" mentioned in the sagas.

A bearing-dial is directly applicable at sea as well as on land, but it is impossible to use a sun-staff in the same way on board a rolling ship as on land, so other means for finding the altitude of sun or stars must have been at hand.

Like the navigators of the early Arabic-Indian trade they may have had a system of measuring arches on the sky by means of the fingers on the outstretched hand, each finger breadth equal to ab. two degrees (fig. 9).<sup>2</sup> In this connection it is of interest to read *Nordisk Astronomisk Tidsskrift*, 1941, vol. 22, in which Professor Strömberg of The Royal Observatory, Copenhagen, acknowledges a similar finger method for measuring approximate arches on the sky. He says:

"When you shut one eye and stretch your arm in front of you, your fist will cover an arc very nearly  $10^\circ$  for a normally built man. One finger-breadth is nearly  $2^\circ$  and

<sup>1</sup> "Staðarhólsbók," a collection of laws from Iceland. The Royal Library, Copenhagen.

<sup>2</sup> See "Mohit," an Arabian Sailing direction of the Indian Ocean. Admiral Sidi Ali Ben Hosein, 1554. Translated by Maximilian Bittner, Vienna, 1897.

consequently you are able to measure arches on the sky with some accuracy in this way."

We also have evidence of this finger method in the twelfth century in an Icelandic manuscript (*Symbolæ ad geographiam medii ævi* (1821, p. 31) describing a pilgrimage of the abbot Nicolas to the Holy Land in 1150 in which a latitude observation occurs. (fig. 10).



Fig. 10.—Bishop Nicolas of Tveraa, Iceland, decides the latitude of the river Jordan by the altitude of the pole-star, c. A.D. 1150.

Unfortunately this is performed on land and not at sea; the text says, that on the bank of the River Jordan the abbot laid himself flat on the ground, lifted one knee, laid his hand thereon, and "then the 'leiðarstjarna' (the pole-star) was just there and no higher." This gives approximately the latitude of Jordan,  $31^{\circ} 45$  N. Lat.

Unfortunately we have no idea about which kind of instrument the Vikings used, but having practised much with primitive ways of angle-measuring I suggest that a combination was used, namely a short stick divided into the units of Star-Oddi's (half-wheels) held vertically in the outstretched hand. Naval officers of the Victorian age will remember when sailing in squadron the distance between the ships was held by keeping the mast of the ship next ahead in a certain angle by means of a measured stick held vertically in the outstretched hand.

Sailing in northern waters, the easiest way to find the latitude is by measuring the altitude of the pole-star (Ursa Minor); when its position with regard to the surrounding constellations is taken into account, the altitude is equal to the latitude, and we may take for granted that the Vikings were quite conversant with this most simple observation. However, as the ocean voyages of the Vikings were performed during the summer months in high latitudes, no stars were visible, and under such conditions the only way left to find the latitude was by observation of the meridian altitude of the sun at noon, when it is at its highest.

In order to explain the navigation of the Vikings I shall quote one of the sailing directions from the sagas, " *Islendingabók* " :—

" From Hernum in Norway steer straight for Hvarf (near Cape Farewell in Greenland) and you have passed to the north of Hjaltland (Shetland) so that you just sight it in clear weather, but south of the Faroes so that the sea is half way up the hill-sides (a very good expression for the distance off the land) and thus south of Iceland so you may have whales and birds therefrom (meaning a good way south of Iceland)."

Upon a modern Mercator's chart I have drawn this track (see dotted line in chart fig. 11); The full lines in same chart indicating the course of a fictitious Viking

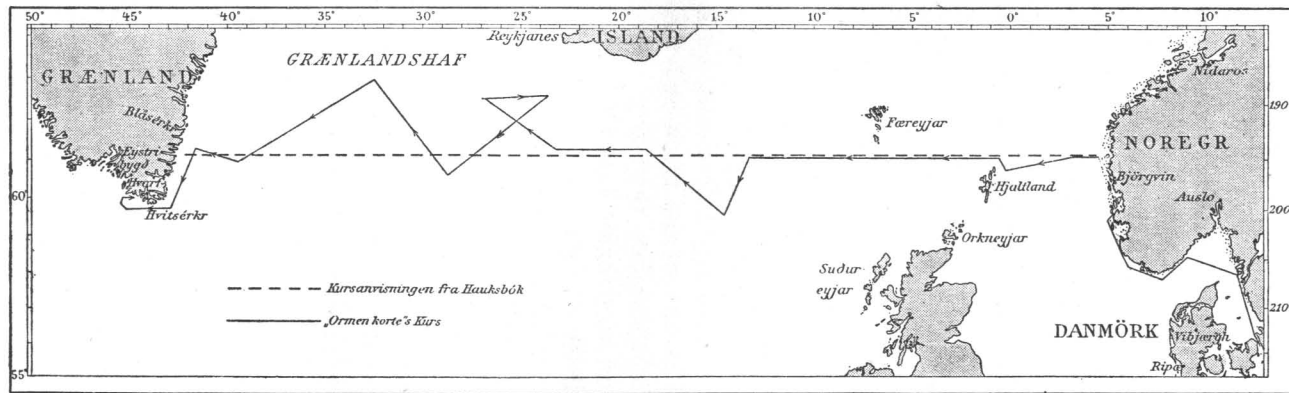


Fig. 11.—Mercator chart showing the track of the Vikings from Norway to Greenland (— — — —) from Hauksbók), and also the course of a fictitious ship. (————) The latitude-scale to the left is divided into degrees from the Equator in the usual way, whereas to the right the latitudes are calculated in Meridian Altitudes of the sun for midsummer (sun's Declination ab.  $23^{\circ}$  N.) and expressed in "half-wheels" (sun's semi-diameter = ab. 16 minutes of arc) as mentioned by Oddi Helgason (c. A.D. 1050). Drawn by Mr. K. Lynge of the Admiralty Chart Office, Copenhagen,

ship from Norway to Greenland showing how the ship was battered round by storms, head wind and fogs.

Now, following the track on the chart it will be seen that the ship has fair wind and weather from Norway a good distance into the Atlantic; how the course was steered by means of a bearing-dial and the sun has previously been explained.

The “leiðsagnarmaðr” (pilot, navigator) on leaving the coast of Norway has taken an altitude of the sun in meridian (at noon) by means of his “sun-stick” and found that the sun is 195 half-wheels (=  $52^{\circ}$ ) above the horizon, and sailing due west he must have known that this altitude would remain unaltered the entire summer months (sun’s declination ab.  $23^{\circ}$  N.) on the said track. Further, I suppose, that in taking altitudes at sea and finding them higher than 195 half-wheels, he knew that the ship was to the south of the track and the contrary in case the altitude was less than 195. The meridian altitude of the sun was thus “latitude” to them, and no special knowledge of astronomical ephemerides nor any scientific education was necessary for such work—only means for measuring the said altitude.

Now, resuming the voyage of the fictitious Viking ship, ten days out the weather changes; the east wind ceases to blow and fog closes in; in a few hours they do not know the heading of the ship rolling heavily on the long Atlantic swells. Later it starts to blow and having no compass no one has any notion from which way the wind comes. They try to “heave to” but later the wind and sea rise so they have to run for it for three days not knowing in which direction they steered.

After this the wind abates, the sun is shining again—and the question now arises about where the ship is and which way to steer. The “leiðsagnarmaðr” of vast experience in this trade has a notion that the ship has been driven south, and consequently he puts the ship on a

north-west course (by means of the bearing-dial) in order to reach the original track laid from Norway to Greenland. However, he is not sure of this supposition until at noon he shoots the sun and finds that the meridian altitude amounts to 205 half-wheels above the horizon. Consequently the ship has drifted 10 half-wheels (= 160 miles) to the south of the original track. He now keeps the ship on N.W. for some days until the meridian altitude of the sun reaches 195 half-wheels, when the course is altered to due west, and the ship is now again on its proper track to Greenland. Some days later another storm arises and the ship is driven to the north and an easterly gale set them many, many miles back, but again the original track is found in the same way as explained above; this happens several times during the voyage.

At last, after 43 days at sea, the ship has reached a long way towards Greenland, but no one knows how far they are from land. The "leiðsagnamaðr" is perfectly sure of the latitude, but although he has done his very best to keep an account of the courses steered and the distances run by marks and lines cut into a wooden board, even he has very little notion how far the ship has reached in a westerly direction. The only thing he knows is, that keeping the course west sooner or later the east coast of Greenland will heave in sight. The main thing is not to come too far south of the course, so that the ship might slip past Cape Farewell, the southermost point of Greenland, without sighting it. Therefore the original track is laid so that it strikes the east coast of Greenland 80 miles to the northwards of Cape Farewell, as seen on the chart.

The last stage of the voyage is most trying for the exhausted men; provisions and fresh water have run short, and day and night the men strain their eyes ahead as the ship is speeding along for a north-east blow. At last a white spot is seen ahead, a forerunner for the heavy drift-ice always barring the east coast of Greenland in

summer, and now the tired men know that they are saved. The high Greenland mountains rise out of the mist as the large fields of drift-ice are reached; there are plenty of seals and polar bears and sea-birds in abundance and fresh-water pools on the ice-floes and they spend a day hunting and eating. Now, the course is set south along the outer edge of the drift-ice past the well known landmarks "Bláserkr" (blue shirt) and "Hvítserkr" (white shirt). Later the ship doubles Cape Farewell and steers north to the well known settlements on the west coast.

As will be seen from the chart this navigation is typical "latitude-sailing," and to me this is the only way in which to make the Atlantic voyages of the Vikings probable. In Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* B. VII, Glasgow, 1904, is an account of a voyage to the western isles (the Azores) by the earl of Cumberland. From England he steered south to the latitude of the Azores, and then due west until the isles heave in sight; an example of regular "latitude-sailing."

On the entire way from Norway to Greenland the navigator hugged the same parallel of latitude, when driven away by storms or fogs either north or south from this line, his endeavour is to work back to it; until after long, long days and nights of suspense the coast of Greenland heaves in sight; pure and simple "latitude-sailing." The rest of the voyage is mere coastal navigation along the drift-ice round Cape Farewell to the colonies on the west coast of Greenland.

For clearness I shall enumerate the opinions I suggest:—

- (1) The "leiðarsteinn-compass," the oldest form for a Mariner's Compass, was not known in Scandinavia in the Viking age; it appeared there after c. 1200 A.D.
- (2) The "leiðarsteinn-compass" may have been known earlier on the southern shores of the North Sea and may have been introduced from there to the Mediterranean sea.



- (3) A probability that the improvements of the compass localized to Amalfi may have been due to Scandinavian influence.
- (4) The Vikings on their ocean voyages found their courses on the open sea by means of azimuths of sun and stars taken with a simple bearing-dial, this instrument being equivalent to the “*sólarsteinn*” of the sagas and the “*doyal*” of medieval English inventory lists.
- (5) The Atlantic voyages of the Vikings were not dependent upon any compass and were performed and kept up as a regular trade without any compass.
- (6) The ocean voyages of the Scandinavians both prior to the introduction of the Compass and after were only feasible with knowledge of determination of the latitude by astronomical observations.
- (7) The Vikings knew how to find an approximate latitude by the altitude of the pole-star and by the meridian altitude of the sun.

